

Immaculate
Heart
of Mary
Parish

A History

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I	Historial Introduction - Beginnings	1 - 7
II	Parish	8 - 30
III	The Church	31 - 47
IV	The Rectory	48 - 51
V	The Academy of Our Lady of Vermont	52 - 56
VI	St. Joseph Cemetery	57 - 63
VII	The Pastors	64 - 84
VIII	Societies	85 - 90

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I Beginnings

In 1496 King Henry VII of England sent John Cabot, an Italian, to discover a passage to the Indies. But instead he discovered Canada, very probably landing on the shores of Newfoundland. The English did nothing further with this discovery.

However, French fishermen came in 1504, found a great fishing ground on the Grand Bank, and began a fur trading business with the friendly Indians.

In 1533 and again in 1535 Jacques Cartier sailed from France up the St. Lawrence River as far as Montreal. Trading posts were established at Port Royal, Quebec, Montreal, and Trois Rivières which eventually grew into towns or cities.

But in 1590 Henry of Navarre began to colonize the area around the St. Lawrence River. The method that he chose was to grant a monopoly in the fur trade to individuals or to small trading companies. The individuals and small trading companies were to settle a certain number of colonists per year at their own expense. The immediate response was not impressive. But by degrees the number of colonists grew.

In 1620 English Pilgrims began to colonize Massachusetts. As the years went by, they began to spread northwards into New Hampshire. Each felt that the other was encroaching on the other's territorial rights. So troubles ensued. The French and Indian Wars followed and finally the English sent an army under General Wolfe which conquered Quebec and later Montreal and points to the West.

Canada thus became an English territory by 1763.

The French settlers in the Province of Quebec, New France, resented the English laws and government. At this time there were the French Canadians who numbered more than 60,000. They were mostly Catholics. There were not more than 2,000 British. These latter brought with them a new religion, the Church of England, and the French Catholics were disenfranchised.

This governing of the French Canadians by the English has been a cause of conflict between the two nationalities ever since. Of course there were the moderate French Canadians who did not like the situation but made the best of it. But there were also the radicals who tried to form their own government. Even to this day we find the radicals asserting themselves and resorting to acts of violence to try to bring about a French Canadian Republic.

Following the Revolutionary War, 1775-1781, we find a few of the more adventurous French Canadians migrating South of the border into Vermont. One of the first was a certain Captain Mallet who in 1785 kept a tavern on the shores of Lake Champlain, in the Town of Colchester. He gave his name to the Bay. In the early 1800's French Canadian settlements were to be found at Swanton, St. Albans Bay, Fairfield, Burlington and Vergennes, and other Northern towns along the Lake.

In October 1837, what was known as "Papineau's Rebellion" caused other French Canadians to leave the Province of Quebec for Vermont. For years they had been taught that this province in which they lived had once been their ancestors, but that it had been taken from them by the English. By 1837 they were ripe for rebellion against their English overlords, and attempted to establish a French Republic, especially in the southern half of the Province.

The most prominent of their leaders was Louis I. Papineau, a member of Parliament. A convention was held in St. Charles in October 1837. Similar meetings were held in other cities and towns, including one in Montreal.

In St. Charles a battle took place between the government troops and the radicals. The rebels were defeated

and fled, some of them to Northern Vermont. The sympathies of many Vermonters lay with the rebels.

Gradually others came into Central Vermont, drawn either by cheap farm land, or by jobs which in the 1840's and 1850's were beginning to become more numerous in the town. Rutland had become a railroad center in the late 40's and early 50's. The marble industry began to flourish, and other industries opened shops in Rutland. According to the 1840 and 1850 U.S. Census most of the French Canadians were laborers, some few were blacksmiths, R. Lawrence, a shoemaker and Louis Caissey, a store-keeper.

The U.S. Census (government census) for 1850 showed that there were about 50 French Canadians in the town of Rutland. At that time the town of Rutland was made up of the present City of Rutland, the towns of Rutland, West Rutland, and Sutherland (now Proctor).

Vermont at this time was part of the Diocese of Boston, and the Catholics in the State were served by Missionary priests sent here by the Bishop of Boston. Although Father Jeremiah O'Callaghan came here in 1830 and Father John B. Daly, OFM, in 1837, the first French-speaking priest to visit Rutland was the Rev. Joseph Quevillan, then stationed in Burlington.

In 1853 he said Mass in the house of Joseph Mailhiot and thereafter came to Rutland every three or four months and said Mass in the old Court House on Main Street. In 1854 (November) the Rev. Zephyrin Druon came to reside in Rutland and built the original St. Peter's Church on Meadow Street. Here the French united with the English speaking congregation for the Sunday worship of God.

In 1852 there were four Canadian families in Rutland (what is now the city of Rutland): namely. Pierre Alain, Henry Branchaud, Wm. Laliberte, and Joseph Mailhiot and twelve or fifteen were living in Mendon and Shrewsbury. Others came soon afterwards and were numbered as attendants at St. Peter's Church.

Not only did these people come to the parish Mass at Old St. Peter's Church but they also took an active part

in the activites of the parish.

When in the fall of 1863 Father Boylan, planning to build a new St. Peter's Church, enlisted the aid of a number of the French Canadian women among the Catholic Ladies Society to help raise funds for the new building and at least until 1869 these women continued to be a part of the annual bazaar which raised a considerable sum of money for the new building. The men also contributed of their earnings for it. As the writer of the Catholic Church in New England-Diocese of Burlington (Vol. II pg. 545) could state, "many of these (French Canadians) had contributed to the building of the present St. Peter's Church."

When in 1865, St. Peter's church opened the old cemetery on West Street, the secretary of the officers of the association was A. Delisle.

According to the town of Rutland Land Records (Book 19, page 636) Joseph Mailhiot sold a parcel of land on Green Street (now Killington Avenue) to Father Z. Druon on April 25, 1856. This was never used by St. Peter's Parish.

In the fall of 1867, when St. Peter's Cornet Band was organized, some of the Canadians with musical talent must have become members of the group. A Mr. (T. Delisle was the first leader of the Band (in 1887 he was the director of St. Peter's Church Choir). And, although we could not find the names of the original Band members, we did find that the Rutland Cornet Band in 1878 had among it's members, A. Valiquette, Drum Major and E. Maranville, 2nd Tenor Horn.

In the 1860's the number of French Canadians continued to grow. For the week of November 17-23, 1868 we find this article in the Rutland Herald: "Owing to the increased number of Catholics in Rutland, the congregation has been divided. The Irish are building a new church for themselves on Mechanics Street (now Convent Avenue) and last Tuesday the Rev. George N. Caissy was in town and secured a beautiful spot between Center and East Rutland where a new Catholic Church will be commenced next spring for the

use of the French Canadians." Father Caissy was then stationed in Brandon.

Just prior to this, perhaps earlier that fall, Father Caissy had taken a census of the Canadian population in Rutland and found about 50 families. The need for a separate congregation was felt. The Canadians wished a church of their own.

More Canadian families were to be found in West Rutland, the men working in the marble industry; still others were found in Castleton, and Fair Haven, and other neighboring communities. In his diary on June 6, 1868, Bishop DeGoesbriand wrote of Fair Haven: "The Church is too small and inconvenient. There are many Canadian families here who seem to be very good, but have had so far very few religious privileges." Father Thomas J. Lynch, writing of the Canadians in Castleton in Hemingway's Gazeteer of Vermont said that many of them had fallen away from the practice of their faith. These things happened because of language difficulties.

What was to be done? What French speaking priests there were in the diocese were already stationed in Northern Vermont.

Bishop DeGoesbriand became anxious about the spiritual welfare of the Canadians in Southern Vermont. In 1868 and 1869 he asked some of the Bishops of the Province of Quebec to let some of their priests come to this diocese to attend the Canadians scattered throughout the south and west parts of the State. He reported in his diary, for example that "Father Audet of St. Hyacinth, through the kindness of Msgr. (Bishop) Larocque comes to Burlington to take charge of the Canadians of Winooski Village which alone has as many as 850 Canadians." Other Canadian priests had been given permission to work among their compatriots before and after this.

But our matter at hand is the Rutland area. In the Bishop's Diary under March 6, 1869 under Brandon, he writes "Rev. Gagnier of Huntington, Quebec, Audet, Myself, and the Pastor (Rev. G. N. Caissy) gave a Mission from Sunday,

February 28 to March 6. Eight hundred four persons received Holy Communion and sixty three adult persons received Confirmation. Five adults were Baptized. The number of persons reclaimed to the practice of their Religion was unexpectedly large."

Under March 7, 1869, "Rev. Fathers Gagnier and Caissy gave a Mission in Orwell. One hundred seventy two persons received Communion."

Under March 14, Pittsford: "Conclusion of a Mission preached by Father's Gagnier and Caissy. Three hundred seventy eight Communions given."

Evidently it was a practice to give a Mission to the Canadians whenever they could be gathered together.

Again in his Diary the Bishop wrote, April 11, 1869, "Rev. Gagnier of Montreal and Tasseville of Quebec opened a Mission for the Canadians in a hall (Chaffee's Hall) in Rutland."

On April 20, 1869 he announced to the Canadians in Rutland that Rev. G. Gagnier would by himself or others, attend to their spiritual needs as their pastor.

"On the same day I gave Confirmation in the Hall to forty two adult Canadians."

On April 30, 1869, he wrote: "Rev. J. A. Boissonnault arrives today and goes to Rutland as Coadjutor to Rev. L. G. Gagnier."

And, on May 8, 1869, "Rev. J. H. Pelletier of the Diocese of Quebec arrives to devote himself to the Canadian Mission."

On September 27, 1870, "The Rev. F. E. Gendreau is appointed to take charge of Proctorsville, Ludlow, Chester, Springfield, Woodstock, Tyson's Furnace, etc."

This idea of gathering together a few priests to serve a central congregation and several out-Missions has been referred to as the "Oeuvre Canadien" or "Les Pretres Missionnaire." The reason for this, as we have already intimated, was the lack of Canadian priests to serve the Canadians scattered in various neighboring towns. As the number of priests grew in the diocese, this plan became unnecessary.

Many of the first priests in the diocese in the middle and late 1850's and 1860's had done this same thing. For example. Fathers Pieart and Lynch in West Rutland had as

Missions; Castleton, Fair Haven, and Poultney. Fathers Druon and Boylan of St. Peters had all the towns on the west side of the state between Pittsford to Bennington.

But by this means the priests visited these various settlements and kept in touch with the Catholics, bringing the Mass and the Sacraments, and their presence to these scattered Catholics, and keeping them within the fold of Holy Mother Church.

II Parish

When Father Gagnier took charge of the Canadian congregation in the village of Rutland much needed to be done. The parishioners who were scattered about the village had to be organized into an effective unit.

First of all a permanent place for Mass and other services had to be obtained until a church could be constructed. The place settled on was Chaffee's Hall on the corner of Merchants Row and Center Street. Masses were scheduled at 8:00 and 10:30 A.M.

There were French Canadian Catholics on the West side of the town also. With the arrival of Father's Boissonnault and Pelletier arrangements were made for Mass there.

In 1868 the Bishop had discovered in Fair Haven, Vt. that "there are many Canadian families here which seem to be very good, but have had so far, very few religious privileges." So, Father Boissonnault was asked by Father Gagnier to visit them every week for Mass and the Sacraments. He continued to reside in East Rutland, travelling back and forth on the Rutland and Whitehall Railroad.

French Canadians were also found in Southeastern Vermont. Father F. E. Gendreau who had come to Rutland as a "pretre missionnaire" began to visit these Catholics in Proctorsville, Ludlow, Chester, Springfield, Tyson's Furnace, etc.

Along with his other duties in caring for the spiritual welfare of these Catholic Canadians, Father Gagnier began to look around for property upon which to build a church. On June 19, 1869 he found such a piece of property. It was the W. S. Wardwell property on Lincoln Avenue. It was the second lot south of Grant Avenue. It measured

71' on Lincoln Avenue and 150' deep toward Nichols Street. This lot was purchased from William and Mary Wardwell. On this lot the Wardwells had just built a two-story house. So, now a rectory was had. Immediately the priests began to occupy the house. The house lot had cost \$5,100.00. This same lot was bought by the Wardwells for \$1,100.00 from E. A. Morse on August 21, 1868.

The Rectory having been acquired, Father Gagnier felt he needed more land south of his lot to build his church. He bought another lot, 70' on Lincoln Avenue, and 150' deep for this purpose. The new church was soon begun, and began to be used on April 23, 1870. From then on Mass was offered at 10:30 A.M. every Sunday.

However, Father Gagnier was not remiss in his duties to West Rutland and Fair Haven. In West Rutland land was bought from the Sheldon and Slason Marble Company in 1869 on the Whipple Hollow Road that led to the Sheldon and Slason Mills and quarries. Here he began to build a church. On December 17, 1869 the Herald reported that "the work on the French Canadian Church is progressing very slowly....Father Gagnier of East Rutland will press the work to completion." And, so in 1870 this church was completed.

At the same time a church for the Canadians in Fair Haven was also being built. On September 19, 1870 Bishop DeGoesbriand "gave Confirmation to forty-five persons in the new Church of St. Louis", in Fair Haven.

So these two Missions of the Sacred Heart of Mary Church (Sacre Coeur de Marie) were well started.

The Bishop's Diary records that on October 11, 1869 the Rev. J. A. Boissonnault was appointed Pastor of the Canadian Church of St. Louis, with missions in Orwell, Benson and West Haven and sometime later Shoreham was added to this list.

One thing that disturbed the good Pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary was the education of the children of the Parish. Of course, French was spoken in the homes. Those children who went to the district schools were having

difficulties with the English in the schools.

So after giving this some thought, he corresponded with the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary at their convent in Hochelega, near Montreal. He entreated them for a few nuns to open a school for the Canadians in Rutland.

In January of 1870 some Sisters of this Order arrived and opened a school on Main Street in Rutland. So another of Father Gagnier's problems was solved. Very likely classes began in the Springtime (April) but on September 1, 1870, the school was open for the fall term.

The new parish was progressing well. But for reasons not recorded Father Gagnier, in the summer of 1870, asked Bishop DeGoesbriand for permission to leave the parish, and the diocese, to go to work in the Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts. Permission being given, he officiated at Sacred Heart of Mary Church for the last time on September 24, 1870. On October 1, 1870, the following Sunday, the Rev. Jerome M. Cloarec became the Pastor.

On September 27, 1870, the Bishop's Diary records that "I appointed the Rev. F. E. Gendreau to take charge of Proctorsville, Ludlow, Chester, Springfield, Woodstock, Tyson's Furnace, etc." And some time before this date the Rev. J. F. X. Pelletier was permitted to return to his home diocese of Quebec.

Thus the "Oeuvre Canadien" or "les pretres missionaire" came to an end in Rutland. "It had done some good" says the Catholic Church in the New England States (pg. 546). "There was no longer any need of diocesan Missionaries." The Rev. F. E. Davison in his book Historical Rutland adds perhaps another reason, when he wrote that it was "found too expensive, and so the Missions were divided."

The Mission given in 1869, saw a gathering of the Canadians in Chaffee Hall of about 400 who came from all the surrounding towns. If the order of exercises were the same as that of a Mission at the Cathedral in April of 1863, they had the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at

5:00 A.M.; a lecture at 5:30 A.M.. Confessions were heard from 9:00 to 12:00 noon; from 3:00 to 7:00 P.M. and from 9:00 to 10:00 P.M. In the evening at 7:15 the Beads (Rosary) was recited, congregational singing and ended with Benediction.

Father Caissy had found about fifty families in the fall of 1868 living in East Rutland. But at the time that the Sacred Heart of Mary Parish was established, Hemingway, in her Gazeteer of Vermont Vol. III, page 1050, states that there were between sixty and one hundred Canadian families living in East Rutland.

The number of families continued to be about one hundred in 1871, with forty single persons. In 1874 there was a slight drop to eight-eight families. In 1876 Father Gelot reported that there were about "seventy families coming to church."

In 1877-1878 the Howe Scale Company moved from Brandon to Rutland. A great number of French Canadians who worked at the Howe Scale Company in Brandon moved to Rutland in these years.

In the Parish Report for 1877, Father Gelot reported one hundred thirty families and ten single persons. But the next year to quote Father Gelot, "There are more than two hundred families as I count all the French; but French Canadians attending to their duties are one-hundred fifty." In 1879 he reported two hundred families, and twenty unmarried men and eight single girls. But in 1884 he reported "two hundred thirty three, really French, and fifty-one mixed, with either a Yankee or Irish spouse."

There was a drop in the number of families in 1885 to one hundred thirty but from 1886 there was an increase to two hundred fifty families and every year after that there was a small but steady increase. In 1887 there were about two hundred seventy five families, in 1888, two hundred sixty three families; in 1890, two hundred seventy five families; in 1893, between two hundred fifty and two hundred seventy five families. The number stayed the same for the next several years.

However, in 1898 a new element was added. Father

Proulx, who spoke Italian, reported "Italians for baptisms and marriages only." Four Italian families belonged to the parish. In 1899 there were two hundred sixty nine French speaking families and two Italian families. In 1901 he reported two hundred forty French speaking families, five Italian families and one Polish family. In 1902 there were two hundred thirty two French speaking families and twelve Italian families in the parish. In 1906, the Parish members were two hundred sixty five French speaking families, seventeen Italian families and one Hungarian family.

However, in 1906 the Rev. Francis Crociata came to Rutland to found an Italian parish. So in 1907 Father Proulx reported three hundred ten French speaking of which seventy are of no account, one American family, and one Italian family. Father Crociata's work around the Italians lasted until the fall of 1908. That year "three hundred ten French speaking families, of which seventy are nil, and eight Italian families" were reported.

In 1911 the total population of the parish was reported as 1,248. But in 1917 Father Proulx reported that "most all of the parishioners can speak English." Between 1921 and 1923, there were reported about 1,300 English speaking, in 1924 the number jumped to 1,500, and until 1951 the number varied between 1,200 and 1,500 English speaking parishioners. In the early 1940's, it is remembered that Father Vezina stated that less than 5% of his parishioners at that time could understand French.

In 1951 the number of parishioners grew from 1,975 souls until in 1958 there were 2,514 persons alone.

Even though the French Canadian Missions in Fair Haven and southeastern Vermont were given to other pastors in 1869 and 1870, Sacred Heart of Mary Parish had at times, other Missions attached to it, settled principally by French Canadians.

The first one that was mentioned in the report of Father Hervé Cardinal for 1871 was the Catholics of Sutherland Falls where there were forty families. After that date Father O'Reilly of St. Bridget's Parish in West Rutland

attended these Catholics until 1879 when the Sutherland Fall's Catholics became the charge of the Pastor of Brandon.

Briefly in December 1874, Ludlow and Proctorsville were served from Sacred Heart of Mary Parish in Rutland.

In 1876, the Catholics of Pittsford were transferred to the care of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish. The Rutland Herald of December 24, 1877 reported that there was a Midnight Mass at Sacred Heart so that the Pastor could go to Pittsford for Christmas Day Mass, or Masses. In 1878 there were one hundred Catholic families in Pittsford; in 1880, one hundred twenty-five; in 1881, one hundred twenty families. Father Jerome Gelot attended these Catholics until 1885 when Father Glynn, Father Boylan's assistant, came here to offer Mass every second Sunday.

In his 1881 annual report Father Jerome Gelot listed the following Missions attended from Sacred Heart Parish: Pittsford - 120 families; West Rutland - 110 families; Bennington - 55 families; Pownal - 42 families; Glastonbury - 18 families; and Montpelier - 45 families. In 1883, Father Gelot stated that there were about five hundred families in the various missions attached to the Rutland Canadian Parish. During these years Father Jerome Gelot had as his assistant his own brother, Father John Marie Gelot.

The Mission to Montpelier was of short duration, until the Montpelier Catholics were given another pastor. The priest in North Bennington was given charge of the Bennington Canadians in 1885.

Pownal and Glastonbury Canadians were soon placed under the charge of Father Brauillet, a priest from Albany, New York who came to work in Vermont. It might be interesting to note that tracks for the Glastonbury Railroad were being laid in 1872. The Bishop's Diary of June 17, 1880 mentioned "Ivicites Glastonbury, twenty-five families of Canadian (wood) choppers."

The Sacred Heart of Mary Parish was assigned one other Mission by Bishop DeGoesbriand when Father N. Proulx succeeded Father Caissy. In 1887 St. Louis of France Church in Fair Haven was returned to the care of Sacred Heart Parish. In September, 1888 it was made a Mission of Poultney until

it became a parish in 1892 with Father John M. Gelot as its Pastor.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, for the French Canadians of West Rutland continued to be a Mission of the Sacred Heart of Mary Parish from 1869 to January 9, 1960, when it was transferred to the care of St. Bridget's Parish, West Rutland. At this same date, St. Robert's Mission Church in Chittenden, Vermont became attached to Sacred Heart of Mary (now called Immaculate Heart of Mary) Church.

When Sacred Heart of Mary Parish was established in 1869, for about one year, Sunday Masses were offered in Chaffee's Hall. This Hall, of course, was rented by the parish. Meanwhile Father Gagnier bought property on Lincoln Avenue with a house for a rectory, and began to construct a church for the French Canadians on this same property. It was to be a good size church, seating five hundred persons.

But all this cost money. The lot and house cost \$5,100. and, according to Child's Gazeteer and Business Directory for Rutland County - 1881-1882, the church cost \$6,000.

How was this considerable amount of money raised? No annual report for the year 1869 and for three quarters of 1870 was found among the diocesan records. But we can be certain that Father Gagnier, practical man that he was, used the means that were in common practice in those days to fund the building of churches, i.e., church collections, subscription fund drives, a week-long bazaar, perhaps a picnic, donations, and a loan from a bank. It was not unknown that a pastor who had some savings of his own, contributed whatever he was able to towards the expense.

The first report that was found was for the last quarter of the year 1870. Father Jerome M. Cloarec succeeded Father Gagnier on October 1, 1870. For those last three months the total receipts were \$412.18. Collected as follows: Pew rent, \$240.50; Offertory, \$36.05; and Miscellaneous sources, \$103.93. In this report it was stated that the total debt on the parish was \$6,444.10.

On August 12, 1871 Father Hervé Cardinal, formerly of Burlington, succeeded Father J. M. Cloarec as Pastor of the Sacred Heart of Mary Parish. For the full year of 1871, the total

receipts were \$3,724.28 (Bew Rent, \$897.81; Offertory, \$165.89; Easter Collection, \$100.00; Fair or Bazaar, \$325.00; Donations, \$254.00; Subscription Drive, \$778.06; and borrowed money, \$1,500.), but the total debt had decreased. It was now \$5,414.00.

One must remember that working men in these days received only \$1.00 a day for wages. However, in 1873 a general Depression struck the United States, and its effects were gradually felt here.

In 1873 Father Cardinal reported only about forty families in the parish, so many had left town. The total receipts that year were only \$479.59, while the expenses were \$550.00. In 1874 the condition of the parish was a little better as there were about eighty-eight families, and this dropped again by 1876 to seventy families coming to church. The total receipts this latter year were \$1,207.00, while the expenses were \$1,118.00.

In 1877 when the Howe Scale Company moved from Brandon to Rutland, bringing a number of French Canadians to Sacred Heart, the number of families increased to one hundred thirty. But the receipts for the year were only \$1,517.48, while the expenses were \$1,609.00.

Father Jerome Gelot succeeded Father Cardinal as Pastor on September 1, 1874. It was evidently during his pastorate that the effects of the Depression were heavily felt in the Town of Rutland, Bishop DeGoesbriand in his Diary notes that "everything is going well through poverty and trials." For those who worked in the marble industry, the Rutland Herald of December 15, 1875 reported that "a large number of the men have been discharged from the quarries, and wages have been greatly reduced, so that many are already feeling the need of employment for the winter to keep the wolf from the door." On January 26, 1876 the Herald reported that "business is at a standstill. Wages are very low. One firm stopped work for two months." As the marble business went, so did the other industries go in town, even the railroads.

Father Gelot in his 1878 report noted that there is "real poverty" at the Sacred Heart Parish. In his 1885 report he noted that "the people here live miserably poor." In this latter report he also noted "The financial prospects of the congregation are far from being bright. A new church will be

needed shortly unless repairs are made on the old one."

In 1879, Father Gelot reported that the income of the parish was as follows: Pew rent, \$1,856.00; Offertory, \$62.00; Easter collection, \$35.00; and miscellaneous sources, \$353.62, while the expenses were \$888.75. But the total debt was \$7304.00. Some years the expenses were greater than the income while other years the expenses equalled the income (1884, 1885, 1888).

On July 1, 1886, the Rev. George N. Caissy succeeded Father Jerome Gelot who was transferred to St. Raphael's Parish in Poultney, Vermont. The pastorate of Father G. N. Caissy lasted just about two years, until August 1888, when he resigned because of poor health. By the end of his pastorate the debt was down to \$4,027.30.

His successor was the Rev. Norbert Proulx, formerly of Newport, who, the Rutland Herald reported, was "thirty-five years old, a lively, energetic man." During his pastorate much good was accomplished in the Sacred Heart of Mary Parish. His pastorate lasted through the year 1919.

Even though the first twenty years of the Parish were difficult ones financially, spiritually these years saw much good accomplished.

Bishop DeGoesbriand to encourage these Canadian Catholics through their trials, was a frequent visitor at the church. Not only did he come to help found the parish on April 20, 1869, but he was here again on April 23, 1871; June 28, 1873; May 31, 1874; May 29, 1877; February 9, and November 17, 1878; June 11 and July 18, 1880, besides being here yearly from 1881 to 1886 and the years that followed.

During these years the parishioners had the privilege of Sunday Mass Vespers and Benediction, besides the girls who attended the school conducted by the Sisters of the Holy Name of Jesus where they were instructed in their religion, as well as in other useful subjects. Catechism classes were held every Sunday afternoon at 3:00 P.M. for the other girls and all the boys who attended the district schools.

The children were prepared for their first Holy Communion during these classes.

The children as well as the adults who were prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, regularly were administered

this Sacrament, the first time being April 20, 1869 when forty-two adults were confirmed. Confirmation was administered to eighty-nine persons on June 29, 1873; to ninety-five on May 29, 1877; forty-two on November 17, 1878; to fifty-eight on July 9, 1880; to eighty-five on July 17, 1883; to thirty-eight on November 25, 1884; etc. In other words, he was here practically every year of these first twenty years for Confirmation.

In the fall of 1870 Bishop DeGoesbriand established the "Devotion of the Forty Hours" in the Diocese of Burlington. This Devotion was instituted in Milan, Italy by St. Philip Neri. It was introduced into the United States by the saintly Bishop John N. Neumann, C.S.S.R. of Philadelphia in the 1850's. The Devotion consists of the solemn exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for forty hours, in memory of the time Christ's Sacred Body lay in the tomb, from Good Friday to Easter Morn. It's purpose was that of making reparation for sin and begging for God's graces. It includes special Masses on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday mornings, with a procession with the Blessed Sacrament on the first and closing days, and the recitation on these days of the Litany of the Saints.

The first recorded Devotion of the Forty Hours at the Sacred Heart of Mary Parish was on May 13, 1872 during the pastorate of Father Cardinal. He had invited Bishop Amadeus Rappe, (the retired Bishop of Cleveland, Ohio who came to work in the diocese of his friend, Bishop DeGoesbriand), to preach during the Forty Hour's Devotion. Over the years this Devotion was held yearly at Sacred Heart Parish. It was usual to hold these services in the Spring (month of April). Masses were offered at 5:30 A.M. and 9:00 A.M., with devotions in honor of the Blessed Sacrament at 7:30 P.M. that included a sermon and Benediction.

Another devotion to deepen their faith and the knowledge of it, is what we Catholics call "The Parish Mission." This usually runs a week at a time, or when the circumstances warrant it, two weeks, one week for the men and another for the women. In these days they usually consisted of Masses at 5:30 and 7:00 or 9:00 in the morning (at 5:30 A.M. because of the early hour that they went to work every day) followed by a sermon and confessions. In the evening at either 7:00 or 7:30 there would

be a sermon, the Rosary, Benediction, and Confessions. The first of these parish missions held at Sacred Heart of Mary was already reported back on Page six and ten.

Other parish missions were also held in these early days. On November 1, 1878, a Mission preached by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate opened at Sacred Heart of Mary. During this Mission five hundred thirty received Holy Communion. Soon afterwards another was held preached by these same Oblate Fathers in April of 1879 at which seven hundred forty Communion were distributed. "A greater part of the congregation received twice." Another was held on May 4, 1881 and closed May 15, 1881. The Masses were at 7:30 A.M. and 10:00 A.M. The parish report of 1888 mentions another parish Mission conducted by the Oblate Fathers from March 17 to 31, 1888. These Missions continued to be held every few years down to the present time. Much good for souls was done during these missions. Some who had ceased to practice their faith came back to its practice; others who had been, let's say, careless about its practice became more fervent; and the fervent received reasons and help to remain fervent. In other words, nearly everyone who attended a parish mission grew stronger in their faith and its practice.

Of course, we cannot over-emphasize the good that was accomplished in these early days by the resident priests of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish. Their charity towards the poor and the troubled, their faithful performance of their duties, and their kindly presence are now receiving their just due in Heaven.

Not mentioned so far in this chapter were the Curates that Father G. N. Caissy had during his two years as Pastor of Sacred Heart, they were the Rev. J. A. Dugast and the Brothers, Rev. Frederick Paquet and the Rev. Joseph Paquet, all originally from Montreal.

Before we write "finis" to these first twenty years, it should be mentioned that Father Jerome Gelot purchased St. Joseph Cemetery from Hiram S. and Lucy Stratton for \$1,245.00 in April of 1882. It contained eight acres of land.

On September 1, 1888, the Rev. Norbert Proulx arrived at Sacred Heart of Mary Parish. Although he retained the Mission Church of Sacred Heart of Jesus in West Rutland, he would not have an assistant, that is, he would be all alone.

There was one minus factor found in the parish. The existing Church was not in too good a condition. Earlier we quoted Father Gelot who informed the Bishop; "A new church will be needed shortly, unless repairs are made on the old one." Besides, the church was too small for the existing congregations. A debt on the parish still existed.

All the other factors in the parish were to the good. There were about two hundred seventy families belonging to the parish. Mass attendance as well as Catechism attendance were good, the effects of the 1873 Depression were over with, and it did not take long for the young pastor to ingratiate himself with his new parishioners.

Soon there was a new mood, a new spirit in the parish. They began to contribute more generously to the parish, at the gentle prodding of the new pastor. For example in the 1890 report to the Bishop, the income for the year was \$4,013.81; pew rent, \$1,804.48; Offertory, \$123.10; Easter collection, \$182.00; Bazaar, \$200.85; Subscription drive, \$702.00; and borrowed money, \$700.00, while the expenses were \$3,123.01. The parish's total indebtedness was now \$3,247.30.

In spite of the repairs that had been made, the old church was still old and too small. So Father Proulx began in earnest to make plans for a new substantial church. The first thing that he did was to buy the property on the east side of the old church property so that the parish owned the land between Lincoln Avenue and the new Nichols Street. This new property was bought on January 31, 1891. Shortly thereafter the parishioners heard him announce the new acquisition and his plans for a new church to be built of stone. "As soon as the frost leaves the ground" he said, "the foundation for the new church will be laid."

The congregation became very enthusiastic about their new House of God. They recognized the need for it. And to add more permanency to their Parish, they ought to have a substantial edifice just like the other churches in Rutland.

The lay members of the parish entered wholeheartedly into the plans of the Pastor and immediately started to make plans to raise the needed monies.

First the Easter collection rose to \$1,013.50 that year. Next it was decided to have an annual bazaar in order to raise

additional funds. The first one beginning on September 14, 1891, and lasting for ten days, raised \$2,759.00. It was held at the Town Hall.

Work was to begin on the foundation of the church later in the spring, but was put off until early fall, and it was hoped to have this much of the work finished before the year was up. The building was to be about 150' by 60'.

Actually the foundation was completed by the middle of June, 1892, and the cornerstone was blessed by Bishop Michaud on August 28, 1892 before a very large crowd which included members of all the various denominations in Rutland.

Another of the annual bazaars took place beginning on September 26, 1892 at the Town Hall. This year a total of \$2,637.38 was realized. The Pew rent was \$1,833.15; the Offertory and Easter collections amounted to \$2,826.25. The new building costs for the year were \$8,204.08. This year Father Proulx did not take any salary. The deficit for the year was \$626.23; and Father paid out \$1,000.00 out of his own pocket. The total debt for 1892 was down to \$2,948.00.

So, thus far the generosity of the parishioners, as well as Father Proulx, had seen this much of the work done without going further into debt.

By June 29, 1893 the stone walls had been raised and the wooden roof ready for slating had been finished. The twin "towers were already several feet about the roof."

But on August 29, 1893 a freak hurricane snapped the wooden beams of the tower as well as the staging, causing them to fall on the rectory, practically demolishing the latter. Father Proulx moved into the house at 3 Lincoln Avenue.

On November 7, 1893 the work of slating the roof of the church was finished, and the windows were being installed. Work began on the interior of the church and was progressing rapidly.

The workmen began to get the basement ready for Mass, and the first Mass in the basement was the Midnight Mass.

Before the end of the year the old church was sold at an auction for \$150.00.

This year of 1893 was understandingly an expensive year. The new building had cost \$16,149.03. The parish had had to

borrow about \$10,000, besides Father Proulx's donation (\$1781.00) to balance the accounts for the year. The annual parish bazaar had added \$1754.00 to the receipts.

But the church was fast nearing completion. The plastering was soon finished, the ornamentation of the walls completed, and the pews were installed. On June 24, 1894 the new bells in the southwest tower were blessed.

On July 4, 1894 the new church was finished and the church was dedicated to the service of God on July 4, 1894 by Bishop Michaud, of Burlington.

A new rectory on Nichols Street was purchased in October for \$3800.00 from Mrs. Emma Murdick.

In spite of the continued generosity of the parishioners, the church debt mounted. The Parish bazaar amounted to \$1227.00, a special collection brought in \$261.12; donations, \$1193.00; Subscription drive, \$549.00. But the total amount spent on the new church in 1894 was \$14,144.09, and Father Proulx had again generously donated his years salary.

We can well imagine the satisfaction not only of the parishioners but also of the good Father Proulx at seeing the completion of this new and beautiful church.

The parish revenue continued high during the remainder of the 1890's and by 1900 the total indebtedness of the parish was down to \$17,000.00; in 1902 it decreased to \$15,150.00.

In 1904 the church property was valued as follows: Church, \$40,000.00; Rectory, \$3,500.00; land of the church and rectory, \$2,500.00; and the cemetery (8 acres) at \$1,600.00.

By 1907 the parish debt was \$9,365.10. This year a receiving vault at the cemetery cost \$1,265.00 and electric lights were installed between the church and rectory.

In 1910 the debt was paid off, except for the amount owed to Father Proulx (\$3,000.00) and his sister, Marie Proulx (\$600.00). Father Proulx then began to build up a savings account for the parish. By 1919 the parish was entirely free of debt.

We must not come to the conclusion that all of Father Proulx's time was spent on the church. He had been out among his parishioners. Since 1890 the Catechism classes were held on Saturdays. In 1889 he began "Les Dames de St. Ann" (the St. Ann's Society).

The St. John the Baptist Society had continued since 1880 in Father Gelot's day. The Children of Mary Society had been started as well as the Apostleship of Prayer.

Father Proulx left Sacred Heart of Mary Parish on March 26, 1920 to become Pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Burlington. He was succeeded by the Rev. Jean Marie Billon. Father Billon remained only until December 2, 1920, when the Rev. L. Albert Vezina became the Pastor.

For twenty-seven years this good priest served as Pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish, as well as the Sacred Heart of Jesus Mission Church in West Rutland.

From time to time Father Vezina continued to make further improvements in the church, as the money became available. An organ fund, gathered through monthly collections, made possible the purchase of a Pipe Organ in 1921. In 1924, Father Vezina began to collect a fund for a new heating system. By 1929 this amounted to \$6,956.40, and, in 1930 the new heating system was installed. In 1922 he began a fund for a new school. The first year's collection amounted to \$394.70. In 1933 this fund had grown to \$28,651.64. This was invested and drew interest from the banks. But about this time the collections seemed to cease.

By 1921 the total parish money in savings amounted to \$4,625.27. The parish revenue was more than the expenses. In 1922, the income was \$7,294.27 and the expenses were \$6,899.37. In 1927 the receipts were \$8,978.34, while the expenses amounted to \$6,432.60. And so each year the surplus receipts were invested until, when Father Vezina died in 1947, there was over \$58,000.00 in the parish treasury. By this time the parish properties and buildings were valued at \$300,000.00.

Catechism classes were held every Sunday afternoon for an hour and a half in the church basement. These classes were taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph, and had been ever since Father Proulx's time. In 1925 they received \$154.00 for their services. In 1938 there were one hundred sixty-nine pupils. It is recalled that a number of the boys and girls of Sacred Heart Parish attended the two parochial schools in the city.

Mount Saint Joseph Academy opened it's doors to boys as well as girls in September 1927. In the beginning very few

children of the parish attended Mount Saint Joseph. For example, in 1932 very few attended the Academy as the parish tuition bill was only \$50.00. But, in 1935 the parish paid out \$330.00 in tuitions to the Academy. In 1944 the amount paid out in tuitions by the parish was \$528.00. No doubt some families paid the tuition for their own children.

With the advent of Bishop Matthew F. Brady as Bishop of Burlington, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine was established in the diocese. Renewed emphasis was given to the Religious Education within the parish. In 1941 there were two hundred five members in the CCD. This number not only included the grammar and high school students, but a number of adults as well. After the regular school of religion throughout the year, the grammar school children were expected to attend the Religious Vacation School, held at first, for four weeks in the mornings during the summer. In 1943 there were one hundred twenty-seven students eligible for these classes, taught by the Assistant Pastor, Father Gelineau, and two Sisters of St. Joseph. In this same year, the High School of Religion was attended by fifty-eight high school students. In 1945, four nuns taught these Sunday afternoon classes. The curate taught the high school classes.

The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine also conducted classes for the adults of the parish in the form of Discussion Clubs. A number of adults took advantage of these classes to learn more about their religion. One of the several popular texts in use by the adults was the booklet entitled The Altar and Sanctuary.

The Forty Hour's Devotion continued to be held about the second week of April each year. Father Vezina invited several of the neighboring priests to help with the hearing of confessions, as well as with the devotions on Sunday and Monday evenings.

To the already existing societies in the parish were added the Holy Name Society and the Holy Rosary Society. The St. Anne's Society, which had one hundred members in 1921, grew to two hundred forty-nine in 1941. A yearly novena and later on a tridium, was held before St. Ann's feast, July 26. The Holy Name Society grew to one hundred eighty-five men by 1941.

The Novena of the Sorrowful Mother was introduced in 1940.

This Novena was held on all the Fridays of the year. It proved very popular with the parishioners during World War II. On Fridays, for the Novena services, the church would be filled.

The parish population during these years remained quite constant, either slightly below or slightly above, thirteen hundred souls. Although most of them now spoke English, yet there was a number of the older people who still could understand and speak French. Practically all of the parishioners were of French descent.

By the late 1930's, the church began to need some repairs and redecoration. In 1937, Father Vezina repaired the roof of the church as well as the front steps. In 1939 the interior of the church was extensively redecorated. This work was finished in 1940. The year 1942 saw a new furnace installed.

But over the years Father Vezina did not neglect the care of the cemetery. A Perpetual Care Fund had been started. In 1927 the fund had grown to \$2,778.81. But, by 1946 the fund had reached \$14,797.89.

During all of these years Father Vezina had the help of other priests in the running of the parish. In the 1920's and 1930's, priests of the Society of St. Edmund, especially those from St. Michael's College, came on week-ends to help with the hearing of confessions, and the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The Masses during these years were at 8:00 and 10:15 A.M. One Mass was also celebrated in the Mission Church in West Rutland. Later in the 1940's he had full-time assistants, among whom were Father Edward Gelineau, Walter Charland, and Charles Marcoux.

No part of the administration of the parish was neglected. The parish's physical, as well as the spiritual, had been in good hands. But alas, as with all mortals, death came to this valiant Servant of God. On January 21, 1947 death came and took him to one of his "Heavenly Father's Mansions."

The parish administration then passed into younger hands. The Rev. Alfred L. Desautels shortly thereafter was named as Pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish.

When he arrived he found the parish property in good shape. In his first parish report, 1947, he wrote that the parish had thus far saved \$53,873.70 in savings accounts, \$5,800.00 in

government bonds, and \$13,500.00 from the estate of the late Father Vezina.

He began thinking of a parochial school. With this in mind he bought the property and house at 10 Lincoln Avenue on September 25, 1947 for \$16,000.00. In 1948 a fund drive among the parishioners raised \$25,701.00 for the school.

But before a school could be opened he had to have Nuns. Since Father Desautel's own sister was a member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, he asked them for nuns to staff such a school. And he obtained the promise of the nuns he would need.

Having obtained the nun's to teach in the school, he began to repair and improve the house at 10 Lincoln Avenue. The house was completely renovated. New furnishings were bought and school supplies were obtained. The Sister's Convent was on the second floor whereas the school would be on the first floor.

On September 8, 1948, the Sacred Heart of Mary School opened it's doors to twenty pupils in the kindergarten and twenty-seven in the first grade. In 1949 a second and third grade were added. This year the number of pupils grew to one hundred four, with four nuns teaching.

In 1950, after moving the old school house back towards Nichols Street, the construction of the new school, of the now named Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, was planned. On May 14, 1950 ground was broken for the new school. This fall two more grades were added to the school. Some of the classes were held in the church basement, with a complement of one hundred eighty-five pupils.

The school year of 1951-1952 found the new school ready for a full eight grades. On April 10, 1950, the house on 12-14 Nichols Street, opposite the rectory, was bought from Mary M. Delpha for the convent for \$16,000.00. Some repairs and new furnishings were bought and the new convent was ready for occupancy before the opening of the fall term in 1951.

In 1950 there had been one hundred eighty-five children in the school and in 1951 the number increased to two hundred forty-six. From that year on, the number of children increased each year until in 1958 there were four hundred twenty-seven attending the school.

Early in Father Desautel's pastorate a new policy was put into effect. Whereas previously this parish embraced the persons of French descent, now any and all, regardless of nationality, were counted as parishioners. The use of French, although only at one Mass, ceased to be spoken. English only was used. The school was a great drawing card for the young couples within the vicinity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. This will explain why after 1951, when there was 1,951 souls in the parish, their numbers rose to 2,514.

Either late in 1948 or early in 1949, the official title of the parish was changed from Sacred Heart of Mary to Immaculate Heart of Mary. The reason for the change was because in 1945, Our Holy Father, the Pope, had extended to the universal church the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This was prompted by the renewed interest in the apparitions of Mary at Fatima in 1917 in Portugal.

In 1947, the Bishop of Fatima blessed a second statue of Our Lady of Fatima (the original is at the Shrine in Fatima) on October 13, 1947. This statue was taken on a tour of the United States and Canada. This statue came to Rutland in the fall of 1948. All the Catholic parishes in the vicinity had delegations in a large procession through Rutland in honor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. "The Pilgrim Statue" as it was called, was at each Rutland church for one day while services were held at 3:30 P.M. and 7:30 P.M. A High Mass was sung at 10:30 A.M. in each church on successive days. Great crowds turned out for the procession and church services. The "Pilgrim Virgin" came here from similar honors in Bellows Falls and, after three days in Rutland, was then taken to Bennington for like devotions.

Soon after this popular expression of devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Father Desautels requested the Most Reverend Bishop, Edward J. Ryan, to change the name of the church.

Late in the pastorate of Father Desautels the Mission Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in West Rutland was transferred to the care of St. Bridget's Church in West Rutland. This transferral occurred on January 9, 1960. On this same

date, the new Mission of St. Robert's in Chittenden was attached to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish. Catechism classes began to be held in Chittenden in 1959. The census of the Mission showed eighty-nine persons in the town. In 1961, the number of souls in this Mission increased to one hundred five, but in 1967 some two hundred seventy-five souls were counted as belonging to this Mission.

On June 18, 1962, the soul of Father Desautels passed from this earth to his eternal reward. During his tenure of nearly fifteen years, he was assisted by the following curates: the Reverends Joseph Lovenbury, Raymond Blais, Peter Rousseau, Robert Whalen, Edward Hart, Donald Ritchie, and Frank Warzocha. Each served his term of apprenticeship before moving on to another assignment.

Within a few weeks after the death of Father Desautels, the Rev. Leo Poirier was appointed to succeed him. Father Poirier had been pastor of St. Amadeus Parish in Alburg for twenty-six years.

During his pastorate, Father Poirier had the help of assistants, namely, at first the Rev. Donald Ritchie and the Rev. Frank Warzocha, and later the Rev. Michel St. Pierre.

During the first year of Father Poirier's pastorate, the present rectory was bought (18 Lincoln Avenue), and after some remodelling, the priests moved from 13 Nichols Street to 18 Lincoln Avenue. The old rectory became an apartment house, the second such apartment building owned by the parish.

Vatican Council II took place during the days of Father Poirier and some liturgical changes were introduced as they were approved by Rome. An Altar facing the people was placed before the old High Altar. Some English began to be used in the Mass.

To bolster the parish revenues, a weekly Bingo was started. In 1961 and 1962, a parish Minstrel Show proved a great success.

Also, of note, Miss Catherine Culver, a stalwart of the parish, received the "Benemerinti" medal from the Pope, because of outstanding work in the parish.

Father Poirier died on September 24, 1965. He was succeeded early in October 1965 by the Rev. Omer Dufault.

Liturgical changes in the Mass were being made with the approval of the Church. More English in the Mass was part of these changes.

The Parish Pastoral Commission was begun during Father Dufault's pastorate. This commission was a group of parishioners selected by its (parish) members, to meet monthly with the Pastor to act as an advisory board in the administration of the parish.

In conjunction with the Protestant churches in the city, an attempt was made to provide Sunday services for the skiers at Killington and Pico ski areas. Father Dufault, for the Catholics, rented the Protestant church in Sherburne, Vermont, just east of these ski areas, in which to have a Saturday evening Mass for them.

Immaculate Heart of Mary School had been holding it's own. But during his years at Immaculate Heart a shortage of vocations to School Sisters of Notre Dame began to be felt. First one Sister was withdrawn, necessitating the hiring of a lay teacher. For example, in 1968 there were four nuns and three lay teachers in the school. While the nuns received a salary of \$1,200.00 a year, the lay teachers were paid about \$5,000.00. The total costs of the school were listed as \$32,535.00. Reports began to appear in the Rutland Herald that there was the possibility of Immaculate Heart School closing, due to high costs. These reports and rumors caused parents with children in the school to begin to make arrangements at the other Catholic Schools or at a public school for the September term, 1968.

But at this time plans also were being made to give a more intensive CCD program for the children who attended the public schools.

However in the summer of 1968 Father Dufault asked the Bishop for a year's leave of absence to go away for further study. The request was granted. And on September 4, 1968 he was replaced by the Rev. John F. Orzel, a native of West Rutland, and a recently retired Army Chaplain who was appointed to succeed Father Dufault.

In spite of rumors, the school continued to operate for the school year of 1968 and 1969, but the enrollment was down.

Father Orzel continued the skiers Mass on Saturday evenings at Sherburne, Vermont, besides attending the Mission Church of St. Robert's in Chittenden.

Father Orzel was assisted by Fathers James Dunn and Samuel S. Mayhall.

However Father Orzel's pastorate at IHM was a brief one, lasting only nine months. When Msgr. Valentine Michulka, for nearly sixty-five years, the Pastor-founder of St. Stanislaus Parish in West Rutland, died on February 3, 1969, Father Orzel, because of his ability to speak Polish, was named to succeed him. And, so on March 20th Father Orzel left IHM Parish.

He was succeeded by the Rev. Donald C. Kelly, who had been Pastor of St. Alphonsus Parish in Pittsford.

The question of the school had to be decided. Because the costs had mounted (and also because the parish had been paying up to now 20% of the operating costs of Mount Saint Joseph, these costs jumping to 30% in 1970) besides the tuition for IHM students at MSJ the parish revenues had been falling behind the expenses of the parish. Meetings of the Parish Pastoral Commission advised Father Kelly that steps should be taken to close IHM after the school year of 1968-1969. The Diocesan School Board met with the Parish Pastoral Commission and, as a result of the meeting, the Diocesan Board recommended the closing of the school. With this decision, the Bishop concurred.

So after twenty years of existence the Immaculate Heart of Mary School closed it's doors, and the Nuns went back to their Mother House in Baltimore for other assignments.

In 1969-1970 the school building was used for the Catechism classes.

In the fall of 1970 the building was rented to the City of Rutland for an agreed upon sum. It has been used by the school for the retarded and other special classes by the City of Rutland School System.

Because of a vote of the parishioners the Sunday Masses which had been Saturday at 5:15 P.M., Sunday at 7:30 A.M.; 9:30 A.M.; and 11:00 A.M and 5:00 P.M., were changed to: Saturday at 5:15 P.M. and Sunday at 8:00 A.M.; 9:30 A.M.; 11:30 A.M. and 5:15 P.M.

Father Kelly was assisted in his duties by the Reverends Edward Mahoney and James Beauregard.

III. The Church

The earliest reference to Mass among the French Canadians in Rutland, by a Canadian priest is to be found in The Catholic Church in New England (Vol. II pg. 545): "In 1853 Father Quevillan came from Burlington and said Mass in Joseph Mailhiot's house, and from that time came every three or four months and said Mass in the old Court House (on Main Street). Towards the end of 1854, Father Z. Druon came to reside in Rutland, and build old St. Peter's Church. Here the French united with the English-speaking Catholics."

From 1854 until 1869 the French Canadians belonged to St. Peter's Parish.

But on April 20, 1869 the Rev. Louis N. Gagnier became the first pastor of the Sacred Heart of Mary Parish. From that date until April 16, 1870, the congregation gathered for Mass at Chaffee's Hall, which they rented. This Hall was situated on the corner of Merchants Row and Center Street. It was on the second floor of the building, on the Center Street side overlooking Center Street.

In 1867, Lincoln Avenue was laid out and opened for building. On this new and sparsely settled street a piece of property near Grant Avenue took Father Gagnier's eye. The property belonged to William and Mary Wardwell. On August 21, 1868 the Wardwells had bought this property from E. A. Morse for \$1,100.00. After acquiring the property the Wardwells built a house on the property. It was this property that Father Gagnier bought on June 18, 1869 at a cost of \$5,100.00. Because this amount of money was more than he had in the treasury at the time, a mortgage of \$2,500.00 was taken out on it. But this was paid off on September 24, 1870.

According to the deed this property was 71' along Lincoln

Avenue (about 200' from the corner of West Street) and 150' deep from the west side of Lincoln Avenue towards Nichols Street. It was bounded on the west by Lincoln Avenue, on the north and east by the lands of Edmund A. Morse and on the south by land belonging to Fletcher C. Sherwin.

The Wardwell house had been built on the northwest corner of the lot facing Lincoln Avenue. This was the house that became the rectory soon after Father Gagnier acquired it.

A little while later Father Gagnier bought the Fletcher property along the south boundry of the former Wardwell land. The piece of property measured 70' wide on Lincoln Avenue, and also was 150' deep along the south boundry of the church property.

With his plans already made, Father Gagnier began to build a church. This edifice was to be built just south of the rectory. It was to be 100' long by 50' wide. The front of the church was about 30' from Lincoln Avenue.

As was customary in those days, because the wages of the men were low (about \$1.00 per day), Father Gagnier must have had a subscription drive among the parishioners for the new church. The parishioners of St. Peter's had been having bazaars to raise money for their new church, towards which many of the Canadians had contributed, and no doubt in 1869 in probably the late summer, or early fall, these Canadians had a similar bazaar for their own new church. Perhaps other donations were also given. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that Father Gagnier also contributed towards the building of this House of God. The parish reports for the year 1869 and until September 1870, which are kept at the Chancery Office in Burlington, are missing from the Sacred Heart of Mary file. It seems more than likely that many of the men of the parish donated their time, perhaps a day a week, or a few evenings a week, toward the building of the wood-frame church.

While the church was in the process of being built, the Mass continued to be offered in Chaffee's Hall every Sunday at 8:00 A.M. and 10:30 A.M. Catechism classes were held there too on Sunday at 3:00 P.M., and Vespers at 7:00 P.M. This hall was used until April 16, 1870. On April 23, 1870 the new church was ready.

Sunday Mass from then on was at 10:30 A.M. while Catechism classes and Vespers were held at the church, at their usual hours.

The property on which the church was built was on an incline that sloped upwards from Lincoln Avenue to the back of the lot. Marble hitching posts lined Lincoln Avenue along the church property. To these horses could be tied while their owners were at church. A brick side-walk from Lincoln Avenue led to the church front door.

As a person stood on Lincoln Avenue and faced the church he saw this frame building covered with clapboards painted white. The main door was in the center of the front of the building surmounted by a tower or steeple, which no doubt housed a bell. On each side of the front door was a window to shed light on the 10' by 12' vestibule. The building rested on a marble foundation which protruded from the ground about 16". The outside walls of the church, about 100' long, had five windows equally spaced in the walls. The building had a pitched roof.

After walking up the brick sidewalk from Lincoln Avenue, one mounted about five steps which led to the front door. Opening the outside door one stepped into the 10' by 12' vestibule. Looking around the vestibule, one would see, on the south corner, a set of stairs which led to the choir loft.

Going straight across the vestibule another door opened on the church auditorium. On the wood floor, the varnished pews, which could seat 600, were made of Chestnut. One would notice the pillars which supported the roof. The walls were painted in such a color as if they were of natural wood. Colored glass was in the window frames.

At the back of the church auditorium, one on each side of the door, were two large woodburning stoves, which burned 4' cord-wood. The stovepipes, fastened near the ceiling, traveled the length of the auditorium. There was a confessional in each of the back corners of the church.

The choir loft was over the vestibule and the confessionals. A hand pump organ provided the music to sustain the choir. The air was pumped into the bellows of this organ by a long handle which protruded from one side of the organ. Some young man had

to keep pumping air into the bellows in order for the organ to be played. If he stopped pumping, there would be no air. This air was released from the bellows by playing the organ. On some of the long Glorias and Credos, the young man himself would be winded.

Along the interior walls of the church were found the Stations of the Cross. These were pictures of the various stations framed in black oak.

The Body of the Church was divided from the Sanctuary by an elevation of three steps and a varnished wooden altar rail. Several feet back of this rail stood the Main Altar, again on a raised platform so as to be easily seen by everyone in the church. This was an oak altar, varnished and ornamented with gold.

At a distance of several feet from each side of the Main Altar, there were two smaller altars. On the north side the altar had a statue of St. Joseph above it. The altar on the south side was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, with her statue above it. The wall above it was blue, decorated with gold stars.

The sanctuary contained a moveable pulpit. The pulpit was mounted on wheels. It was kept back to one side of the main altar when not in use, but rolled up close to the altar rail when it was to be used. It was entered by a two or three step ladder which was hinged to the floor of the pulpit, the steps being folded onto the floor of the pulpit when not in use.

Originally the church was lighted by kerosene lamps which were attached to the columns or pillars. There was one such lamp in the vestibule. There were lamps on each side of the main altar. Later these kerosene lamps were replaced by gas, the jets forming a circle around the pillars.

In back of the altars there were two rooms, one the priest's sacristy and the other a room for Catechism class.

After the closing of the girls school conducted by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary in 1883, Father Gelot tried to keep the school going by hiring a layman and a laywoman. To do this he divided the room used for catechism into two rooms. A second floor was added over the sacristy and class rooms to contain a large hall that served for parish

functions and as a meeting place for the St. John the Baptist Society.

In 1888 the seating capacity of the church was enlarged by the addition of balconies on each side of the church auditorium. They were at the same height as the choir-loft and extended along each wall for about 40'.

(This discription of the old church is taken from:
L'Histoire des Canadiens de Rutland, pas M.O. Freniere, 1930)

Through the years since 1870 the wear and tear on the building went on. Every few years it needed painting. Other repairs had to be made. Sometimes, because there was not enough money, these repairs had to be put off and since "a stitch in time saves nine" the repairs mounted and were more costly. Such had been the case. The parish was made up of poor families and the late 1870's and the early 1880's especially were difficult ones. In the report of 1885 Father Gelot wrote to the Bishop in his annual report: "The financial prospects of this congregation are far from being bright. A new church will soon be needed unless repairs are made on the old one."

Some repairs were made as well as improvements. But a church that was built to hold 600 in 1870, in the 1880's because of the increased population, soon taxed the strength of the old building causing further need of greater repairs.

When Father Proulx arrived in the parish, he was soon apprised of the need of a new substantial church. But first the debt had to be reduced. This he explained to the parishioners and brought about an increase in the revenue. In 1890 he began a parish Fair or Bazaar which brought in \$200.00, and he had a subscription drive which amounted to \$702.00. By these and various other money-raising affairs the debt was reduced from \$4,627.00 to \$3,247.00. Things were looking up!

Plans were formulating in Father Proulx's mind for a new church. But before anything else could be done, Father felt that he needed more land.

Mr. Edmund A. Morse owned the land that he wished to obtain. After a few conversations with him, Father bought "a piece of land on the corner of Grant Avenue and Lincoln Avenue. It was bounded on the north by Grant Avenue, 72' westerly from the

corner of Nichols Street; on the east by Nichols Street, 145' south from the Grant Avenue corner;; on the west by the lands of Mrs. C. C. Murdick and those of Mrs. Kay Meldon and the land formerly deeded to Father L. G. Gagnier." So now except for a strip of land on the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Grant Avenue Father Proulx had what he considered enough land. This land of Edmund A. Morse was bought on January 31, 1891. The price was \$1,600.00.

The architect, Geroge H. Guernsey, of Montpelier, after consulting with Father Proulx, drew up the plans for the new edifice.

Late in March 1891, Father Proulx announced his plans and the congregation became, as the Herald reported "enthusiastic".

"Mr. Hill of the True Blue Marble Company (of Whipple Hollow) had contributed a carload of stone. Other friends signified their willingness to help us." The new church would seat 900 people.

The parishioners became so enthused over the new church that they planned a ten day Bazaar, to begin September 14th to raise money for the project.

On September 14th and for the next ten days, the Town Hall, the site of the Bazaar, was a busy place. It was decorated with the Stars and Stripes and the French Tri-color. A number of booths were set up. Various articles were sold "everything from a wagon to a pin-cushion, from a wax doll to a coal stove." The booths contained fancy articles, refreshments, a gypsy booth, candy, ice cream, a lottery booth, etc.

On Wednesday, September 16th, the St. Caecilia Society of St. Peter's Church, Rutland, gave a concert at the Town Hall, amidst the Bazaar. Another concert this time given by a choir of thirty-six voices from Sacred Heart of Mary Church with Father Proulx, director, and Miss Bacon at the piano took place during the evening of September 21st. During this concert, the Rev. Joseph Brelivet of Northfield gave a bass solo which was well received.

The last evening of the Bazaar, a cast made up of local talent from the parish presented a French drama entitled

"Jean le Maudit" at the Opera House, which was well received.

As a result of this Bazaar the sum of \$2,759.00 was raised for the new church. The parishioners had worked hard for their new church.

Towards the last of September 1891, work began on the foundation of the church. Mr. Cassiner Douglas had been awarded the contract to build the foundation. The measurements of the foundation were 150' long by 60' wide.

Since the grounds slopped towards the west, the western walls (near Lincoln Avenue) were 14' to 15' high, and on the eastern end, or the back of the church, the foundation walls were 12' high. The walls were 3' to 6' thick, the 6' being at the southwest corner where the tower was built. Above the foundation there was an underpinning of rock-faced dark blue marble about 5' high (less at the rear of the building).

So at the end of 1891, Father Proulx had bought the land and seen the foundation nearly completed. The cost so far was \$2,984.00. And "the debt was \$100.00 less than one year ago."

Where exactly was this church placed on the property with respect to the existing buildings? The church was built just north of the old church. The rectory was moved. In 1891 it had "stood about where the center of the new church will be." The rectory had been moved to just about in front of the old church, in otherwords, just south of the front of the present church. It was intended to move the rectory, after the old church was torn down, to the site of the old church.

By the middle of June 1892 the foundation was completed. It contained two rooms. One room was 33' by 49'. A staircase in the northwest tower would be the entrance to this room. Another room in the basement was 21' by 32'. This last room was intended to be the choir rehearsal room. In the rear of the basement was the boiler room.

The blessing of the cornerstone was arranged for August 18, 1892. The Coadjutor Bishop, Stephen Michaud of Burlington conducted the ceremonies.

An outer floor covered the foundation. On the east end of the floor a platform held a chair for the Bishop, at which he changed his vestments for the blessing of the cornerstone.

In the center of the floor there was another platform from which the Bishop preached. The choir was on another platform south of this. The cornerstone was placed in position for the Bishop to bless. It was at the southwest end of the building, facing Lincoln Avenue.

The cornerstone was of rich blue marble, 4' and 3" long, and 2' and 6" deep. It bore the inscription on its face "Le Coeur Sacré de Marie - 1892". Under the stone there was a wooden box which contained the names of Pope Leo XIII; President Harrison; Governor Page; Chairman H. O. Carpenter, of the Village Selectmen; N. A. Bailey, the Village President; George H. Guernsey, the Architect; the Granite Construction Company, contractors; Father Proulx, and a copy of the French newspaper, "Le Nationale". After the blessing of the cornerstone, the Bishop spread the cement on it, and then four men placed the stone into position in the foundation. With Holy Water the Bishop sprinkled the stone and the four sides of the church. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament closed out the affair.

A great crowd of people were on hand, representing all denominations. The silver trowel, used by the Bishop, was later given to the person making the largest contribution.

The parishioners continued to work hard for their new church. On September 26, 1892, the French Catholic Fair opened at the Town Hall for two weeks. Again there were booths for various articles, "much as last year", everything from a coal stove to a pair of slippers, enough to stock a small store.

On the 28th of September a concert was given by the Howe Scale Band and a quartette. On the 29th a quartette composed of Misses Kenworthy, and Patnod, and Messrs. Cocklin and McKeough performed. A cornet solo was rendered by C. A. Collins and a solo by Miss Josie Tierney. This night there was a large attendance. On October 1st those who attended were treated to an oyster supper. On October 7th, the Howe Scale Band gave another concert.

On October 10th the Bazaar closed. Father Proulx thanked everyone for coming and attending the affair. \$2,637.00 was realized by this event.

While this was going on the workmen were raising the

walls of the church, and the wooden roof was on before the snows flew.

By the end of June the slating of the roof was started and the towers were already several feet above the roof.

But on August 29th, a catastrophe took place. Winds of hurricane force (the fagged out tail of the West Indian storm) struck Rutland. It was more wind than rain. And although there was little damage done in Rutland, the new church had considerable damage done to it.

The frame work for the spire and the large staging around it were blown to the ground. The accident happened shortly after 8:00 A.M. Fortunately the workmen were not working on the staging at that time. They stayed in a shed while the wind was so high. So no one was hurt.

Work had been going on on the spire for about one week. Eight spliced timbers, 75' long, had been placed in position in the tower.

The spire timbers were 8' x 10' pieces. One timber was 40' long while the other was 35', spliced together by a 3½" bolt. They were tapered from 6" to 8" at the bottom to 3" to 5" at the top. The entire spire was bolted to posts running down 40' into the stone-work at the corner of the building. The work was under the direction of J. R. Wilson, foreman of the contractors.

The velocity of the wind had picked up during the night. The structure swayed but it was thought that it would ride out the storm. But at 8:00 A.M. the force of the wind cracked the timbers and the spire toppled from its base and fell. The staging also broke where it had been spliced and the heavy timbers fell down upon the rectory, causing the house to be demolished.

Within a few days the work on the spires was continued. The slate work on the roof of the church was finished by November 7th.

The basement was gotten ready for Mass in October. The Stations of the Cross and furnishings were taken from the old church in order to use the basement for a church until the upstairs was completed. Everything was in readiness for the

first Mass in the new building on December 24th. The Christmas Midnight Mass was celebrated in the new edifice.

In the meantime the work of plastering the interior walls of the upper church got underway early in November. The window frames for the colored windows were put in, too. Soon the window panes were being put in. The work of plastering the interior walls was finished by late November. The decorators soon afterwards began their work.

A large terra cotta statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, made in Holland, was set in place over the front entrance towards the end of November.

In 1893 so much had been accomplished on the new church. Again it was a year of hard work for the parishioners. They generously gave of their time and money. The pew rent amounted to \$1,722.00; the offertory, \$2,157.00; Easter, \$174.00; the Bazaar brought in \$1,754.00. Father Proulx had to borrow \$9,075.00 besides putting \$1,781.00 of his own money. This year he had spent on the new building the sum of \$16,149.00. The parish societies had also put on money-raising affairs for the new church.

What happened to the old church? There seems to be two answers. It is clear that the old church was sold at auction. One story in the L'Histoire des Canadiens de Rutland, pas M. O. Freniere, 1930, contends that it was bought by Mr. David Guerin of Columbian Avenue for \$250.00. It was torn down by Mr. Frederick Freniere and the materials taken to Columbian Avenue with which Mr. Guerin built a house and barn while the rest of the debris was used as firewood.

The other story appeared in the Rutland Herald, January 1 and 11, 1894. It states that the church was sold at auction, "last Saturday afternoon (December 30, 1893) to Center Rutland Italians for \$150.00." The purchasers were to tear it down and remove it within two weeks. The January 11th issue of the Herald states, "The work of tearing down the old French church has begun. It will be moved to Center Rutland and be made into a tenement house by David Guerin". The annual parish report mentions, "the sale of the old building, \$150.00". It would seem that this latter story is the correct one.

The work of decorating the interior walls was rapidly progressing by late spring, 1894. There remained only the "figure painting and the ornamentation of the Sanctuary to finish." This part of the work was under the direction of Mr. M. S. Richer who had studied his art in Paris for five years. He was to paint five canvas panels, which still hang in the sanctuary to this day. These would be finished before the church was dedicated.

The stained glass had arrived by the end of June and were placed in their window frames that week.

On June 24, 1894 three bells were blessed by the Rev. Thomas J. Gaffney, pastor of St. Peter's Church, because Bishop DeGoesbriand was unable to come.

The three bells had been placed just inside the altar rail in front of the altar of the church. The large bell was placed in the center with each of the smaller ones on its right and left. The large bell was named Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. A second bell was named, Leo, Louis, and John Stephen. The third one was named Norbert after Father Proulx.

At 3:00 P.M. the ceremony began with a sermon, in French, by Father Proulx. Then Father Gaffney, acting as a delegate for Bishop DeGoesbriand, intoned the "Miserere" (Psalm 50) and followed it with shorter psalms. After these recitations the bells were incensed and then washed in Holy Water. He prayed that just as Our Divine Lord was awakened in the boat during the storm and calmed the sea, so too, these bells would invite the Christian people to the worship of God.

The next day, June 25, 1894, the bells were placed in position in the large tower on the southwest corner.

Sitting high on a hill east of the business section of Rutland, the new church's spires were visible from the west side of the city. The spire on the northwest tower reaches the height of 110'. The other spire on the southwest tower points skyward 170', making it 200' above the street level.

Looking at the church from Lincoln Avenue one would notice first the gentle slope of the terrain towards the west, and landscaping of the grounds.

The manmouth gothic edifice of blue marble, with the twin

spires on the front, was topped by a pitched slate roof. Its exterior measurements were 150' by 60'. Five arched windows could be seen on each sidewalk.

Midway between the two towers, a center door could be seen. Another entrance door would be found on the right side of the southwest tower. The lower part of the tower was circular in shape up to the height of 24'. At that point it would change to be octagonal.

Entering the main entrance one would find a vestibule. It stretched across the width of the church to a depth of 9'. In the northwest circular tower, a stairway leading to the basement, would be found.

Walking across the vestibule another door led to the body of the church (two other doors on either side of this center door led to side aisles). The body of the church was 118' long by 56' wide. Pews, about the same number as there are today, would stretch down the aisles to the Sanctuary, being able to seat 800.

Over the front entrance would be found a balcony (containing an organ) that would seat an additional 200. This balcony extended 20' over the main body of the church. Under the balcony, in the corners, there was a confessional on either side.

The long middle aisle led to the sanctuary. This was an elevated platform entered by ascending three steps. The sanctuary was octagonal in shape. On another elevated platform stood the main altar, situated in the back of the sanctuary, and visible to all in the church. The main altar was a richly ornamented wooden altar painted white. In one of the panels of the octagon sanctuary, on the south side of the main altar, there hung a canvas painted in oils depicting the "Nativity of Christ". While on a panel on the north side of the main altar there hung an oil painting of "Our Lady of the Rosary". In this latter painting Pope Leo XIII is represented in a kneeling position. In the ceiling over the main altar there was a painting of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

On each side of the sanctuary there were two side altars. The one on the south side of the building was dedicated to St.

Anne. Over it, attached to the wall was an oil painting on canvas of the Annunciation. The altar on the north side of the church was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Behind this altar there was another oil painting on canvas dedicated to the Flight into Egypt.

The statue of St. Joseph was on a pedestal in front of St. Anne's Shrine and slightly to its right.

The walls of the church had been tastefully decorated. The Stations of the Cross were found between the windows on the interior walls. Large columns supported the enormous roof of the church.

Behind the main altar there was a door which led to the sacristy or vestry. This was at the southeast corner and it was tri-angular in shape. The baptistry would be found in the sacristy.

On the southeast side of the body of the church there was, in front of the first pew, an aisle which led to a door which could be used either as an entry or exit not only for the people but also for the priest.

As the church neared completion Father Proulx began to make arrangements for its Dedication. Bishop Michaud would perform the ceremony and offer the Pontifical High Mass. The Right Reverend Louis F. Lafleche of the Diocese of Three Rivers, would preach the sermon in French while the Rev. D. J. O'Sullivan of St. Albans gave the English sermon. The date was set for July 4, 1894.

The Rutland Herald on July 5, 1894 thus described the ceremony:

"The beautiful Gothic Church of "Sacré Coeur de Marie" was dedicated yesterday with impressive ceremonies...

"Long before 9:00 A.M. the crowds began to gather on Lincoln Avenue. The St. John the Baptist Societies of Rutland and West Rutland marched to the church with the American and French flags flying.

..."When the chimes were still ringing word was given to clear the church, which was done. At 9:15 A.M. when the front doors were thrown open, Bishop Michaud of Burlington, attended

by the clergy, descended the steps. The church choir intoned the "Asperges Me" (Sprinkle Me) and during the function of the sprinkling (of the outside walls with Holy Water) and the "Miserere" (Psalm 50) was chanted in the open air.

"Returning into the church the ceremonies were continued with the solemn Litanies, Father P. E. Lachance being soloist and the choir responding.

"The Pontifical High Mass followed: The celebrant was the Rev. J. A. Boissonnault, of St. Johnsbury; Deacon, the Rev. J. A. Coatuel of Burlington; and the Sub-Deacon, the Rev. P. E. Lachance of North Bennington. The two Bishops and about fifteen priests were present. The French sermon was delivered by Bishop Lafleche and the Rev. D. J. Q'Sullivan preached in English.

"After the ceremonies were over, the vestry in the basement of the church was thrown open and the visiting clergy sat down to an elaborate dinner, given by the women of the parish.

"The local parishioners, who find their many sacrifices crowned with success, also joined in the banqueting and it was a scene of general felicitation and rejoicing.

"Perhaps the most satisfied and contented individual was Father Proulx who in a happy little speech thanked the parishioners and those who cooperated with him in the work of building the church. Bishop Lafleche being called upon, complimented Father Proulx for his perseverance and energy in pushing the enterprise. The Bishop recalled that he had ordained Father Proulx and had therefore followed his career with interest.

"The dinner was a fitting close of an important chapter in the history of the parish of Sacré Coeur de Marie."

Excluding the cost of the land, the new church had cost about \$41,500.00. Much of this had been paid for by church collections, fairs, subscription drives, special collections and donations. Besides these money raising means Father Proulx had had to borrow money. In 1893, \$9,075.00; in 1894, \$10,425.00. Father Proulx took no salary from 1892 through 1895, as well as donating or loaning to the parish the sum of \$3,000.00. But little by little, the loans were paid off.

It might be of interest to know that in 1896 Father T. J. Gaffney of St. Peter's loaned \$2,000.00 to the parish at 5%. This loan was paid off in 1899.

By 1902 the total debt on the parish was \$17,750.00. In 1902, the National Life Insurance Company of Montpelier was owed \$11,000, and Father Proulx, \$3,000.00, and his sister, Marie Proulx, \$600.00.

In 1904 the church property and buildings were valued at \$47,600.00. The next year the total debt was \$11,593.00. By 1908 the loan from the National Life was down to \$3,000.00 and in 1909 it was down to \$1,000.00 and by 1910 was completely paid off. The only debts that remained then were to Father Proulx and his sister. From then on he began to accumulate a surplus in the banks. In 1911 he paid off the debt to his sister.

By now he began to make repairs and improvements in the church. In 1911, a cement sidewalk leading to the church was laid. The church and rectory was painted. In 1919 electricity was installed in the rectory.

In 1919 the debt of \$3,000.00 owed to Father Proulx was paid off and the church was clear of debt, with a balance in the bank. On March 26, 1920, Father Proulx was transferred to St. Joseph's Parish in Burlington.

For about nine months the Rev. J. M. Billon served as Pastor (March 26 to December 2, 1920). He was succeeded by the Rev. L. Albert Vezina.

One of the first purchases that Father Vezina made was a Pipe Organ in 1921. There was a fund for this that had reached, by the end of 1921, the sum of \$5,769.39. In 1922 a carpet was purchased for the Sanctuary. In 1923 a new pulpit was added to the church. In 1924, the Christmas crib was bought.

In 1924, he began to collect a fund for a new heating system. By 1930 the fund had grown to \$6,956.40. In 1930 the new heating system was installed in the church at a cost of \$4,900.00.

When devotion to St. Theresa of Lisieux became popular in the 1920's Father Vezina purchased in 1928, a statue and an altar in her honor and this was installed on the north side of

the church, where the Baptismal Font now stands. Father Vezina had removed three or four pews in front of the large window to make room for the altar and statue.

In the early 1930's he bought altar fixtures and vestments. The church roof and the front steps of the church were repaired in 1937.

In 1922, Father Vezina had started a school fund, hoping someday to build a French school. By 1933 this fund had grown to \$28,651.00. But because there were so few children in the parish who understood French he gave up on the idea of a French School. In 1938 he decided that this fund should be used to redecorate the church.

The church walls had grown black over the years as a result of burning soft coal in the furnace during the cold months. They needed to be cleaned and redecorated. And so beginning in January of 1939 the redecoration was begun, in the capable hands of Rambusch Company of New York City.

First the soot had to be washed from the walls before the painting could begin. They began with the sanctuary. The staging was put in place and the men began to paint.

While the sanctuary was being done an unfortunate accident occurred. About 9:00 P.M. on January 19, 1939, Mr. Edward J. Kerrigan was working on the scaffold applying paint to the sanctuary ceiling. The thirty-three year old Kerrigan suddenly slipped, plunged about 40', and landed on the predella of the altar. He was rushed to the nearby Rutland Hospital on Nichols Street where he died about 11:00 P.M. He suffered a fractured skull, his chest was crushed, and he died of a concussion. Mr. Kerrigan was a local painter who was employed by Rambusch and Company.

In 1939 the entire interior of the church was cleaned and repainted with two coats of paint.

The electric lights, which were on the pillars, were replaced with fixtures hanging from the ceiling.

The staging upon which the men worked was in place for several months, being of some small inconvenience to the parishioners when they came to Mass.

A new sanctuary of marble, floor and altars, and altar rail, was also added to the church.

When the work was finished in 1940, the interior of the church was greatly improved.

In 1942 a new oil burning furnace was put in the church replacing the old coal burning furnace.

The Parish report for 1943 mentioned that the church and land was now valued at \$150,000.00.

During the following years some repairs and improvements were made as must be made on any building. The walls were washed in Father Desautels time.

About 1964 when the "Liturgical Renewal" began an altar was placed before the old altar so that Mass could be offered facing the people. A few years later the tabernacle with the Blessed Sacrament was transferred from the main altar to the altar on the north side of the church.

In 1947 the church and its property was valued at \$300,000.00. This was before the school was built.

IV The Rectory

From June of 1869 until 1892 the first Rectory of the parish stood on the lot about where the front of the church now stands. The lot just north of the rectory then belonged to Edmund A. Morse.

This house was a two story building. Not only did Father Gagnier live here, but for the first year so also did the Reverends J. A. Boissonnault, J. F. Pelletier, and F. E. Gendreau; who took care of other Mission Churches outside of Rutland.

This house was bought from William and Mary Wardwell on June 18, 1869. At the time this was a new house. the price asked by the Wardwells was \$5,100.00. A mortgage on the property of \$2,500.00 was paid off on September 24, 1870. The priests took possession immediately and from then on it was their residence and office.

An incident that occurred on May 7, 1888 is well worth mentioning in regard to this rectory. The Rutland Herald of May 8, 1888 records the incident in this manner: "Shortly after midnight Friday night after the electric lights in that part of town were extinguished, Father J. A. Dugast (an assistant to Father Caissy) who was sleeping in a room on the ground floor of the rectory on Lincoln Avenue, was awakened by the attempts of two men to administer chloroform to him. He feigned to be under the influence of the drug. As soon as he dared to walk, he jumped from the bed at his assailants. He called to Father Paquette who came to him. His assailants fled. Nothing was stolen. No clues were found as to the identity of the two men, but the police are investigating."

Nothing else of the incident appears in the following issues of the Herald.

When plans were made to build the present blue-stone church in 1891, the rectory had to be moved. "The rectory then stood about where the center of the church will be." The rectory was moved to the site in front of the old church. It was planned to move the house to the site of the old church, when it was torn down.

But an act of nature interfered with this latter plan.

On August 29, "the fagged out tail of the West Indian Storm which has created such havoc in the South" hit Rutland. There was more wind and rain with the storm, and it did little damage in Rutland, except to the French church.

Says the Rutland Herald of August 30, 1893, "the frame work for the spire (on the southwest corner) of the French Church, and the large staging around it, was blown to the ground shortly after 8:00 A.M. yesterday. The damage is heavy, but fortunately there was no loss of life."

"Work on the spire had been going on for a week and it was in readiness for boarding and slating. The eight spliced timbers 75' in length, which formed the corner of the eight sided pyramid, were in place. The belt boards were on and it was expected that the spire would be completed in a few days.

"The spire timbers were in two pieces. The first piece was an 8" by 10" timber about 40' long. To these were spliced the 35' timbers with 3½" bolts. The latter timbers tapered from 3" to 5" at the top. The entire spire was bolted to posts running down 40' at the corner of the building.

"The velocity of the wind had increased all night (August 28 and 29) and the unfinished spires swayed. It was thought that it would ride out the storm. But at 8:00 A.M. a cracking noise was heard and the spire, torn from its base, toppled over tearing down the staging as it fell. The resistance of the staging caused the heavy timbers to break where they had been spliced and they cracked down upon the rectory. Three of the large timbers pierced the roof of the house and went through the dining room in which Father Proulx was seated and imbedded themselves in the ground in the cellar. Several smaller timbers pierced the roof and nearly

every room was wrecked by the falling timber. The entire south side of the house was covered with broken boards and scaffolding, and the lawn about the house was torn up, as was Mrs. Meldon's house next door.

"Nearly every room in the rectory is wrecked. Plaster is torn off and the floors and ceilings are broken and the chimney was knocked off. About \$2,000.00 in damage was done to the rectory.

"Father Proulx was seated at the dining table about three feet from where the heavy timbers crashed to the cellar. The shock affected him greatly. It was several minutes before he could speak.

"The escape of the workmen was thought to be miraculous. They had been asked to proceed with the work, but had refused! John Wright, Frank Gilman, and Frank Laport had bolted down the spire at its base and finished about ten minutes before the crash came. They, with the other workmen, remained in the shop at the rear of the old church."

"Crowds of people visited the scene yesterday. The ruins were cleared away before night-fall."

One of the neighbors offered Father Proulx hospitality for the night. But the next day he rented and moved into the house at 3 Lincoln Avenue. Evidently he lived here for some time with the expectation that once the old church was torn down, it would "allow the masons to lay the foundation for the new rectory" on the site of the old church.

But "the best laid plans of men oft gang aglae", and instead of building where the old church had been, Father Proulx bought from Stella Johnson, C. Alvernon Johnson, Emma Murdick and Clarence H. Murdick the land adjoining his property (bought from Edmund A. Morse on January 31, 1891) on Nichols Street. This lot contained a house. The price paid was \$3,800.00. The transaction was made on September 28, 1894. (This land was originally bought from E. A. Morse on June 6, 1889). The property was 60' long on Nichols Street to the north corner of the lands of Robert Pierpoint. On October 11, 1894 the Rutland Herald reported

the transaction to its readers. Bishop DeGoesbriand's Diary noted on October 2, 1894, "Father Proulx moves into his new rectory, purchased for the congregation."

For many years this rectory at 13 Nichols Street served the priests and parishioners well. It was just a few feet south of the southeast end of the new church, handy for the priests to go to the church and sacristy by the church's rear door.

In 1902 Dr. Alberic H. and Lena E. Bellerose sold for \$10.00 a piece of land on the west side of Nichols Street to the parish. This new acquisition was south of the rectory property. It measured 75' deep towards Lincoln Avenue. It is part of the parking lot off Nichols Street. The Bellerose's had bought this property from Annie E. Pierpoint.

In December 1964 the parish bought from Richard Reardon the house and lot on the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Grant Avenue. Along the east side of Lincoln Avenue to the corner of Grant Avenue, the property measured 71'. Along the south side of Grant Avenue, from the corner of Lincoln Avenue, it was 150'.

After some work had been done to equip the downstairs with offices for the priests, this house became the rectory in 1965. After the priests had moved to 18 Lincoln Avenue, the old rectory became an apartment house.

This property was owned, at an earlier date (1891) by Mr. Edmund A. Morse who, in 1891, sold a strip of land (72') along Grant Avenue to the east corner of Nichols Street and 145' along Nichols Street from the corner of Grant Avenue. Now the parish owns all the property on the south side of Grant Avenue between Nichols Street and Lincoln Avenue.

So, in all four houses have been used as rectories in the parish

V The Academy of Our Lady of Vermont

The position of the French Canadian children vis-a-vis of the district schools of Rutland was a difficult one. English was the language of the district school. French was the language of the home. While it is true that some French Canadians did send their children to the district schools, the children at first had a hard time. They could not understand the teacher or their English-speaking classmates; and the teacher could not understand their French speaking pupils. The children very likely lost at least one year in school while learning enough English to keep up with their classmates.

Therefore it is not surprising to learn that when Father Gagnier began the parish of the Sacred Heart of Mary (Sacré Coeur de Marie) that he almost immediately began to look for an Order of Nuns in Canada who would establish a French-speaking school for the children of the parish.

We find, in fact, that even before the church was completed in April of 1870 that an Order of Nuns, the Most Holy Names of Jesus and Mary of Hochelega, Montreal, had opened such a school in the parish.

Father Gagnier, with the approval of Bishop DeGoesbriand, had obtained permission of the Mother Superior of the Mother House of the Sisters, of the Most Holy Names of Jesus and Mary to open a French school here in January 1870. By the end of January, 1870, two Sisters, Sisters Marie Eulalie and Marie Eugenia, had arrived in Rutland.

They rented a house on Main Street which was used as a convent-school. It opened its doors on January 31, 1870.

On February 19, 1870, the two original Sisters were joined by two others, Sister Marie De Lorette and Sister Marie Lozinne.

One room in the convent (upstairs in the house) was set aside as a chapel for the Sisters. And after some necessary improvements the chapel was blessed and on April 18, 1870 the first Mass was offered in it and thereafter the Blessed Sacrament was revered there. The Mother General of the Order, Mother Mary Stanislaus, was present at this first Mass.

The School that these Sisters opened was a girl's school. It is doubtful that this school was supported by the parish. The parish report of 1872 mentions \$50.00 for the support of the school, while that of 1874 states \$100.00 for the school. It is likely that those who sent their daughters to it paid a small tuition or some produce or food stuff in lieu of money.

At any rate, the Sisters conducted a yearly Bazaar, or Fair, for the benefit of their convent-school. The first such Fair was held at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in West Rutland, near the marble works, the first week in July for five days.

The first Bazaar held in Rutland by the Sisters opened October 10, 1870.

Witness this advertisement:

"Encouragement Please! The Fair of the Sisters of Rutland will begin October 10, 1870 at Chaffee's Hall. Refreshments will be served each evening."

The fair ran for ten days. Some fine articles were sold, some of them imported.

On October 18, 1870 this card of thanks appeared in the Herald: "The Sisters of Rutland express their heart-felt thanks to General H. Henry Baxter for his generous and timely donation of \$50.00 to their Fair."

These Bazaars were yearly affairs. Each year "The Fair yielded a considerable amount of money which will be applied by the Sisters for the benefit of their convent-school."

Each year the school opened about September 1st. In 1871, 1872, and 1873, thirty-five to forty girls attended the French School on Main Street. Without question the usual subjects of reading, writing, and arithmetic, as well as geography, history, and, no doubt, English, were taught. Music lessons on the piano, violin, etc. were available from the Sisters, outside of school

hours. "Their course of studies (the same as that given at the school of the Mother House at Hochelega) comprises the various branches of a solid, useful, and ornamental education."

In June or July 1874 the Sisters moved to a "more commodious house" at 52 West Street. Hemingway states (in 1875) "their school and boarding-house are well patronized." The annual parish report of 1878 notes that seventy girls attended the school; that of 1880, mentions sixty girls; that of 1881 says forty-five girls; while that of 1882 (for the school year of 1882-1883) reports only twenty "little ones were in attendance."

Two other Nuns from Montreal, Sister Mary Lawrence and Sister Mary of the Rosary, joined the faculty after the convent school moved to West Street. In its latter years (1880-1882) Sister M. Francais de Borgia was the local Superior.

Bishop DeGoesbriand, lending it all the support that he could, was a frequent visitor to the Convent and School. His Diary mentions his visits (see February 9 and November 1, 1878; June 11, 1880; January 27 and 29, 1881; January 15 and February 25, 1882; and January 26, 1883.)

Yearly closing exercises took place at the end of each school year. Evidently these were held in the church hall. But on one year, 1876, the Herald of July 3rd announced, "By the liberality of General H. H. Baxter the ladies of the convent of Our Lady of Vermont will hold their exhibition at the Baxter Music Hall on next Thursday instead of in the hall in the French Church. Friends are invited. Admission - \$.25.

On Thursday, July 6th, the closing exercises of the pupils of the Convent of Our Lady of Vermont was held at 7:00 PM at Baxter's Music Hall.

"The Programme"

Pianists: J. Williams, J. LaFrance, J. Laval, R. Primeau, S. Fitzsimmons, and C. Williams.

"Betsey" - a play. The participants were: M. Hanley, R. Primeau, J. LaFrance, S. Fitzsimmons, J. Valiquette, K. Battles, B. Hunter; solo, L. Valiquette; pianist, J. Laval.

"Drame en Deux Actes" J. Laval, P. Valiquette, F. Liberté S. Laval, J. LaFrance, J. Blanchard, A. Boucher, L. Gillman, and J. E. Primeau.

An operetta was presented as well. A large crowd packed Baxter's Hall for these exercises. The pupils exhibited much spirit and good sense in the rendition of the different numbers on the programme. All are deserving of much praise. The musical numbers were far above the average for pupils so young, and they were as much a surprise as a pleasure.

"At the close of the regular programme Bishop DeGoesbriand made a short address."

This school continued through the school year of 1882-1883. That year the parish report states that only twenty "little ones" attended the school. And so the financial support was down. After that school year the Sisters of the "convent of Our Lady of Vermont on West Street...permanently closed. The Sisters left this morning (July 25, 1883) for Montreal."

It was with regret that they did so. For "the Sisters of the Holy Names cherish the fondest memories of their dear Rutland students, among whom six were called to the religious life. It was with deep regret that, owing to financial conditions, they felt obliged to close the Mission on July 24, 1883."

However, this was not the end of Catholic education for the children of these French Canadian families. Father Jerome Gelot, the pastor of the parish, sought means to continue to educate the French Canadian children. In the spring of 1884 he had a school building erected, just south of the old church. It was a small building (see the picture of Rutland, on the second floor of the Rutland Library). He also divided a room in two in the southeast corner of the old church.

In Rutland County by Smith and Rann, page 377, it is stated "In 1884 a new French Catholic School was opened which has now about 100 pupils." Father Gelot had secured the services of Mr. J. L. Hernot and a lady assistant to teach in the school.

According to the annual Parish Report for 1884, seventy-five pupils attended this school, while in 1885 the number of students recorded was ninety.

But this school closed its doors at the end of the school year of 1885-1886, when Father J. Gelot was transferred to Poultney, Vermont.

No further mention is made in these annual reports of a French Catholic School, until 1948 when the Sacred Heart of Mary School opened its doors. This school was adequately treated in Chapter II.

Even though attempts for having a Catholic school did not succeed too many years, the different pastors of the parish did hold classes of Catechism for the children. These classes were held from 1869 to 1890 on Sunday afternoons, at 3:00 P.M., very likely from April 1869 to April 1870 in Chaffee's Hall and afterwards in the church on Lincoln Avenue. These classes were taught by the Nuns until 1883 and thereafter by lay people.

First Communion was received by those who had reached the appropriate age, at this time about ten years. Confirmation was administered by the Bishop at stated intervals. On April 20, 1869, forty-two adults were confirmed in Chaffee's Hall. On June 28, 1873, eighty-nine were confirmed; on May 29, 1877, ninety-five were confirmed; On November 17, 1878, forty-two were confirmed; on July 18, 1880, fifty-eight received Confirmation; on September 17, the Bishop confirmed eighty-five, etc.

During the more than thirty years of Father Proulx's pastorate Catechism classes were held on every Saturday. No mention was made of the number of children who attended the classes. But during these years the classes were taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph.

When Father Vezina became Pastor in 1920, these classes were again shifted to Sunday afternoons and were followed by Vespers and Benediction. And so down through the years the Faith has continued to be taught to the children preparing them for the day when they would take their place among the adult Catholics.

VI St. Joseph Cemetery

From earliest Christian times, it has been customary for Christians to bury, reverently, the bodies of their deceased. After all God created man composed of body and soul. So the body should be laid to rest because, in God's plan, it was the Tabernacle of the soul. Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, and the other sacraments gave or increased a share of God's Divine Life (Grace) to the soul and thus not only sanctified the soul but also made the body more holy because it was through the body that the outward signs of the sacraments that Grace came to the Soul.

Cemeteries for the reverent interment of the bodies have always existed, going back to the catacombs, where the bodies will await their reunion with their soul in the resurrection of the dead at the end of the world.

The French Canadians of Rutland conscious of the teaching of the Church, provided a burial ground for their dead.

From the 1860's until 1882, old St. Peter's Cemetery filled this purpose for a large number of them. After all, from 1854 to 1869 they had been members of St. Peter's Parish. And so, many of the members of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish continued to bury their dead in old St. Peter's Cemetery on West Street until they obtained their own cemetery. Some no doubt used the town cemeteries, too.

On April 1, 1882 the ground for the cemetery of the Sacred Heart of Mary Parish was bought by Father Jerome Gelot from Hiram S. Stratton and his wife, Lucy. It contained eight acres of land, and the price was \$1,000.00. It fronted on what is now known as Stratton Road in the east part of Rutland.

The Cemetery book of the parish shows the following for 1882:

April 1 - to Hiram Stratton for deed to land - \$1,000.00.

April 4 - Making out the deed - \$5.00

July 3 - To Michel Garity for 13 day's labor @\$1.50 - \$13.00

" " - To Michel Garity for 16 days work @\$1.75 - \$28.00

" " - To Will Stratton - Teaming - 24½ days @\$3.50 - \$85.75

" " - Michel Cain - 21½ days @\$1.50 - \$32.25

" " - Pat Banks 3½ days @\$1.50 - \$5.25

" " - Cross for center - \$20.00

December 15 - Paid for cedar posts and boards - \$27.67

" " - Paid for 212 lbs. of wire and staples - \$22.50

Cost of Cemetery for 1882 - \$1245.52. This figure is the same as that given in the 1882 parish report.

The land was divided into sections (VI in all, North and South). Each section was divided then into lots, 20' x 20', the south sections (I thru VI) containing eighteen lots, while the north sections (I thru VI) were divided into twenty-six or twenty-eight lots. Each lot cost \$10.00 and a deed to it was given to the lot holder. Because of this plan it was easy for each lot holder to find his or her lot.

That first year (1882) the following lots were sold:

July 18 - Fl. L'Heureux, Sect. VI, North, lot 1 - \$10.00

" " - Dom Courcel, Sect. V, North, lot 8 - \$10.00

July 16 - M. Deragan - Sect. V, North, lot 4 - \$5.00

July 18 - Philbert Guilenain, Sect. VI, North, lot 3 - \$5.00

July 30 - Ad. Gibeaux, Sect. V, North - lot 1 - \$5.00

August 12 - Fred Guy, Sect. V, North - lot 2 - \$10.00

November 26 - M. Deragan, Sect. V, North - lot 4 - \$5.00

" " - Jeremiah Gingras, Sect. V, North - lot 12 - \$10.00

" 28 - Joseph Allard, Sect. V, North, lot 9 - \$10.00

December 20 - Ad. Gibeaux, Sect. V, North - lot 1 - \$5.00

" 23 - Joseph Guillmain, Sect. III, North, lot 4 - \$10.00

" 24 - Benj. Henrichon, Sect. IV, North, lot 6 - \$10.00

" 31 - A. Goyette, Sect. VI, North lot 9 - \$10.00

" " - E. Leclair, Sect. V., South Lot 1 - \$10.00

1882 - Received for lots in the Cemetery - \$115.00

But not only were lots sold (20' x 20' and some 20' x 19') but single graves were available for \$1.00 per grave. Sections V North lot 14 (page 134 in Cemetery Books) and Section VI,

South lot 11 (pages 163 to 176 in Cemetery Book) were used for this purpose.

The digging of graves from 1882 to 1889 was \$1.00. From 1889 to 1908 une fosse (a grave) was \$2.00, while a petite fosse (a baby's grave) was \$1.00.

When a person of the parish died the body was usually prepared for the wake and burial by S. C. Clifford (whose name appears on one of the windows in the church) and then brought home for the wake. The undertaker would put a wreath of flowers at the front door. In these early days the relatives and friends would gather at the wake house and even some of them, spend the whole night keeping watch. The wake usually extended over two nights. On the third day the body of the deceased would be taken from the home and brought to the church (perhaps on the shoulders of six stout men, or in a horse-drawn hearse) where the funeral Mass would take place.

After the Mass the body would be taken to the cemetery for burial, accompanied by the mourners, relatives and friends. There the priest would say the final prayers.

On one occasion Father Jerome Gelot told the Bishop: "Sometimes I may receive \$5.00 for a High Mass and going to the cemetery; but seldom do I get any."

In 1883, work continued in the cemetery, making improvements and putting up a board fence around the cemetery. From the Parish Cemetery Book, we learn that:

May 8 - To Will Stratton for work - \$9.00

May 11 - To Michel Haley for work - \$5.50

May 27 - To Pat Banks - \$15.00

June 17 - To Bill Stratton - \$34.15

June 17 - Latch and bolts for door - \$1.30

June 17 - Setting gate - Granger - \$2.50

June 17 - To Harris - for Cemetery Gate - \$11.80

Cost of Cemetery - 1883 - \$79.25

The expenses for 1884, totaling \$32.25, were as follows:

May 1 - Digging holes for fenceposts - Guertin - \$3.25

May 14 - Manure for lower part - \$14.00

September 16 - Gravel for walks - \$3.00

September 16 - Gravel for walks - \$12.00

It is evident from reading the Parish Cemetery Book that the remains of some of the bodies of people who died before 1882 and were buried elsewhere were transferred to the lots of lot-owners and reburied in St. Joseph's Cemetery. For example, in Section I, North lot 3, owned by Edward Lefebvre, we read "Henri Albert Lefebvre died in Rutland March 4, 1881 - transferred later."

In Section V North, lot 12, owned by Jeremiah Gingras, it is noted that the remains of "Louise Gingras, died in Tinnmouth May 11, 1871" and "Elnire Gingras, died in Clarendon April 18, 1874" were transferred to St. Joseph's Cemetery.

But by far the greatest number of transferals was from "the old Irish Cemetery" (*Transferès du vieux cimetièrè irlandais* de Rutland ar de West Street). This, of course, refers to the old Catholic cemetery on West Street near the present General Electric Plant.

In the late 1880's Father Gaffney was able to buy the land for the new Calvary Cemetery. After the work of improving the land was completed, this cemetery was consecrated on June 28, 1891. Those who had bodies of their loved ones buried in the old West Street Cemetery were urged to transfer their remains to New Calvary and many of the parishioners of St. Peter's Parish did so. And the parishioners of Sacred Heart of Mary transferred the remains of their loved ones to St. Joseph Cemetery.

On November 13, 1895, Madame Gregoire Valiquette who had bought a lot (14) in Section V North transferred the remains of: 1) Gregoire Valiquette who died March 25, 1879; 2) Albert Valiquette died March 24, 1881; 3) George Valiquette, died May 23, 1881. All were transferred "*du vieux cimetièrè irlandais*" to St. Joseph's.

On July 17, 1887 Nazaire Gèvy bought lot 9 in Section IV, North in St. Joseph's. The following remains were transferred to this lot: Marie Gèvy, Died April 10, 1877, transferred from Balston, N.Y.; Eulalie Gèvy, died July 4, 1875, Matilda Gèvy, died December 13, 1877; Nellie Gèvy, died November 13, 1880; Francois Gèvy, died November 19, 1880. The notation after these names reads: "*Transportès tous quatre du cimetièrè irlandais de Rutland*" (transferred all four from the Irish cemetery of Rutland).

Marie Rabidoux, died May 29, 1863; Nozairè Gèvy, died March 5, 1864; Alfred Gèvy, died November 18, 1865. The notations after

these names reads "Ces trois derniers transportés d' East Dorset." (These last three were transferred from East Dorset.)

Leon Leblanc after buying lot 12, in Section II, North, June 24, 1895 transferred "du vieux cimetiere irlandais" (from the old Irish cemetery) the following: Henriette Leblanc, died 1881; Angeline Leblanc, died December, 1881; Emile Leblanc, died 1885; Adelord Leblanc, died 1889.

And, Arthur Lamoureux transferred the remains of his son who died in May 1882 "der vieux cimetiere de West Street" (from the old cemetery on West Street).

As was mentioned earlier the cost of a lot was \$10.00. Some paid this out-right and some paid \$5.00 now, and \$5.00 later. But some paid only \$1.00 or \$2.00 at the time and later paid \$1.00 or \$2.00 until the lot was paid for. Some few secured a lot by putting down a \$1.00 or \$2.00 and never paid any more. Years later, with the consent of the lot owner, these lots were sold to others.

In 1888 a system of charges for a funeral was introduced here, that had existed in the Province of Quebec, and which still existed there up to a few years ago. Father George N. Caissy wrote to the Bishop "Funeral - \$7.00; \$10.00, or \$20.00, according to more or less display of Church decorations."

In this system there were three classes of funerals - first class; second class; and third class. The church decorations included, a black antependium that hung from the mensa of the altar table; black coverings of the six brass candlesticks, a black drape that hung down from the top of the altar-rail, a black cloth that hung over the Missal stand, as well as a black pall for the casket. A first class funeral - \$20.00 had all of these. A second class funeral - \$10.00 - had less. And a third class funeral - \$7.00 had a bare minimum of decorations.

This system existed in most French Canadian churches until the early years of Bishop Rice's episcopacy. He set the fee for all High Masses, including Funerals, at \$10.00 except when a Solemn High Mass was requested, and then the fee was \$25.00. A Solemn High Mass was one which had a Celebrant, Deacon, and Subdeacon.

The leading causes of death in the 80's and 90's were these: Consumption (tuberculosis), Pneumonia, Cholera Infantine (among children), Diphtheria, Typhoid Fever, Scarlet Fever, Heart, etc.

In 1904 the Annual Parish Report stated that the cemetery land was valued at \$1,600.00.

Improvements in the cemetery were made very often. In 1905, a new fence was erected around the cemetery at a cost of \$172.00. In 1907, a receiving vault was built for \$1,265.00. In 1909 a new cross of marble was erected for \$102.00. And, in 1911 the front of the cemetery was fenced in. In 1912 the parishioners were solicited for donations for a new fence.

In the Parish Cemetery Book there is a large list of names of parishioners who gave \$1.00 or \$2.00 and a few who gave \$5.00 for this project.

The care of the lots at first was left to the lot owners. But it seems that by 1915 that a caretaker was hired and that a charge of \$4.00 a lot was charged. In 1918 there is the first mention of Perpetual Care - \$300.00. But it seems that only a few contributed to such a fund. It was not until 1924 that Perpetual Care was introduced and caught on. That year eighty subscribed for it. For a full lot \$100.00 was charged; for a half lot \$50.00; and for a single grave, \$15.00.

The money received for Perpetual Care was invested in the Marble Savings Bank. The interest from the money thus invested was used for the care of lots. (For those who did not take out Perpetual Care, cemetery dues of \$3.50 was charged).

This Perpetual Care Fund grew with the years. In 1927, it was \$2,278.77; but in 1944 it had grown to \$14, 797.99; in 1951, these fund were \$20,000; and in 1954, \$23,500.00.

In 1934-1935 the charge for the Perpetual Care Funds rose to \$125.00 for a full lot; \$65.00 for a half lot.

One other item bears mention, on November 10, 1928, J. Henri Frenier purchased from Joseph Terrien, a farmer, his lot in Section III North lot 5. This purchase was of the unused portion of said lot. On this lot J. H. Frenier erected a mausoleum and four bodies from the Frenier lot 8, Section II, North were transferred to the mausoleum. On October 19, 1929 Mr. J. H. Frenier

gave his lot (Section II, North, lot 8) to the parish to be used for the burial of priests.

The pastors of the Parish, through the caretakers, have always taken good care of the cemetery. It is with pride that the parishioners and lot-owners visit the cemetery to pay respects to their deceased.

VII The Pastors

Reverend Joseph Quevillan

The first French-speaking priest to visit the French Canadians of Rutland was the Rev. Joseph Quevillan.

He was born in Canada in June 1805. He studied in Montreal and was ordained in 1828. He served on the Canadian Missions for nine years and then went to Oswego and Syracuse, New York for a while. For five years he labored in St. Elizabeth's in Montreal. He then came to Burlington, Vermont.

In 1850 Father Quevillan was appointed the first Pastor of the Canadian parish in Burlington. At that time the Canadians had no church of their own. So the first Mass was offered in the old Court House (now the Fletcher Library). At this Mass there were about three hundred Canadians. Under his direction a church for the Canadian people was soon built on Prospect Street. It was a substantial brick church and was named St. Joseph's (now the site of the St. Joseph's Home for the Aged in Burlington).

At this time Burlington was part of the Diocese of Boston, and Father Quevillan came to Burlington at the behest of the Bishop of Boston.

On hearing that there were a number of French Canadians in Brandon, Vermont, he was wont to attend them. His occasional trips to Brandon started in 1851. He offered Mass in the old Town Hall there, and sometimes in private homes.

It is related that on one occasion there were so many children to be baptized that the room was not large enough to hold them all. So the children were brought into the room six at a time for baptism.

Father Quevillan urged the people to build a church of their

own. A subscription list for the building of the church was begun in February, 1852. The congregation was small and scattered. There were about seventy-five families in Brandon, Forestdale, at the old Brandon quarry, and a few in Goshen. The subscription was small, for there were no rich Catholics in the area, and scarcely a land-owner among them. But in the spring of 1852 a lot for the church and cemetery was purchased. The first stone of the foundation was laid in June. The work was continued until the frame was completed. Soon Mass was celebrated in it by Father Quevillan.

In October 1852, Father Quevillan sent word to the Catholics of Brandon that Father Migneault, Pastor at Chambly, Canada, was coming to dedicate the new church. (Father Migneault was the Vicar General for Vermont from the Diocese of Boston). The church was still unfinished. A new floor had to be laid. Men were sent to Goshen to purchase boards for the flooring. None could be found. So trees were cut down and sawed that day. The floor was laid that evening. On a Sunday in October 1852 Father Migneault dedicated the church "Our Lady of Good Help". Father Quevillan offered the Mass and Father Migneault preached the sermon. This church was located on "Canordor Street". Even though Father Daly, O.F.M. made occasional visits to Brandon, Father Quevillan continued to minister to the Catholics of Brandon until October 1854.

It is also reported that he visited Shoreham at this time.

Rutland also experienced the priestly efforts of this devoted priest. In 1853 Father Quevillan came to offer Mass for the French Canadians of the area. He first said Mass in the home of Joseph P. Mailhiot and later in the old Court House on Main Street in Rutland. He came here every three or four months. In November 1854 Father Druon became the Pastor of St. Peter's Parish, Rutland and the French Canadians became members of this parish.

In October of 1854 Father Quevillan returned to work in Canada, then to King Edward Island, again to Syracuse, New York. He then worked in Holyoke, Massachusetts, and finally in Pittsfield, Massachusetts in 1870.

While he was Pastor of the Parish of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, the parish of Our Lady of Good Help

in Brandon celebrated its silver jubilee in October 1877. For the occasion Father Quevillan returned to Brandon to sing the High Mass. He was then in his 50th year as a priest.

In 1882 he resigned his parish in Pittsfield, having attained the reputation of a saintly life. He returned to Canada and there he died and is buried in his native parish of St. Vincent de Paul. His death took place on August 6, 1891.

Reverend Louis G. Gagnier

Louis G. Gagnier was born in St. Martine, Canada in 1830. He was educated in the college of St. Therese and ordained in Montreal on December 22, 1885. After a curacy of eight months, he was named pastor of Huntington, Canada, where he remained more than twelve years.

Due to the influx of French Canadians into this diocese after the Civil War, Bishop DeGoesbriand appealed to the Bishops of Quebec for volunteer priests to come to this diocese to take charge of the French Canadian parishes. Among the many who volunteered to work in this diocese was the Rev. Louis G. Gagnier.

He arrived in the diocese from Huntington, Canada, evidently in February of 1869. The first mention of him in Bishop DeGoesbriand's Diary is of a mission he preached to the French Canadians in Brandon, Vermont from Sunday February 28 to March 6. So successful was this Mission that the Bishop's Diary states that "the number of persons reclaimed to the practice of religion was large."

Then on March 7, 1869 Father Gagnier and Father G. N. Caissy Pastor of Brandon, gave a week's Mission at Orwell at which one hundred seventy-two received Holy Communion. Then on March 14th both priests opened a Mission at Pittsford at which three hundred seventy-eight received Holy Communion.

On April 11, 1869 Father's Gagnier and Tasseville opened a Mission for the Canadians of Rutland in a hired hall (Chaffee's Hall). So successful was this Mission that at its conclusion, April 20th, Bishop DeGoesbriand named Father Gagnier Pastor of the Canadians in the Rutlands and Fair Haven. The Bishop, that date, also confirmed forty-two adults here.

For the next year and a half Father Gagnier was a busy man, with Rutland, West Rutland and Fair Haven to cover. It is true that Bishop DeGoesbriand sent on April 30, Father J. A. Boissonnault to assist him and on May 8th the Rev. J. F. Pelletier, but property had to be acquired and churches built in these three communities. And Father's persistence was such that he pushed these churches to completion. Money had to be raised for these projects and Father Gagnier had the foresight to use the means already mentioned in an earlier chapter.

"He was a gentleman of education and of fine social bearing." An excellent speaker, and was much sought after for this purpose.

Having bought the rectory in June, 1869 on Lincoln Avenue, he next built the church which was opened on April 24, 1870. During the interval between April 1869 and April 1870, Mass, Catechisms, and Vespers were held in Chaffee's Hall on the corner of Center Street and Merchant's Row.

By 1870 West Rutland and Fair Haven French Canadians saw their churches completed. Truly he was a busy man that year.

Concerned too, with the education of the French Canadian girls in Rutland he was responsible for the coming of the Sisters of the Most Holy Names of Jesus and Mary from Montreal to open a convent-school in the parish. At the end of January, 1870, the Sisters arrived and settled in a house on Main Street which they converted into a school downstairs and a convent upstairs. The Sisters were the first teaching sisters that Rutland had seen, more than three years before the arrival of the Sisters of St. Joseph at St. Peter's Parish.

However, his pastorate at Sacred Heart of Mary Parish lasted only until September 24, 1870. At that date he left Rutland and the Burlington Diocese for the Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts. During the remainder of his life he did yeoman's work in the Lord's Vineyard, in this new diocese. He was first stationed in East Douglas, Massachusetts, at St. Denis Church.

On July 16, 1871, the French Canadians of Ware, Massachusetts began to experience his services. That Sunday he said Mass in the Music Hall, and formed a new parish under the title of "Our Lady of Mount Carmel". A brick church was begun on March 9, 1872 at a

cost of \$7,300.00. While still at Ware, he took on the care of Warren in 1872, and West Warren on July 23, 1871. He built churches in both of these Missions.

On March 9, 1873, Father Gagnier went to St. Joseph's Parish in Springfield, Massachusetts. His first Mass there was in the City Hall. He sought funds among his new parishioners for a church and on May 5, 1873 he purchased land on Harvard Street for \$20,000. In June 1873 he began the construction of a basement church which was ready for Mass on November 1, 1873. In 1877 the super-structure was completed. The original parish took in French Canadians from Springfield, West Springfield, Longmeadow and Mittimeague. In 1873 there were 1460 souls in the parish.

Before 1898 Father Gagnier's services were remembered in Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts.

In the fall of 1897, he made plans to build a school for the children of the Parish. The school was dedicated on May 8, 1898. The services of teaching sisters were obtained.

He was a member of the Bishop's Council, and a most sought after director and confessor by his fellow priests.

He died in Springfield, Massachusetts on August 20, 1907.

Reverend Jerome M. Cloarec

The second pastor at Sacred Heart of Mary Church was the Rev. Jerome M. Cloarec. He was born at Saint-Sauveun, Brittany, France on June 17, 1833.

In 1855 Bishop DeGoesbriand visited the Seminaries in Ireland and France, seeking vocations for the diocese of Burlington. One of those to accept the Bishop's plea to come to Vermont was Jerome M. Cloarec. Bishop DeGoesbriand sent him to St. Mary's Seminary, in Baltimore, Maryland to complete his studies for the priesthood. He was ordained in Burlington, Vermont on July 4, 1858 by Bishop DeGoesbriand.

His first parochial assignment was at St. Francis de Sales, Bennington, beginning January 1, 1859. As Missions he had East Dorset, Manchester, Arlington, North Bennington and Shaftsbury. Numbering about one hundred seventy-five families. Here in

Bennington he bought a rectory. He remained at Bennington until August 1, 1861 when he was transferred to the Cathedral in Burlington.

For eight years he labored zealously in Burlington, attending such missions as Charlotte, Richmond, Underhill, and Williston. Together with Bishop DeGoesbriand, he supervised the building of the present* Cathedral. He also served the diocese as chancellor during these years.

On October 1, 1870 he was made Pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish in Rutland, with the Mission at West Rutland. But his pastorate here was all too short, ending August 1, 1871. Of him the Rutland Herald on March 28, 1871, wrote: "The labors of Father Cloarec have produced much good. He is greatly loved and respected. He is a talented and effective speaker, a humble and devoted servant of God." This could be said of him no matter where he went.

After a ten month pastorate at Sacred Heart, Father Cloarec was appointed pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Burlington. It was here that he remained the next forty-eight years of his life.

On his arrival at Burlington he was appointed a diocesan consultant.

In 1883 he bought property on Allen Street and Elmwood Avenue and began the construction of the present St. Joseph's Church, the largest in the State of Vermont. In 1899, Bishop Michaud named him the Vicar General. On August 22, 1901, Bishop Michaud invested him in the robes of a Right Reverend Monsignor. He was the first and only Monsignor in the diocese until 1935.

In 1902 he had constructed the present St. Anthony's Church on Flynn Avenue. In 1915 he erected the old Holy Cross Chapel at Malletts Bay.

On February 10, 1920, a long and illustrious career in the priesthood came to an end. The funeral was held on February 13, 1920. He was buried in a vault in front of the altar in the basement chapel in St. Joseph's Church.

*refers to the old Burlington Cathedral which since this writing was burned to the ground, and a new Cathedral built on the same site.

Reverend Herve Cardinal

Sacred Heart's third Pastor was born in Brittany, France. He was ordained at Quimper in his native land. On October 22, 1857 he arrived in Burlington, Vermont and was immediately named Pastor of St. Joseph's Parish there, succeeding Oblate Fathers who had been pastors from 1854 through 1856. The parish included all the French Canadians in Chittenden County.

Through his efforts the "Ladies of the Sacred Heart of Mary" (popularly known as the Ladies of Nazareth) came to Burlington and in 1862 opened a convent and school near the church.

Besides his own parish, extensive as it was, he also travelled to Grand Isle where he purchased an old factory and converted it into a church.

After a zealous pastorate of nearly fourteen years he was transferred from St. Joseph's of Burlington to the Sacred Heart of Mary Parish in Rutland.

Before he left Burlington, the Free Press wrote of him, "Father Herve Cardinal leaves Burlington with the great regret of his parish and the general esteem of our citizens." He was a kindly and generous priest.

He arrived in Rutland on August 26, 1871.

Besides his priestly duties of administering the Sacraments, he worked through Fairs and Festivals to raise money to pay off the debt of over \$6,000.00 that he had inherited. Before he left in 1874, the parish indebtedness was reduced to about \$5,400.00. He was a great supporter of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary and their school. It was in his time that the convent-school was moved from Main Street to 52 West Street.

In 1871 he purchased a new organ for the church.

In the fall of 1870 the Devotion of the Forty Hours began in this diocese. Whether Father Cardinal had established it in the Sacred Heart in 1871 is not known. But in May 1872 it opened on May 11 of 1872 with Masses at 5:30 A.M. and 9:00 A.M. and with evening devotions at 7:30 P.M. The preacher for the occasion was the saintly Bishop Rappe. It began on Saturday May 11th and

closed Monday May 13th.

He remained as Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish until September 1, 1874. He preached his last sermon here on August 30, 1874. He was re-assigned to St. Anne's Parish in Milton, Vermont.

For reasons of health he left Vermont and returned to his native land. Bishop DeGoesbriand puts it this way, "Father Hervé Cardinal returns to Brittany. He had a slight shock (apoplexy) and because of it and his age he probably won't return."

He never did return. He died there on April 7, 1883 and his body now lies in his own "belle France."

Reverend Louis N. St. Onge

Born at St. Cesaire Rouville County Canada on April 14, 1842 the son of Jean Baptiste St. Onge, Louis Napoleon St. Onge attended schools in St. Hyacinthe Canada. Ordained a priest on May 31, 1866 by Bishop M. Blavchet at Vancouver, he was a pastor at St. Joseph's in the State of Oregon, 1866-1867; at Yokamas, 1867-1870; retired at Vancouver 1870-1872 for reasons of health.

His next field of endeavor in the Lord's vineyard was Vermont. From 1872 to 1874, for one year and nine months, he was stationed at St. Michael's Parish, Brattleboro, Vermont. Because of ill health he made a European Tour in 1874. On December 1874, he was named Pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish, Rutland, Vermont with the Mission of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in West Rutland. He also had as Missions, Ludlow and Proctorsville.

While pastor of the French Canadians in Rutland, he carried on the works of the parish and its Missions. In Rutland the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary had relocated their school from Main Street to 52 West Street. The Sister's Fair, to help support the school was held June 14, 1875 at the Village Hall. On September 26, 1875, Bishop DeGoesbriand noted in his diary that "the Rev. L. N. St. Onge left at the beginning of the month. The French churches in the Rutlands, Proctorsville and Ludlow are temporarily attended by Father Gendreau of Bellows Falls, assisted by Father Beaudry."

We next find Father St. Onge in Glens Falls, New York as Pastor of St. Alphonsus Parish from 1875 to 1893. He lived in retirement from 1893 to 1897 in Troy and at St. Hyacinth from 1897 to 1901. There he died on November 27, 1901.

Reverend Jerome M. Gelot

The Rev. Jerome M. Gelot was born in Brittany, France in 1852. While a sub-deacon he came to Vermont and was ordained a priest on December 8, 1875 in Burlington.

On January 1, 1876, he was in Rutland as Pastor of the Sacred Heart of Mary Parish, with West Rutland and Pittsford as its Missions. In the midst of a depression (1873) the parish was very poor. He used various means; picnics, donations, even borrowing money, to pay the parish bills. The people evidently were discouraged. Only one hundred fifty of the more than two hundred families attended to their duties.

In 1878 he offered to give up his parish. But the Bishop would not hear of it. He blamed the parish troubles on "trouble with his eyes." "The debit is getting bigger because of my incompetence in finance." "He had hoped to spur the people to greater efforts." He blamed his lack of success on either "ill-will or real poverty."

Yet it was he who purchased the land for the cemetery in 1882. In 1881 he listed as Missions that he attended; Bennington, Pownal, Glastonbury, Montpelier, besides West Rutland and Pittsford. From 1881 he was assisted by his brother in his works, Rev. John Marie Gelot.

In West Rutland in 1882, he had a new church built in that Mission because the old church built by Father Gagnier was much too large. West Rutland, at this time, had about one hundred twenty families at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church.

He was instrumental in organizing the St. Jean Baptiste Society in both the parish and the West Rutland Mission.

After the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary left Rutland and closed their school, he built a small schoolhouse

near the church and obtained the services of two lay persons to teach for a year or more.

In the parish report for 1885 he wrote "the people here live miserably poor." "The financial prospects of this congregation are far from being bright."

He remained at Sacred Heart of Mary Parish until June 30, 1886 when he was transferred to Poultney. But the Rutland parishioners did not wish to see him leave. The Rutland Herald reported in its July 1, 1886 issue that "Bishop DeGoesbriand met with four delegates of the parish, with a petition bearing seven hundred names, asking that Father Gelot remain at Sacred Heart Parish. The Bishop did not encourage them."

From June 30, 1886 he became the first resident Pastor of St. Raphael's Parish in Poultney. He also cared for Castleton, Middletown Springs, and the French-speaking Catholics of Fair Haven. His first job was to acquire a rectory in August of 1886. He was assisted by his brother. He remained as pastor of St. Raphael's Parish until 1892. At this time, the Rev. John M. Gelot was named Pastor of St. Louis of France Church, in Fair Haven.

His next assignment in the diocese was at St. Mary's Parish, Middlebury from 1892 to 1899. Here he began to build the present marble church, completed by Father Shannon. While here he attended also to the Catholics of Bristol.

From September 1899 to October 1904 he was pastor of St. Thomas Parish, Underhill. On October 20, 1904 he was transferred to the Annunciation Parish in Ludlow. He died there on December 4, 1904. After the funeral Mass there his remains were taken to Burlington for burial in Mount Calvary Cemetery.

Reverend George N. Caissy

George N. Caissy was born in Sorel, Canada on March 23, 1838. When he was a young boy his parents (Mr. and Mrs. Louis Caissy) moved to Rutland, Vermont, being one of the early French Canadian families to come to Rutland.

George N. Caissy studied at St. Hyacinthe College, at St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, and at the Grand Seminary in Montreal. On April 7, 1862 George Napoleon Caissy was ordained a Deacon at the Cathedral in Burlington. On June 14, 1862 he received the Order of Priesthood at the hands of Bishop DeGoesbriand, in Burlington at a low Mass. The Bishop's Diary states that "he was formerly from St. Hyacinthe. He was the first French Canadian to be ordained a priest in New England."

After assisting in parishes, giving Missions, and filling in in various parishes, Father Caissy was assigned to the parish in Fairfield in June of 1864. The Catholics of the towns of Enosburgh, Berkshire, Richford, Montgomery, Bakersfield and many other towns in Lamoille County were within the limits of the parish.

The parish of Fairfield was an established parish from at least 1847 when the church was built. It had had several pastors before Father Caissy assumed the task.

But some other towns in the area were not so fortunate. Let us quote Abby Hemingway's Vermont Historical Gazeeter, Vol. III, page 479, this account was written by Father Caissy himself:

"Owing to the scarcity of Catholic priests, and while without a pastor to care for the flocks, many of the French Canadians had become neglectful, and even some of them through ignorance or human respect, or both, after being Methodist for a while, joined with the Baptists, or rather formed a new society of their own, called for the time being, the French Catholic Church. But some good persons feeling acutely the want of religion, in 1861 undertook to build a Catholic Church which was four years in being completed. Father George Caissy of Fairfield succeeded in gathering together the Catholics of Enosburg with the intention of finishing the chapel. On December 10, 1865, Bishop DeGoesbriand dedicated it under the patronage of St. John the Baptist.

"Until then, the Catholics were thought to be few in number, but it was soon ascertained that they numbered eighty to ninety families. As ignorance or human respect were dispelled the number of either apostate or lukewarm Catholics diminished; and all, as far as I know, those who had called themselves Protestants returned

to their former faith. They were attended from Fairfield once a month until June 1868 when, having the benefits of a Mission during which, over three hundred persons approached the Sacraments of Penance, Holy Eucharist and more than eighty persons were confirmed, they began to be attended twice a month. In October, 1868, Enosburg and Bakersfield were formed into a parish with the Rev. Pierre Savoie of Bakersfield."

While stationed in Fairfield, Father Caissy was active in other parts of his vast parish. It is recorded that in 1865 Bishop DeGoesbriand assisted by Fathers Caissy and Malo gave a mission in Richford, Vermont. Other towns in this parish received similar attention. From early in 1868 Father Caissy was assisted by Father P. Savoie, a priest from the Archdiocese of Quebec.

In October 1868 Father Caissy was transferred from Fairfield to Brandon, Vermont. He came to the French Canadian Church on Canador Street.

One of his first tasks here was to take a census of the French Canadians in Rutland. About fifty families were found. He was made aware, no doubt, that the Rutland Marble Company of West Rutland had imported about seventy-five French men from Montreal to work in its quarries and mills earlier in 1868. No doubt this census induced Bishop DeGoesbriand to reach the decision to begin as soon as possible "L'Oeuvre Canadien", or "Les Pretres Missionnaires".

Previous priests (Father Caissy was the first pastor) had lived at the hotel or in private homes. But on April 14, 1869 Father Caissy purchased a lot on Carver Street and built a large brick house in 1870 for a rectory. During his pastorate of three years the singing and ceremonies of the church received much attention. His Missions included Orwell and Leicester Junction. Missions were preached by him and Father Louis Gagnier in Brandon, Orwell and Pittsford, with great success.

But the number of French-Canadians in St. Albans, Vermont had increased radically after the Civil War. Father Zephyrin Druon Pastor of St. Mary's there had been taking care of them. In 1871 Bishop DeGoesbriand decided that these French Canadians should have their own parish and pastor. So in January 1872

Father Caissy was sent to St. Albans to organize the French speaking Congregation.

In 1872 there were three hundred Canadian families in St. Albans. During this year Father Caissy continued to have Mass for them at St. Mary's, just as Father Druon had been doing.

On February 16, 1872, a lot was bought for a new church on the corner of Lake and Elm Streets. Work on the Church was begun in the summer and in October, Bishop DeGoesbriand blessed the cornerstone of the new church under the patronage of the Holy Guardian Angels. The basement was completed and roofed. Mass was celebrated there for the first time at Midnight Mass on Christmas 1872. This basement was used as a church for the next fourteen years. Father Caissy also bought and paid for a rectory opposite the church.

On December 1, 1875 Father Caissy's health began to fail and he was forced to take a year off. He went to Europe. He was succeeded by the Reverend Joseph Daignault. On his return from Europe the following Spring (1886), he resigned the rectorship of the church.

In view of devotion to St. Ann in the diocese, it is interesting to note that Devotion to her at St. Ann's Church in Milton received great impetus on July 26, 1883 when Father Caissy organized a pilgrimage from St. Albans to the Church Shrine at Milton. Over four hundred received Holy Communion.

On July 4, 1886 Father Caissy was appointed Pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary Church, Rutland, with Sacred Heart of Jesus, West Rutland, as its Mission. He succeeded Father Jerome Gelot who was transferred to Poultney.

It must be remembered that Father Caissy was not a well man when he became pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish. It must be remembered, too, that Sacred Heart Parish was in debt. The number of parishioners had outgrown the seating capacity of the church.

But, ill health and all, Father Caissy did his very best for the parish. He was well liked by the parishioners. But in 1887 his health began to fail again. In fact in November of that year

The Reverend Phileas LaChance was sent as his assistant.

But in February the Rutland Herald reported that he was "in poor health". In April it reported that he was "very ill in Montreal." In May it stated that "he had been in a Montreal Hospital for three months having his throat treated." Although he improved he did not fully recover when he came home towards the end of May. But on May 31, 1888 the Herald reported, "he drove to West Rutland on Wednesday and called on several of his parishioners."

In February 1888 Father A. Langevin was appointed curate at Sacred Heart but he was replaced on March 1, 1888 by Father Fred Paquet. The latter curate had to carry on for the hospitalized Father Caissy and carried on until about September with the help of his brother, Father Joseph Paquet.

About August 1, 1888, Father Caissy was unable to carry on his duties and was obliged to resign. The two Fathers Paquet remained to carry on the work. Father Caissy went to live in Winooski. He died there November 10, 1888.

Father Caissy was mourned here in Rutland and West Rutland because "he had many friends". He was buried from Holy Guardian Angel Church in St. Albans on November 14, 1888 and lies buried in the crypt of that church.

Reverend Norbert Proulx

Norbert Proulx was born in St. Zephirin, Canada on April 13, 1855. He prepared for the priesthood at Nicolet College and also studied his theology there. On September 29, 1878, he was ordained in the Church at St. Zephirin, by Bishop Lafleche of Three Rivers, Canada. For three years he worked within his own diocese.

On January 16, 1881, Father Proulx of the Diocese of Three Rivers, received jurisdiction in the diocese of Burlington. His first assignment in the diocese was as a curate to Father Daniel O'Sullivan at White River Junction, Vermont. This curacy lasted only until March when he was sent to St. Mary's Parish, Newport, Vermont as pastor. While in Newport he did excellent work. Among

other works he opened a Catholic School there, taught by lay teachers, with about eighty pupils.

As Missions from the main parish, he took care of the Catholics in Lowell, Albany, Barton, Wells River, and Ely.

When Father Caissy resigned his pastorate of the Sacred Heart of Mary parish in Rutland, early in August 1888, Father Norbert Proulx, then only thirty-three years old, was appointed to succeed him on August 13, 1888. He had as Missions here, West Rutland and the church of St. Louis, in Fair Haven, which was re-attached to Sacred Heart of Mary for a short while.

He found a church which was too small for the increased congregation, and, no doubt, a congregation financially in difficulty and somewhat discouraged.

But these conditions did not get the young priest down. Slowly he became acquainted with his new parishioners and then began to make plans for a new church which have been amply described in the Chapter on the Church (Chapter III).

Late in March 1891, he announced to the congregation that a new church of blue stone would be constructed. The parishioners became enthusiastic about the idea and supported the plans of the pastor with money-raising affairs. "Friends have signified their intentions to help us", he announced.

In the fall of 1891, the basement was started. The cornerstone was blessed by Bishop Michaud on August 28, 1892. On Christmas Eve, 1893, the first Mass was offered in the basement of the new church. The old church, having been used up to then, was auctioned off to the highest bidder. The new church was completed and dedicated on July 4, 1894. Bishop Lafleche of Three Rivers, who had ordained Father Proulx, was the speaker in French at this dedication Mass.

Father Proulx worked hard to complete the new church. Mention is made in the accounts in the Rutland Heralds of his being the director of the church choir at one of its public appearances.

The Herald stated on July 5, 1894, "The local parishioners who find their many sacrifices crowned with success" also stated that

"Perhaps the most satisfied and contented individual was Father Proulx who in a happy little speech thanked the parishioners and those who coöperated with him."

He founded the St. Anne's Society in 1889, the Apostleship of Prayer in 1895. In 1902, there is mention of the Men's League of the Sacred Heart.

On the occasion of his twenty-fifth anniversary of ordination, September 29, 1903, it was stated that the debt on the new church was three-quarters paid off. Over five hundred parishioners turned out for a banquet in his honor at the Canadian-American Hall, at which a purse of \$250.00 was presented to him. The next morning, September 29, 1903, a large congregation turned out for a Mass in his honor, at which his own brother, Rev. A. Proulx of Montreal, was the speaker. Many priests came to grace the occasion.

After reading the documents of the parish, I think that it can safely be said that he turned the thinking of the parishioners completely around...from one of discouragement...to one of enthusiasm.

For thirty-two years he remained as Pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish. Before the end of those years the church debt had been entirely paid off and there was a surplus, albeit small, in the parish treasury.

It was with regret that the parishioners of the Parish saw their beloved Father Proulx leave their midst on Mary 21, 1920 to assume the pastorship of St. Joseph's Church in Burlington.

In Burlington he is remembered for having erected the Nazareth School.

But on Saturday, May 27, 1933, good Father Proulx died at the DeGoesbriand Hospital of myocarditis. His funeral was held at St. Joseph's Church, Burlington on May 30, 1933. Bishop J. J. Rice presided at the Mass which was offered by the Rev. Louis I. Sevigny who had been Father Proulx's altar boy at Sacred Heart of Jesus Mission Church in West Rutland years earlier.

His body was then taken to St. Zephirin, Canada for burial on May 31, 1933.

Reverend Louis Albert Vezina

L. A. Vezina was born in Danville, December 13, 1875, one of nine children of Mr. and Mrs. Regis Vezina. The family moved to Fall River, Massachusetts when he was a year old. He attended the parochial school there and at the age of thirteen went to Quebec to begin his preparation for the priesthood. In 1896 he graduated from Laval University. After four years of study in the theological seminary connected with Laval he was ordained a priest by the Archbishop of Quebec, Cardinal Bégin, at the Cathedral in Quebec City, February 18, 1900.

Because of the demand for priests in Vermont at this time Father Vezina, who was to have been ordained with other members of his class in June 1900, received the Sacrament of Holy Orders in February 1900.

Father Vezina never served as an assistant pastor. Immediately after his ordination he was appointed by Bishop Michaud, pastor of St. Bernard's Parish, Norton Mills, Vermont, with Missions in Wallace Pond and Bloomfield, Vermont. He remained here until July 1901. He then was transferred to the newly established parish of St. Genevieve at Shoreham, Vermont. He served there until January, 1907 when he was transferred to St. Peter's Church at Vergennes. During his stay here he was prominent in civic affairs.

He organized the Vergennes Chamber of Commerce and headed various committees on arrangements for public events, including the celebration in 1912 of the centennial of the battle of Plattsburg fought on Lake Champlain, when a fleet outfitted at Vergennes and led by Commodore Thomas MacDonough forced the British ships to retreat to Canada.

Father Vezina went to Washington, D.C. and was successful in obtaining a \$15,000.00 federal appropriation for the erection of the MacDonough Memorial which stands in the Vergennes Park.

He was influential in organizing the Vergennes Board of Trade and served as president of that body in 1909.

In four years the congregation of St. Peter's Church increased from six hundred to one thousand and the revenues of the church doubled.

In December of 1920, he was appointed by Bishop J. J. Rice to assume the pastorate of the Church of the Sacred Heart of Mary. It was Father Vezina's first assignment to a French-speaking parish. The parish numbered 1307 souls in the city, while the Mission at West Rutland had 300.

Father Vezina was active in musical circles in this city. For many years he was director of the church choir and, as president of the Green Mountain Chorus, was instrumental in presenting a series of concerts in Rutland.

During his pastorate here he accomplished many improvements at the church. Chief among them was the installing of a new pipe organ at a cost of \$ 10,000.00, and redecorating the church in 1939, and redoing the sanctuary with a new permanent white marble altar, with panels of rose de Brignolles marble which was erected after Easter, 1940. The cost of the new altar was about \$6,000.00.

After the death of Msgr. J. M. Brown of St. Peter's Church, he was named by Bishop Ryan to be the Dean of the Catholic clergy of Rutland County.

Since 1940 he had not been in the best of health, but he continued to run the parish with the help of assistant pastors, the first of whom was the Reverend Waltar F. Charland.

But on January 21, 1947 he was stricken by a cerebral hemorrhage and died that afternoon, at the age of seventy-one. The funeral was held Friday morning, January 24, 1947 at Sacred Heart of Mary Church. He was buried in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Rutland.

He had been active in city affairs. He was a member of the Catholic Order of Foresters. He was director of the Vermont State Court of the C.O.F. for two years and twice had been a delegate to international conventions. He was also a member of the Knights of Columbus.

Right Reverend Alfred Desautels

Alfred Desautels, the son of Moses and Agnes (Duhamel) Desautels, was born in New Haven in 1898. His early education was received in the schools of Burlington, Vermont and Fall River, Massachusetts. His high school and college courses were made in Montreal, Canada. Then he attended the Grand Seminary in Montreal.

He was ordained in 1924 at the Cathedral in Burlington, and offered his first Solemn High Mass at St. Joseph's Church, Burlington, the next day. Within a few weeks of his ordination he was assigned as an assistant to Notre Dame des Victoires Parish in St. Johnsbury. Here he remained until 1929.

In 1929 he was named the Pastor of St. Paul's Parish in Orwell, with a Mission in Shoreham. In September, 1939 he was transferred to St. Paul's Parish, in Barton, Vermont. While here he was named Dean of the Orleans district Catholic clergy. The district included three counties, Caledonia, Orleans, and Essex.

Following the death of Father Vezina in January 1947, he was appointed Pastor of Sacred Heart of Mary Parish in Rutland with Sacred Heart of Jesus Mission Church of West Rutland attached to it. For a number of years he was the State Chaplain of the Knights of Columbus.

It was not long before Father Desautels began thinking of building a parochial grade school in the parish. (This is amply discribed from page 25 and following). Fortunately he found Nuns who would undertake the teaching. An old house near the church was converted into a convent-school. On September 8, 1948 the school opened its doors. But on May 14, 1950 ground was broken for a new Sacred Heart School, opening for the fall term of 1951

His kindness and pleasant manner, in spite of poor health, is well remembered by the parishioners.

In June 1959 he was made a Right Reverend Monsignor by the reigning Pontiff.

Under his able administration the parish had grown in numbers and the school prospered.

For a number of years he had suffered from a heart ailment and on June 18, 1962, he died suddenly at the age of sixty-four. It was a Monday evening.

Among his survivors was one Sister who was a Nun, and a brother, the Very Reverend Armond Desautels, the President of Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts. Another brother, the Rev. V. Desautels had pre-deceased him.

The funeral was held Friday, June 22, at the Sacred Heart of Mary Church at 11:00 A.M. The Very Reverend Armond Desautels was the Celebrant of the Solemn High Mass. The burial was in the priest's lot at St. Joseph's Cemetery, Rutland.

Reverend Leo F. Poirier

Born in New Bedford, Massachusetts on September 23, 1901, Leo F. Poirier, the son of Francis and Angelique (Dupeus) Poirier, received his early education at St. Mary's Grade School there. He attended St. Thomas High School in Rockford, Illinois. St. Michael's College in Winooski Park, Vermont was the next educational institution he attended; after which it was St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, Maryland, and then the Grand Seminary in Montreal, Canada.

The Most Reverend Joseph J. Rice, D.D. Bishop of Burlington ordained Father Poirier at the Cathedral in Burlington on June 14, 1930. After curacies at St. Joseph's Church in Burlington, and then at Notre Dame des Victoires, in St. Johnsbury, he was given his first parish on October 24, 1936, St. Amadeus, in Alburg, Vermont. Here he remained for nearly twenty-six years.

Active in the parish, parish societies and the Knights of Columbus, he worked happily among his parishioners.

He was musically inclined and served as organist not only on the priest's retreats, but was the organist for the priest's choir which was organized by the Reverend Francis McDonough in 1939 or 1940. Father Poirier served in this capacity for several

years.

A friendly, but self-effacing little man (he was not very tall), he nevertheless made countless friends.

Although at the age of sixty-one and not a well man, he nevertheless was offered Immacualte Heart of Mary Church in Rutland after the death of Monsignor Desautels on June 28, 1962.

With the aid of his two curates Father Poirier carried on the work at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish. But after a week's hospitalization for a heart attack he died on September 24, 1965.

The funeral Mass was held at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church at 11:00 A.M. on Monday, September 27, 1965. His remains were taken to New Bedford, Massachusetts for burial in Sacred Heart Cemetery there.

VIII Societies

Choir

The musical tradition at the Sacred Heart of Mary Church dates back to its beginning. During the Mission that preceded the announcement of Father Gagnier's appointment as pastor, singing played a prominent part. Evidently a choir was formed to assist in their worship of God. An organ was placed in the choir loft of the first church.

The September 22, 1891 account of the Parish Bazaar that year mentions "a concert by the church choir of thirty-six voices with Father Proulx, directing and Miss Bacon at the piano." At the blessing of the cornerstone, August 28, 1892, "the choir was on a platform on the church floor on the south side." During the Bazaar, September 27, 1892 the choir gave another concert. At the Dedication of the new church, July 4, 1894, a Solemn High Mass was celebrated. The choir also taking part in the Dedication ceremonies before the Mass.

During Father Proulx's years as pastor the choir continued to be an integral part of the Sunday High Masses, Vespers and Benediction. Christmas and Easter were feasts for special efforts by the choir.

But with the coming of the musically talented Father Vezina, the choir received a new impetus.

"A very elaborate musical program", reported the Herald, "has been prepared at the Sacred Heart of Mary Church for Christmas" (1921). "With the help of singers from the City and West Rutland

the choir will render the "Messe Solevnelle" of L. Dachauer...a Sacred concert will be given between 11:30 and 12:00 and the Mass will begin at 12:00 sharp.

"The program of the concert follows: 'Il est né le Divine Enfant' - chorus and solo by Bernadette Leonard; 'Nouvelle Agreable' - chorus and solo by Mrs. Herbert Pelkey; Prayer in the Chapel - orchestra; Christmas Hymn, Orchestra; 'Dans Cette Etable' - Chorus and solo by Octave G. E. Chamberland.

Program of the Mass: "Gratias Agimus" soprano solo by Maud Rocheleau; "Qui Tollis", quartet, Emma Marceau, Doris Bacon, T. C. Ross, bass solo by Sidney Graham, "Et in Spiritum", bass solo by Octave Chamberland; "Agnus Dei", quartet, Emma Ianni, Mrs. Pelkey, Louis A. Provost, and Arthur Bacon.

"Personnel of the Chorus: Sopranos, Anita Charron, Louise Crocker, Florence Lapistale, Marguerite Lassar, Marie LaVallée, Emma Marceau, Geraldine Monette, Maud Rocheleau, Mrs. Louis Martin, Mrs. Menard, Mrs. T. C. Ross, Bernadette Leonard, Hazel Moulton and Mrs. Leon Moulton; Altos, Mrs. G. W. Branchaud, Irene Longe, Leah Laporte, Mrs. Charles Preedom, Mrs. E. C. Routier, Doris Bacon, and Mrs. Herbert Pelkey; Tenors, Rev. L. A. Vezina, T. C. Ross, Thomas Granger, Edmond Lefrancois, Donald Watkins, William Hevey; Bass, Arthur Bacon, Octave Chamberland, Andrew Ducharme, S. P. Graham, J. E. Provost, and Robert Ostiguy, and L. E. Provost; Director, Reverend L. A. Vezina; Organist, Mrs. Louise Branchaud.

"On Christmas day Mass will be said at 8:00 and the music will be rendered by the children of the parish under the direction of the assistant organist, Doris Bacon."

At Easter, 1922, an elaborate musical program was prepared and sung, under the direction of Louis Provost, at the 9:30 A.M. Mass.

But besides these church appearances of the choir, it also made public ones, augmented by other local talent, at the Playhouse (now The Movies on Center Street).

In April 1921 an orchestra of ten assisted the chorus of sixty voices in putting on a musical entertainment that drew a standing room attendance at the Playhouse for the benefit of Sacred Heart Church. Father Vezina directed the orchestra and chorus. Excerpts from Gounad's "Faust", Rossini's "Stabat Mater", Berlioz's "The Regimental Song", and Shumann's "The Two Grenadiers" were sung as well as French and English favorites.

In May, 1922 a second annual public concert was held again at the Playhouse before a capacity crowd. This year an orchestra of seventeen pieces and a chorus of seventy-five voices performed. The soloists were all local singers: Octave Chamberland, Leo O'Rourke, John Barrett, Sidney Graham, Archie Stewart, and Misses Marie LaVallee, Emma Marceau, Maud Rochleau, and Nellie Barrett were among those featured. Father Vezina again directed the chorus and orchestra. Again the proceeds of the performance was for the benefit of Sacred Heart Church.

This year a select group of the singers performed at the Nurse's Graduation from the Rutland Hospital. Later the chorus and solists volunteered their services for the benefit of the Nurses's Home.

A third concert, for the benefit of the church, was scheduled again for the Playhouse. This concert featured the works of these composers: Bellini, Bizet, Liszt, Rossini, Auber, DuBois, Delibes, etc.

A trained chorus of sixty voices, and an orchestra of fifteen pieces tastefully entertained a capacity audience.

For several years, under Father Vezina's direction with Mr. Louis Provost Choir Leader, not only the congregation at Sacred Heart, but also the musically inclined of the area were treated to these musical delights.

St. John The Baptist Society

The first recorded attempt to organize the French Canadians living in Rutland into a society was made in 1879-1880 at the

Sacred Heart of Mary Church. Father Jerome Gelot had a hand in organizing the St. John The Baptist Society, a unit of an international Society (or Union) dedicated to charity and socialibility among its members.

The December 31, 1879 issue of the Rutland Herald reported that "the St. Jean Baptiste Society held its first annual dance at the Armory last evening. A large company was present and the festivities were prolonged to a late hour."

However the first meeting of the new society took place on February 4, 1880. Dances, suppers and other money raising activities were frequently held, not only for the benefit of the society but also for that of the church.

June 24th was their feast day. Not only did they celebrate this day locally, but some years they went to St. Albans, to Vergennes (1882), to West Rutland (1890) to join with the local units in their celebrations.

But without question their biggest celebration was June 24-27, 1886 when they hosted the National Convention of the St. John The Baptist Societies. Twenty-six Societies were represented at this convention. The city donned holiday attire for her guests. The convention was held at the Town Hall. Three hundred delegates attended.

The last day of the convention was climaxed by a giant parade through the streets to the Fairgrounds with all of the delegates and bands that were present participating. 10,000 people lined the parade route. Mass was Celebrated at the Fairgrounds. Bishop DeGoesbriand preached in French and Father Daniel O'Sullivan in English.

Delegates came from Paris, France; Montreal, Canada; New Hampshire; Vermont; Massachusetts; Rhode Island; Maine; New York; and, from as far away as Lake Linden, Michigan. New Hampshire was well represented and the site of the next national convention was chosen as Nashua, New Hampshire in June, 1888.

The first officers of the local unit to be mentioned in the Heralds was for the year 1883. They were: Alphonse Allaire, President; David Hevy, Vice-president; A. Rousseau, Secretary; Joseph

Poulin, Financial secretary; P. Roi, Corresponding secretary; Joseph Lareau, Treasurer; Rev. Jerome M. Gelot, Chaplain; and Milaire Lefevre, Marshall. The election of officers was held on the first Wednesday of January each year.

Their first meeting place was the hall at the rear of the old church on Lincoln Avenue. It was known as the St. John The Baptist Hall. Later the Society met in the Canado-American Hall over the Rutland Savings Bank on 45½ Merchants Row.

For a number of years this society had affairs such as dances, dinners and entertainments for the benefit of Sacred Heart Church. In the early days and during the building of the new church, they put on suppers, etc. to assist the pastors with their financial burdens.

The officers in 1899-1900 were: Noah LaRose, President; and Frederick Gosselin, Treasurer. The Local Council was No. 20. Their meetings were held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at the Canado-American Hall.

A few years later the officers were: C. J. Frechette, President, Nazaire Ostiguy, Secretary and A. J. Courcelle, Treasurer.

The Garde D' Honneur, a juvenile branch of the society, is first mentioned in the City Directory in 1909-1910. They met on the first and third Fridays of each month. The first officers were: L. N. Provost, Captain; C. J. Frechette, First Lieutenant, and L. S. Robillard, Second Lieutenant. This unit of the Society lasted for several years.

The first mention of the Ladies Auxilary of the Society, Cercle St. Cecile, was in 1914. This unit still meets regularly.

The parent unit of the Society lasted until 1960 when, due to lack of interest among the younger men of the parish, the St. John the Baptist Society was down to seven or eight members. This great Society then decided to disband.

The last officers were: D. J. Laflamme, President; A. Racine, Secretary and L. N. Provost, Treasurer. They still carry on the insurance with the Society, by paying directly to the National office.

St. Ann's Society

The feast of St. Ann was first celebrated in 1889. In August of that year the women of the parish petitioned Bishop DeGoes-Briand to officially permit the Ladies of St. Anne to be formed at Sacred Heart of Mary Church in Rutland.

The formation of this society in Rutland engendered a great devotion to St. Ann which still exists to the present day.

Chief among the devotions was an annual pilgrimage to St. Ann de Beaupré in the Province of Quebec. Large crowds, not only from Rutland, but also West Rutland Bennington and other parishes along the Rutland Railroad took part in these pilgrimages. The pilgrimage would leave Rutland by train, at Montreal they would take a boat to St. Ann de Beaupré. The devotees of the St. Ann would spend a half day in Quebec City and, on the way back, a full day in Montreal and thence to Rutland by train. It usually lasted three days.

Later this organization used to sponsor a Novena in honor of St. Ann at the parish church.

The Society has been very active in the parish since its inception. Untold good has been accomplished by its members.

Children of Mary

The Children of Mary (les enfants de Marie) was first organized in the parish in 1887. This society took girls from thirteen years of age and up.

It met once a year, about the time for the feast of the Assumption each year.

Dues for the thirteen and fourteen year olds was \$.15 a year and for those over fifteen, it was \$.25 a year.

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DJM (Webmaster)