



## THE CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Diocese of Amarillo



806-414-1076 + Fax 806-383-8452

P. O. Box 5644 + Amarillo, TX 79117-5644

4512 N. E. 24th Avenue

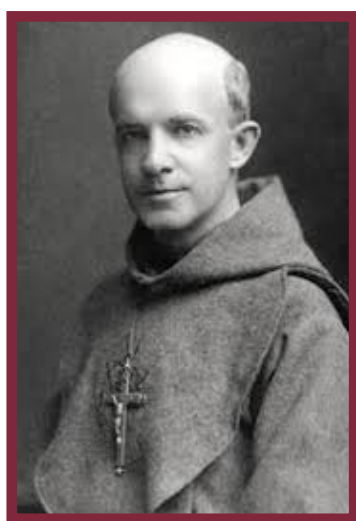
Email: [sgarner@dioama.org](mailto:sgarner@dioama.org) **NEW**

VOLUME FOUR

WINTER

2019

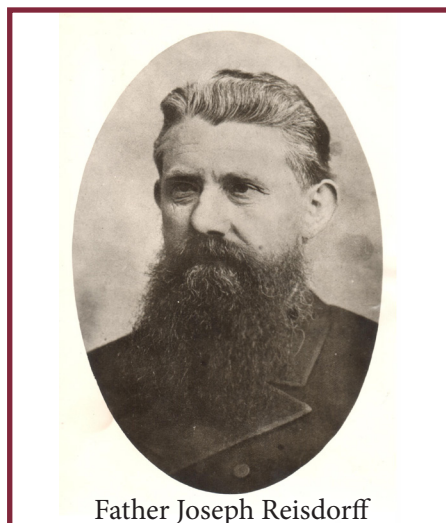
# Atonement Friars in West Texas



Fr. Paul Wattson

Highway 60 in the Texas Panhandle turns southwest from Amarillo and runs through parts of Potter, Randall, Deaf Smith, Castro, and Parmer counties and on into New Mexico. It was along this route, in a tremendously productive area of irrigated farm land, that the Friars of the Atonement, in their sixty-eight years there, 1920-1988, built three parishes and laid good foundations for a fourth. From their center at St. Anthony's Church in Hereford, they developed St. Ann's Parish in Bovina, St. Teresa's Parish in Friona, and began the mission of St. Joseph's parish in Hereford, the second Catholic parish in Hereford. To go back a little earlier than the coming of the Friars, in 1902 the priest-

colonizer, father Joseph Reisdorff, had founded a parish at Nazareth in Castro County, and another at Umbarger in Randall County in 1909. He had had experience in bringing German farmers to two other parishes that he had founded earlier, farther east in Texas. At Nazareth he began advertising in Catholic newspapers in South Tex



Father Joseph Reisdorff

as and in the Middle West. Young farmers, whose fathers or grandfathers had found farms in those areas in the 1800s, were looking for farms for themselves. In 1902, the ranches in the Texas Panhandle were being broken up into individual farms. The prospect of a farm in a new land, in a parish where there was a Catholic church, was very appealing, and the parishes grew. When the Friars

came to Hereford in 1920, not quite a generation later, there was a similar movement of young farmers. Families from Nazareth and Umbarger, and of course others, found new farms and new homes in the irrigated farm land around Hereford, where St. Anthony's Church and the Atonement Friars served them.

To go back again to 1920, the young Irish priest, Father David Henry Dunn, who was pastor of the entire Panhandle except Nazareth, moved his church headquarters from Clarendon in Donley County to Amarillo, because that was the coming railroad center of the Panhandle. He built the first Sacred Heart Church in Amarillo in 1916, only a few months earlier than Father Reisdorff built Holy Family church in Nazareth.

It was Father Dunn who first brought the few Catholics in Hereford under the ministry of the Church. The first recorded baptism for Hereford is that of Edward Renfro, baptized in Sacred Heart Church, Amarillo, by Father D. H. Dunn on July 4, 1906.

It was Father Dunn's practice to make trips on the railroad lines out of Amarillo, stopping off at points to offer Mass for the few Catholic families in the towns or surrounding territory. For some



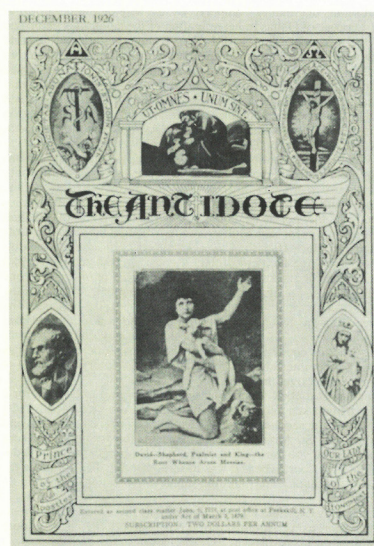
families farther from the railroad he made a trip by hack into the country, as he did for O'Loughlin family north of the Canadian River. We might note that Father Charles Bier, who was Father Dunn's assistant from 1909 to 1913, followed the same procedure. Father Dunn would send a postcard ahead of time to the family in whose home he would celebrate Mass, telling them the time he would be there. Families would notify each other. One of the Hereford families preserved one of Father Dunn's postcards for years. The family of W. D. Keliehor settled southeast of Hereford in 1893 and had attended Mass in the T P. McCormick home at Wynne (later Nazareth) in Castor County. The family moved to Hereford in 1907, where Father Dunn offered Mass in their home once a month. Gradually Father Dunn got some help.

Father Reisdorff offered Mass in Hereford on occasion, coming probably from Umbarger, and so did Father Bier, from Amarillo. Father Christian Weigand, who served at St. Mary's church in Umbarger for some months in ear-

ly 1910, celebrated Mass in Hereford the last Sunday of each month.

Then in late 1910, Father J. A. Campbell, who was to found St. Anthony's Church in Hereford, was assigned to Umbarger, with missions along Highway 60 from Canyon to the New Mexico line. By motorcycle he went, celebrating Mass in his one church in Umbarger and in other towns in homes, or possibly public buildings, baptizing children both Spanish and Anglo.

There was at this time a rabid anti-Catholic paper called *The Menace* circulating in the country. It was an expression of the centuries-old hatred of Catholics, dating from the Reformation, and this animosity was heightened by the fear that the Catholic immigrants would take over the English-speaking United States of America. Millions of Irish people had come to America following the potato famine in the 1840's. Now millions more were coming from southern Europe, many of them Catholic, all of them foreign speaking. This wide spread fear would result in restrictive immigration laws that held for a half century.



*The Antidote* published by Father Campbell at Hereford to counteract slander against the church. Father Paul took it over and published it until 1930.

For Father Campbell in 1910 *The Menace* was defaming his church

and his few Catholic families, and he did something about it. He set up a small press in Umbarger and published a monthly magazine called *The Antidote* to counteract the poison spread by *The Menace*. It seems that Father Campbell had the help of another priest of the Diocese of Dallas in his refutation of the calumnies published in the *Menace*. This was Father Kemper, stationed oater at Kerrville, Texas. Father Kemper answered a letter of inquiry from Bishop Laurence J. FitzSimon of Amarillo. Yes, he had helped Father Campbell in editing *The Antidote*. He wrote part of the material published in the paper, on occasion writing all of it. He and Father Campbell had obtained copies, he said, of the subscription lists of *The Menace*, and they sent *The Antidote* to those subscriber's. The last issue of *The Antidote*, he said, was dated 1931. When father Campbell came to Umbarger in 1910, he immediately began to expand his services in Hereford.

A new county courthouse was being built there on Sampson Street, across the street south of the old county courthouse. The old courthouse, located on the northeast corner of the intersection of 4th and Sampson, was for sale. Father Campbell bought the property, Lots 7 and 8 in Block 10 of the city of Hereford, for four thousand dollars – for three hundred dollars in cash and the remainder in a series of eight notes for \$500.00 each, payable in intervals of one year. The deed read: purchased by J. A. Campbell, in trust for Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas, Texas. The agreement was made that the building could continue to be used for the purposes of a courthouse until the new courthouse was finished, and could also used for religious purposes, so long as those did not interfere with the

## Father Paul Called his shed the Palace of Lady Poverty



County's use. There is no record of disagreement over those terms.

Father Campbell was purchasing the building to be used for a church and a school. When the building was free he established a chapel on the second floor, in the former district court room, and named it for St. Anthony of Padua, a name that the parish has kept since. He moved the printing press from Umbarger and installed it on the first floor, where it was used in printing *The Antidote* for nearly a decade. The building came to be called *The Antidote Building*.

In late 1913 Father Campbell moved to Hereford, the first resident pastor, using a room or rooms on the first floor of the Antidote Building for his residence

The first Catholic families in Hereford wanted a Catholic school as well as a church. On St. Anthony's annual parish report for 1914, to be sent to the Bishop of Dallas, the Catholic congregation was given as ten families, and it carried the notation, "School will be opened in April." The following year the school was open for two months.

It was not until 1917 that St. Anthony's School began full operation. Four Sisters of the Atonement from Graymoor, New York arrived in Hereford in August 1917, and opened St. Anthony's School that fall. In about 1916 Father Campbell had begun writing to Father Paul James Francis of the Friars of the Atonement in Graymoor, New York, asking for mission helpers. The contact with Father Paul was a fortunate one for the little group of people at St. Anthony's in Hereford, and had resonances in many parishes in the Diocese of Amarillo and to the south. The Friars were to come to St. Anthony's and stay until 1988.

Father Paul, whose baptismal name was Lewis Thomas Watson, was the son of an Episcopal minister stationed in Maryland. Even as a boy Paul had conceived the idea of founding a religious order of preachers. At the age of twenty-three he was ordained an Episcopal minister. The influence of the Oxford movement in England was being felt in America. Some of the Episcopal ministers felt great sympathy with those in England who seemed drawn to the Roman Catholic Church. The Reverend Mr. Lewis shared this attraction. He believed that Episcopal ministers were validly ordained and that it should not be difficult for the Episcopal Church, as a whole body, to be

reunited with the Catholic Church. He prayed and he spoke for this reunion.

He filled a number of positions in the Episcopal churches in the East, and was then appointed as the superior of a group of unmarried Episcopal ministers in Omaha, Nebraska, who were living a common life together as they did their apostolic work. This would seem to be a good experience for one who envisioned the founding of a religious order. For three years the young minister stayed there, and before leaving Omaha, he made a vow of Franciscan church as well as within it. From the Bible, the Rev. Mr. Watson took the name of the Religious society that he wished to found, the Society of the Atonement.



Mother Lurana Mary Francis

It was during his stay in Omaha that he received a letter of inquiry from Sister Lurana White. Coming from a well-to-do episcopal family in Warwick, New York, she had entered an Episcopal congregation of religious sisters, the Sisterhood of the Holy Child. But she felt called to a stricter life of poverty. She asked the Reverend Mr. Watson if he knew of any Episcopal group of sisters

who followed the Franciscan life of poverty closely. He answered that he did not know of one, but through the correspondence that ensued between them he told her of his plan of founding a Franciscan order of Religious men, and suggested that she might like to found an order of Franciscan sisters in the Episcopal Church that would practice stricter poverty, and that it might be a group parallel to his. She agreed to this plan.

Sister Lurana heard of an abandoned chapel on a small piece of land about fifty miles north of New York City, in a sparsely settled valley known as Graymoor. She went there in 1899 to live in an abandoned farmhouse, and there she later built the mother-house of the Franciscan sisters of the Atonement.

The Reverend Lewis Watson by coincidence acquired a 24 acre site nearby in the Graymoor Valley, with a hill which he name Mount of the Atonement. He made a short novitiate with the Anglican Fathers of the Holy Cross, and then in late 1899 he came to the Mount of the Atonement. He spent the winter there in a dilapidated shed.

The next year he knelt before Episcopal Bishop Colman of Delaware and publicly pronounced the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. As a Franciscan he took the religious name of Paul James Francis. Returning to Graymoor he built St. Paul's friary, a small building, but the beginning of later development. In 1901 father Paul preached a sermon in a Long Island Episcopal church, defending the primacy of Peter, stating in resounding terms that the Bishop of Rome was the rightful head of all Christian churches. This sermon alienated the leaders of the Episcopal Church. In their opinion, he had spoken heresy. As a result, Father Paul found Episcopal pulpits closed to him.



But Father Paul persisted in his efforts to bring the Episcopal Church into the fold of Peter. He founded a monthly magazine devoted to church unity, *The Lamp*. The first issue came out February 1, 1903. On the masthead he printed the Latin words *Ut Omnes Unum Sint*, meaning in English That All May Be One, --words that Christ prayed at the Last Supper. In this paper Father Paul defended the Papacy in editorials and articles. The magazine was not supported by the majority of Episcopalians. It could not pay for itself and some issues had to be skipped. Mother Lurana and her sisters begged on the streets of New York City and sold the paper to provide the money to continue the magazine. In January of 1908 Father Paul and his community inaugurated the eight days of prayer for church unity, beginning on January 18, the feast of St. Peter's Chair in Rome, to January 25, the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. This was called the Church unity Octave.

At that time father Paul began to read more of the Catholic literature that defended the primacy of the Pope. He concluded that the claims of the Pope were correct. The Roman Catholic Church was the true Church of Christ. For the rest of his life he would work to bring Christian churches into the Church of Peter.

It was clear that the Society of Atonement could not wait until the whole Episcopal Church was ready to unite with the Catholic Church. They would have to act now. On October 20, 1909, the Society of Atonement, as a group, was received into the Catholic Church.



In this group there were seventeen people: Father Paul and Brother Anthony, Mother Lurana and her four sisters, and ten lay persons who were associated with the friars and sisters as a lay society.

Father Paul was ordained in the Roman Catholic Church in June, 1910, at Dunwoody, New York. Missionary societies such as the Society of the Atonement not only pray for

In 1899 Mother Lurana was the first to move to Graymoor. She and her one companion lived in a ramshackle hut near the little chapel. They had no heat, no electricity, nor any of the ordinary comforts that even the poorest would have. Still, they were content, knowing that they were serving Lady Poverty in the spirit of St. Francis. The first winter, with deep snows and extreme cold, was exceedingly difficult, but they persevered. Father Paul joined them after leaving Holy Cross. He hoped to find a cave in the area to spend the winter, but there were none. A workman showed him an old paint shack nearby with big gaps in the outside walls; here he could winter over. Father Paul called it the Palace of Lady Poverty, and, for a time, he happily made it his home.

Christ's kingdom, they work for it. This second activity, the labor, was soon added to the goals of the Society of the Atonement and placed on the mast-head of *The Lamp*. Below the name was a line which read, "A Catholic Monthly, Devoted to Church Unity and the Missions." In the early years of the Society their membership was very small. Help for the missions would have to take the form of financial aid. In the pages of *The Lamp* they asked for alms for the missions, and the response grew year by year. The Society began a perpetual novena to St. Anthony of Padua, the wonder worker. Donations came in and the two communities of the sisters and the friars, and their lay associates, prayed fervently for those who assisted them. Father Paul launched his mission aid or organization, the Union-That-Nothing-Be-Lost. Members joined this union and gave alms to it, to be distributed to the missions. When the numbers of friars increased, as they did, friars also went to the missions. When Father Campbell, far to the west in Hereford, Texas, asked for missionaries to help him, it was Mother Lurana who answered the call. Hereford had a priest, Father Campbell; she sent four sisters, headed by Sister Christina, two would teach in the school that Father Campbell was eager to open, and the others would help in other work. This was the first mission opened by the Society of the Atonement.

Early in 1917, Father Campbell had purchased a house and moved it beside the Antidote Building as a convent for the sisters, who were to come in the fall. *The Memoirs of Lurana Mary Francis* carry the account of the four sisters' departure for Texas:

*"August 27 [1917]: 'Hereford Day.' This great day of the departure of our first Mission sisters is the most exquisite one for two months, clear, cool, and altogether perfect. Reverend Father came down a little earlier for Mass. The Sisters had bid the four missionaries good-bye last evening at the end of the Community Hour, so as not to break the Great Silence this morning. After breakfast all went into choir while the 'four' knelt at the altar rail for Father's last blessing; first he blessed their Union-That-Nothing-Be-Lost medals. Next he blessed each one separately and prayed for them all a safe journey. Just before he blessed them, the Veni Creator had been recited, our Atonement prayer, 'O God, Who hast prepared for them that love Thee,' etc., and the Union-That-Nothing-Be Lost prayer with outstretched arms. Then Father called the superior into the Sacristy and gave or rather lent her the precious relic of the Five Proto-Martyrs. This is to be returned to him some day. He told them later to have, above all else, a great confidence in our devotion to God the Holy Ghost. After the Blessing the other Sisters returned to their work and the Missionaries with two other companions who were accompanying them to New York, Reverend Father and myself, stepped into the front cloister, and then the six got into an automobile at the front door, and it started off with its precious freight. We were much edified by their cheerful faces and their sweet dignity and self-control, Though I know the tears were not far off. After Terce, we said in Choir the Itinerary for them. May they indeed 'proceed prosperously in the name of the Lord.'"*

The sisters arrived in Hereford August 30, 1917 and school began the first days of September, in the Antidote Building, where two sisters taught thirty pupils in grades one to six. The sisters were quickly immersed in their work.

mined to go back to his native Canada, but first he must take care of his business matters. By 1916 he had paid all the notes due on the Antidote Building. Father Campbell's little parish of some ten families could not help with the payments for this building. He had made all the payments himself. On March 2, 1915, Bishop Lynch of Dallas deeded the property of the Antidote Building to Father Campbell.

Now Father Campbell would be willing to turn the Antidote property over to Father Paul James Francis, S.A. for church purposes. The two men made an agreement to that effect in May, 1918. The conditions made in this agreement reveal their concern for the Church and its missions. The agreement noted that the Antidote Publishing Company had been incorporated under the laws of Texas "for the purpose of advancing Missionary work on behalf of the Catholic church in the southwest of the United States and other work of similar character," and that Father Paul had "for a number of years been doing similar work successfully through the publication of the *Lamp*."

There were several conditions made in the transfer. Father Paul James Francis, party of the second part, would "continue to publish the Antidote and strive to procure the advancement of missionary work in the southwest of the United States, through the same "The Antidote" as well as the enlightenment of our separated brethren of the Protestant faith, agreeing that the Party of the Second Part, with good will and within reasonable bounds of charity, of the sisters of the Atonement in their education of the children of scattered Catholic families and Poor Mexicans, as is now being done."

It was agreed "that the two cer

tain parcels of land located across Sampson Street and bought from one Charles Lester, may at the option of the Catholics of Hereford, be taken by them as a building site for a Catholic Church.”

It was agreed “that the relations between the Party of the First Part and that of the Second Part, must be those of mutual good will in all things pertaining to the good work at hand...”

It was agreed that Father Paul James Francis would furnish Father Campbell with room and board and, if Father Campbell stayed in Hereford, with forty dollars a month, but if he moved from Hereford, the stipend would be increased to seventy-five dollars a month. Father Paul James Francis would also furnish Father Campbell with a Mass stipend as long as he was able to celebrate Mass. All of these payments would cease at the death of Father Campbell. Father Campbell later returned to the Diocese of Amarillo and died there July 9, 1927. He is buried in the priests’ section of Llano Cemetery in Amarillo. After Father Campbell’s death, Father Paul wrote to Bishop Gerken, offering to pay any expenses incurred, but the Bishop replied that there were none. Father Campbell had made three wills and destroyed them all, and disposed of his property before his death. Apparently, some property that he had was left to the Diocese of Amarillo.. One thing was constant in the missionary’s life, a love for the Church in the Southwest. His soul must have communed with God in those long silent rides to and from his missions.

Mother Lurana and Father Paul were nonplussed when just one year after the sisters arrived, Father Campbell left Hereford. The Texas Panhandle was a faraway place. Would there be a priest to

celebrate Mass and help the sisters in their introduction to parish life? Would this new mission, so far away, continue, or would it fail? It was hundreds of miles from Dallas, the center of the diocese. Father Paul wrote a very anxious letter to Bishop Lynch at Dallas. The Bishop’s answer was to direct Father J. J. Dolje, at St. Mary’s Church in Umbarger, twenty miles to the east of Hereford, to celebrate Mass on Hereford Sundays and Wednesdays at Hereford.



Fr. J. J. Dolje

Father Dolje was an old time-missionary from Holland, big of body and big of heart. The confidence, instilled by him wherever he went, would reassure the sisters, and relieve the worry of the two founders at Graymoor. These founders, Lurana and Paul, were also big of heart and used to perseverance in adverse circumstances. The first school year was barely over, when the sisters were given a task for which they were not prepared, the printing of *The Antidote*. The October, 1918 issue of *The Lamp* tells the story. *Early in the summer, as previously announced in the Lamp, The Antidote Publishing Company passed into the control of the Society of the Atonement, and James Boyland, one of our tertiaries, was placed in*

*charge of the printing office. He was handling the job in a very satisfactory manner, when in July came the summons to put on the Khaki (wear military clothes), and this created a situation which only the pluck and courage of our Texas sisters saved from being a calamity.*

*“With the assistance of Father Campbell, who was preparing to escape the grave by getting away from Hereford while there was still time to seek a lower altitude, the sister superior and her companions took charge of the office, and although none of them had had any previous experience in the printing line, they learned in a few weeks to run the linotype and the printing press and got out a double number of *The Antidote* for August and September, which was quite the equal of any of its predecessors, an achievement in the journalistic line probably never exactly paralleled in the whole history of what has been done by women in religion. Can anyone doubt after this that our sisters will make good no matter what difficulties they have to encounter in the mission field?”*

The *Antidote* was published in Hereford for about a year, when it was moved to Graymoor and continued to be published until the beginning of the depression of the 1930s.

The sisters had opened school in the *Antidote* Building, but after a few months they moved to a house on the site that later became the school playground. In 1918 the parish, no doubt with help from Graymoor, purchased a fairly large house on North 25 Mile Avenue, not far from where St. Anthony’s would locate their parish plant many years later. This house was named St Francis House. In the second school term, the classes were held both in

on the playground near the church, which Father Paul named St. Christopher Cottage. The sisters soon moved to St. Francis House, leaving their former convent to be St. Anthony's rectory.

The Friars of the Atonement were gradually increasing in number. Father Paul was looking forward to the ordination of two young priests. One of them, Father Salvatore di Giovanni, a capable young man, he planned to send to St. Anthony's in Hereford. It would be a great moment in the annals of the friars, for it would be their first mission house.



Fr. Salvatore di Giovanni.

The Lamp for June, 1920, tells the story: "June 16th according to the Franciscan Calendar is the Feast of Our Lady of Succor. Its celebration at Graymoor this year was specially memorable for three reasons: First, it was the tenth Anniversary of the Ordination to the Catholic priesthood of the Father Minister by His Eminence, the late Cardinal Archbishop of New York; Second it was the occasion of Father Salvator and John Marie making their final vows and third: Father Salvatore and Brother James left late in the afternoon for Hereford, Texas, to establish there the First Branch House of the Friars of the Atonement."

"The celebration began on the evening on the previous with a

*'Gaudeamus' in St. John's House of Studies where music, singing, and speeches capped by ice cream constituted the order of the evening's entertainment. During the Solemn High Mass in Saint Francis Church at 9 o'clock on Wednesday morning, Fathers Salvatore and John Marie made profession of Life Vows as Friars of the Atonement (Third Order Regular of St. Francis). At three o'clock in the afternoon, the Community again assembled in the famous Hymn of Farewell to departing missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith was sung, during which those present first kissed the feet and then lovingly embraced the first two Missionaries to descend from the Mount of the Atonement in fulfillment of the Prayer which we have recited for the last twenty years - 'That the Sons of the Atonement might become Missionaries in all lands.' It was a solemn moment charged with deep emotion and many tears were shed. After the completion of the hymn and the embrace of farewell, Solemn Benediction of the Sacrament was given by Father Salvatore, assisted by Father John Marie and Joseph Capoano, T.S.A."*

*"We ask our readers also to accompany Father Salvatore and Brother James with their prayers in Hereford, where for three years past our Sisters have already labored and who will rejoice to welcome the Friars to the Texas 'Panhandle.' One of Father Salvatore's first tasks will be the erection of a Church. Two thousand dollars has already been contributed by a generous benefactor in New York [ by a friend of Father Salvatore's ] and we ask for young Missionary further assistance; for the Church he plans to erect will cost at least Five Thousand Dollars."*

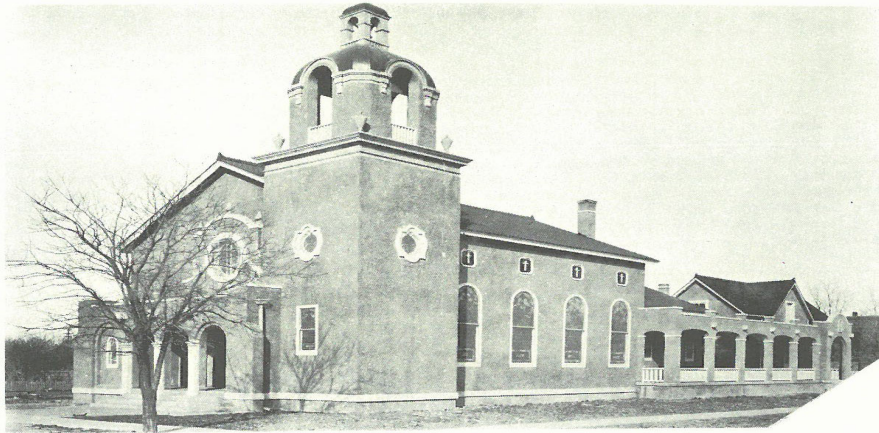
There was rejoicing in the little Catholic community at Hereford when the two arrived from Graymoor. To the four sisters it meant daily Mass and the visible presence of the support from their motherhouse and from Father Paul and the friars. To a dozen or so Catholic families, it meant all the consolations of a parish and a resident pastor.

Father Salvatore's first task was to make a church out of the old courthouse building. The Antidote Building was very sturdily constructed, but to this young Italian with memories of European churches as part of his cultural heritage, it would take a considerable amount of remodeling to make it into a church. The floor of the second floor would have to be removed. New windows and doors were necessary. The cost rose to twenty-five thousand dollars, but it was a beautiful little church, designed with Italian grace and individuality. It was a credit to Father Salvatore di Giovanni. No one would guess that it had been made out of the old Deaf Smith County courthouse.

The first Mass was celebrated in the new church on December 8, 1921, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. To pay for the expenses incurred in building, Father Salvatore begged, through the pages of the Lamp, with such success that when the church was dedicated by Bishop Lynch of Dallas on June 13, 1922, the feast of St. Anthony, the church was free of debt.

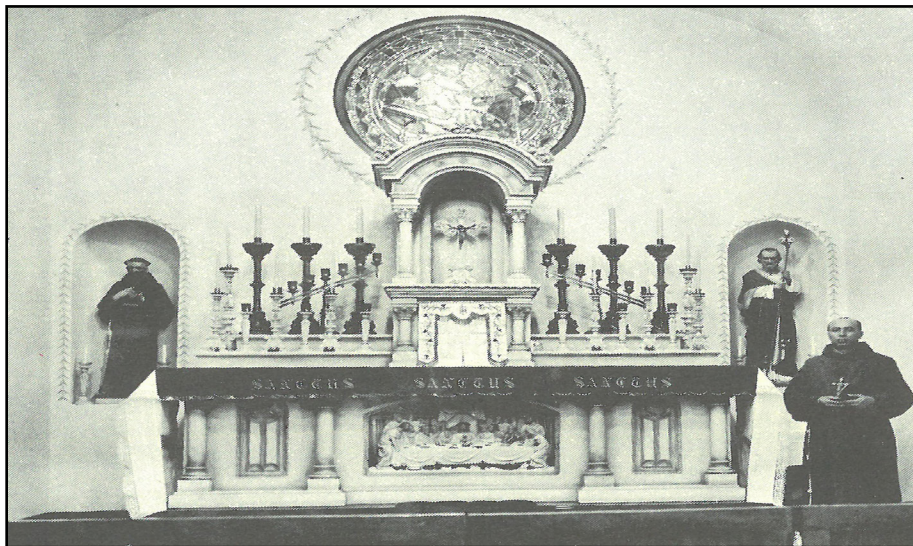
There were only twelve families in the parish at Hereford at this time. That was not sufficient number to pay for the expenses of the church and school. To augment their income, Father Salvatore with the assistance of the sisters, began a perpetual novena to St. Anthony at

# The Conquest of Quivira--Summer, 1541

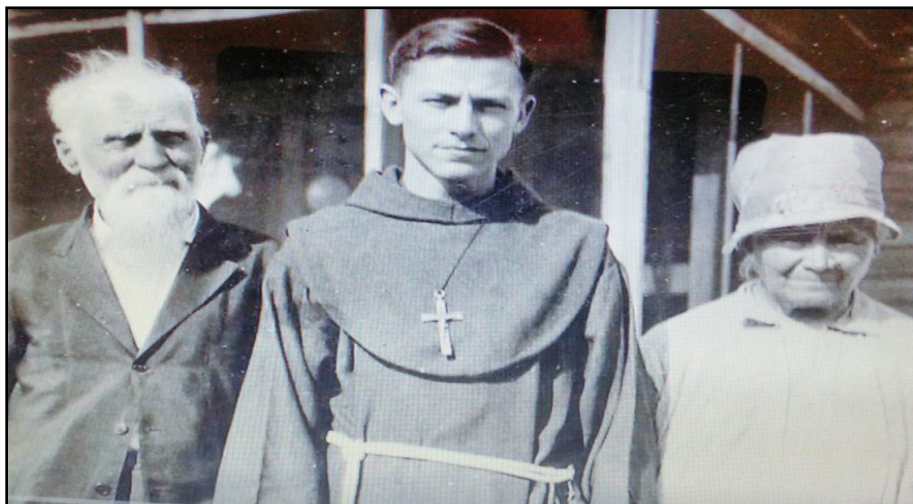


St. Anthony's Church, 1922.

Renovation of the Courthouse by Fr. Salvatore



Renovation of the Interior by Fr. Salvatore



Louis Koelzer and parents

What difficulties lay ahead for Father Paul and Mother Lurana! The happiness they enjoyed now that they were finally at home with Rome was tempered by legal problems with the Episcopal Church, which tried to take away the property of Graymoor, and by the fact that Father Paul was not really "Father" at all. Legally, of course, the Graymoor property belonged to Father Paul and Sister Lurana according to the original deed. After some time, that problem being settled, the sisters were faced with a similar legal battle on their convent property. The fact that Mother Lurana refused personally to own property complicated the situation. After more than seven years of negotiations, and the assistance of some heavyweight state politicians, including the Honorable Hamilton Fish, a state assemblyman and prominent Episcopalian, the sisters were finally granted title to their small property. Later they were able to acquire more property due to the generosity of the local citizenry, Catholic and Protestant

Hereford. It was publicized through the pages of the Lamp, and issues of the magazine carried the letters of gratitude from those who received favors through the novena.

In these early years came the first of a number of religious vocations for the Atonement mission field in Texas. Louis Koelzer, the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Koelzer of Hereford, graduated from St. Anthony's School in 1925 and went then to Graymoor to begin studies for the priesthood. He would become a leader for the Friars of the Atonement.

St. Anthony's School had been

increasing in enrollment and was outgrowing its buildings. In 1924 a house was purchased and placed on the northwest intersection of fourth and Sampson Streets to serve as a school. Additions had to be made to this building, and at one point a former garage was pressed into service as a first-grade classroom. Some classes were still being taught at St. Francis House on 25-Mile Avenue. It was clear that a new school building was needed.



This picture was taken at the dedication of the school in 1927 by Bishop R.A. Gerken of Amarillo.

An attractive brick school building was constructed north of the church in 1926-27, containing four classrooms and a full basement to serve as an auditorium. Eight grades were taught in this building, two in each classroom, with a sister teaching in each room. The men of the parish contributed much of the labor on this building. Money was advanced by the Union-that-Nothing-Be-Lost. The major part of the cost of the building was repaid in the next four years by the indefatigable Father Salvatore through the St. Anthony's Novena, with the assistance of the girls of the parish. They wrote and answered "beg letters," as they called them, and sent rosaries and holy cards to those who answered the appeal. Father Salvatore was recalled to Graymoor in 1932. With youthful energy and good judgment, he had put St. Anthony's Parish, both church and school, on a firm foundation. He was deeply loved, and left behind him a grateful parish.

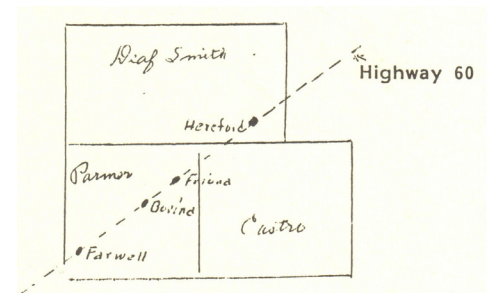


Father Matthias Gilberg, S.A.,

Father Matthias Gilberg, S.A., replaced Father Salvatore in 1932 and served St. Anthony's Parish in the dust bowl days of the early thirties. The friars and sisters and the people of St. Anthony's made many sacrifices to support the church and the school in those days. One little girl who grew up to be a sister of the atonement tells of walking several miles to school from the country with her brothers and sisters, while the bus with the public school children rolled by, leaving them in a cloud of dust. But the people were faithful.

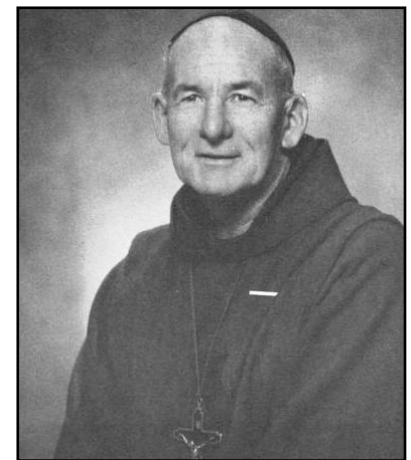
A canonical report sent in to the Diocese of Dallas in October, 1924, from St. Anthony's in Hereford tells of the condition of the parish at that time. The parish included all of Deaf Smith and Parmer Counties and a minor part of Castro County. The rest of Castro County would have been included in Holy Family Parish in Nazareth. A hand-drawn map of the area was

included and is included here.



There were 110 Catholics included in the Hereford parish, excluding Mexicans. The reason for this exclusion undoubtedly was that the Mexican population consisted mostly of transient migrant workers who did not stay long enough to take part in parish life.

There was a Ladies Altar Society in St. Anthony's Parish, and the report states that there would soon be a Holy Name Society, a Children of Mary Solidarity, a St. Aloysius solidarity, and an Angels' Society.



Fr. Raymond Gillis

St. Teresa's in Friona was founded through the efforts of Fr. Raymond Gillis, an Atonement friar. Gillis moved to Hereford in 1948 and worked among the migrant laborers in the vegetable fields of the area. His flock lived in the barracks of a former prisoner of war camp. In this setting, dubbed the "Labor Camp," Gillis built a church, school, convent, and clinic. He thus also provided the first Catholic church for nearby Friona.

# Hub City of the "Golden Spread"

Editor's note: The following written by Bill Cox, associate editor of the West Texas Register appeared in the June issue of "Catholic Digest", 1962.

By Bill G. Cox

In the old days, when city dudes traveled great distances to peddle their firms' wares, a Chicago salesman once witnessed a transaction in Amarillo, Tex., that left him wide-eyed. The awed drummer later told a crony, "I just saw \$22,000 worth of unborn calves change hands between two cattlemen, and not a word was written for a contract. They did it over two cups of coffee!"

The sales man pushed his derby back, wiped his brow, and added, "And to think that just a little while before that I just sold a merchant \$15 worth of supplies and had to have him sign three carbon copies!"

Such informal business dealings were the custom rather than the exception in the Texas Panhandle of the 1880's. Today, a sprawling metropolis (147,000 population) located in the idle on the Panhandle's "handle," Amarillo is the hub of a half-billion -dollar-year oil and gas industry, nucleus of the free world's helium production, center of a breadbasket growing 90 per cent of the big state's wheat, home range of cattle business boasting the largest cattle auction in the world. The city has its share of expressways, discount houses, suburbs, giant shopping centers and malls, automatic laundries, traffic problems, and sonic booms (the latter from the faster-than sound jets at nearby Amarillo Air Force base).

Only three generations back, pioneers were fighting Indians at the famous Battle of the Adobe Walls on the nearby Canadian river, or they were taming fast guns like Billy the Kid at Old Tascosa, the Western town from which Amarillo came into being. Small wonder that one of the three men you meet today on the wide streets of Friendly City will be wearing a ten-gallon Stetson. The wide hats and the firm handclasps you encounter are links with the men who founded Amarillo: Cattlemen and railroad men. They came from far countries—England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, Germany – and they had one thing in common: *Rugged individualism*. These tough, independent, impulsive pioneers worked smoothly toward a common goal: a good life in the shortgrass, long-horn country.

Two railroads spanning the prairie land, the Santa Fe and the Fort Worth & Denver, converged at a point south of the Canadian river in 1887. There a tent city blossomed overnight. The residents called it Rag Town because tents were the only structures. The water supply was Wild Horse lake, an over wallowed buffalo wallow. The railroaders worked and played hard. Each construction crew had its boxing champion, and competition was keen. The brawling wasn't limited to the ring.

The railroads crossed the eastern section of a 250,000 acre spread known as the Frying Pan ranch. The ranch was owned by two partners, H. B. Sanborn and Joseph F. Glidden, both Northerners who had come west to seek their fortunes. Glidden was the inventor of barbed wire; Sanborn was an agent helping Glidden sell cattlemen the idea that the free ranges should be fenced so that pure stock could be bred. Their Frying Pan ranch was the first fenced pasture land in the Panhandle; four strands of barbed wire completely encircled it.



Wild Horse Lake

Sanborn, an exuberant promoter late to be called "the father of Amarillo," allowed as the ranch was plenty big enough for a town. He invited the citizens of Rag Town, and of another nearby town site called Old Town that had shot up like buffalo grass, to move onto one end of his ranch. He offered free lots as an inducement.

Nor did Sanborn stop there in his plan to colonize the Frying Pan. He made a trip to Fort Worth, some 350 miles away, and there collared an enterprising newspaper editor, John Buchanan of the Sunday Mirror. Sanborn offered the editor a one fourth interest in several sections for \$1500 cash and a crash publicity program in the Mirror. Buchanan finally agreed, then went all out with hard-sell advertisements complete with pen and ink sketches

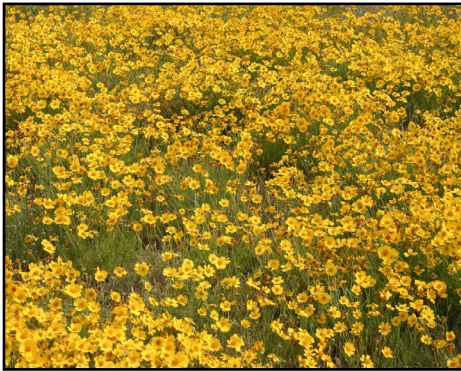


Built by "The Father of Amarillo", the H.B. Sanborn House is at 1311 Madison St, Amarillo, TX. It originally stood where today's Amarillo Civic Center is located, at 505 S Buchanan St.

of “show places” in the Panhandle’s newest development. He topped his campaign with an offer of a corner lot and a year’s subscription the *Mirror* for only \$15.50.

In slightly over a year, he sold 1,500 lots – many to people in Northern and Eastern states. Thirteen were bought in New Rochelle, N. Y. 20 in New York city; eight in Boston; three in SoHo Square, London, England. The *Mirror* apparently had a good circulation.

By 1889 Amarillo had 431 residents, of whom 8 percent were foreign-born. Just how this cosmopolitan populace arrived at the name Amarillo, which means yellow in Spanish, is not known for certain, though old timers say he name came either from the yellow subsoil of a nearby creek or from the yellow flowers that blanketed the area.



Yellow dirt and flowers and all – including a string of saloons known as the Bowery, a brick courthouse, a mercantile store, a livery stable, several dwellings, and windmills – Amarillo was finally incorporated on Feb. 18, 1889. An earlier attempt to incorporate had failed because enthusiastic residents had tried to annex too much pasture land within the city limits, a not uncommon weakness of growth-minded cities.

The cross had been carried into this vast and windy region many hundreds of years earlier, when Fray Juan de Padilla, a Franciscan missionary, accompanied Coronado in

1541 on his search for the fabulous Seven Cities of Cibola, supposedly rich in gold and other treasures. The discouraged Coronado returned to Mexico, but Fray Padilla remained in the Panhandle to Christianize the Indians, only to be slain with a hail of arrows as he knelt in prayer before an oncoming hostile band. He was the first Christian martyr in what is now the U. S. The Knights of Columbus have erected a monument in his honor in an Amarillo park.

In 1892 a resident priest came to Clarendon, a little outpost 78 miles east of Amarillo which the cowboys had nicknamed “Saints Roost”. There was established St. Mary’s church, first Catholic church in the Panhandle. In 1951 the little frame church was remodeled and rededicated as the shrine of the Panhandle.

One of St. Mary’s first priests was father David Dunn, who shortly after his arrival persuaded the Sisters of charity of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio to establish a small sanatorium in Amarillo. That was in 1901 Two years later, the city’s first Catholic chapel was constructed in the two-story hospital.

There was some opposition to a Catholic hospital; even though the town doctor Dr. David Fly, a non-Catholic, was doing everything he could to help the founding Sisters. Coming to the Sisters’ aid, was Editor J. L. Caldwell of Amarillo Weekly News, who wrote scathingly: “If a Catholic hospital in Amarillo is a bad thing, then a Catholic hospital on a battlefield is a bad thing, and one in the midst of a plague should be boycotted. If you refuse to help build a hospital for any church, let it be for reasons other than religious prejudices. Those prejudices have been the bane of the world.”

The hospital, which saw hard times from weather and later from

depression, nevertheless flourished and today, is St. Anthony’s hospital.

The hospital was the beginning of a decade of growth for Amarillo. By 1910 the population was 12,424. A streetcar system was added. The town adopted the commission-management form of government in 1913, the first U. S. city after Galveston to do so.



Even the new streetcar system failed to capture public attention the way another mode of transportation did. On days when the wind was blowing right townspeople turned out to view “the sail wagon from Washburn.” An adventurous gent, an old sea dog who could not resist the endless sea of prairie, contrived a strange schooner: an ordinary wagon with a huge, billowing canvas sail. He used the contraption to tote supplies on days when the wind was strong and from the right direction. Fast wind switches sometimes confused the land sailor’s destinations. One old-timer recalls, ‘I’ll never forget the old captain’s disgust the day he was becalmed and had to be pulled into town – sail and all – by mules.

Culture was dribbling into town in the early years of the century. An opera house was established. The Just Us Girls club collected books for a library. The hotel dining room started using white linen on the tables. Once, when the hotel barred a cowboy because he didn’t have a coat, he stalked outside, yanked his yellow rain slicker from his saddle, shrugged into it, and returned for



grub. Another cowhand upset the hotel's routine by riding his horse into the elevator. The typical cowhand who came to town would spend \$1.98 for a pair of jeans, \$40 for a pair of hand-tooled boots, and more than that for a fancy saddle. The Amarillo Diocese was established by Pope Pius XI on August 25, 1926. It included 73,000 square miles of West Texas, from the far northern tip of the Panhandle almost to the Mexican border. Its priests made long journeys by horse, horse and buggy, train, and Model T. In the winter they were often imperiled by Panhandle's blinding snow storms; in the summer they sometimes groped their way through choking dust.



Father Charles Dvorak

One of the pioneers, Monsignor Charles Dvorak recalls periods of daytime darkness, created by thick clouds of dust that could not be penetrated by the lights of your car. To protect yourself you had to hold a handkerchief over your nose and stuff your ears with cotton." Fortunately, Father Dvorak could take the onslaughts of nature with a philosophical outlook, as indicated by a passage in a diary he kept: "Your life is that much poorer if you have never gone through nature's wonders in the Amarillo Diocese. The sandstorm cleanses the atmosphere by electrifying it – it purifies it even better than rain. You do not believe it? I warn you not catch the fence wire with your bare hand during a severe sandstorm – you may get shocked."

One evening as dusk closed in on a life mission church, Father Dvorak opened the main door of the church before putting on the light in his bedroom, then sat down at the rusty old organ in the sanctuary. His purpose was not to soothe himself with music. "At the touch of my hands the keys gave sounds that could hardly be called music," he says. "the racket drove flocks of feathered inmates – some must have been screech owls – out of the church that was to be my lodging that night."

The task of the missionaries in the huge diocese was increased threefold in the 1920's with the discovery of "black gold" – oil. With the boom on, the population skyrocketed.

Amarillo became headquarters for a multimillion-dollar oil-and-gas industry. Sky scraper office buildings joined the skyline in 1926. Today the skyline is visible 20 miles away across the flat plains. In 1928 the U. S. government built its first helium plant seven miles west of Amarillo. Now, 90 percent of the free world's helium is produced

within a 250-mile radius of the city. With the oil boom, the day of the cowboy was receding, though the cattle business still forms a major part of the city's economy. D. E. Davenport returning to Amarillo in 1928 after a 20-year absence, remarked, "I had no idea the town would boom out of all resemblance to itself. Why, they tell me the cowhands never come into town and shoot out the streetlights anymore and that used to be our big Saturday-night event.

The city and its trade area, known today as the Golden Spread, have several nationally known attractions.



Roy Rogers

There is Boys ranch founded in 1938 at the old ghost town of Tascosa by a former wrestler turned merchant, Cal Farley, a man who liked to help boys. For a time the old Tascosa courthouse served as a dormitory. Today the self-sustaining ranch is home for 275 boys from broken homes. Frequent visitors are Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, who furnish the boys with new boots. Amarillo has its little "Grand Canyon" just 18 miles southeast of the city. Palo Duro canyon, Texas's largest state park with 15, 103 acres, is a 1,200-foot-deep gash out of the smooth prairie. Today an outdoor theater is being constructed in the colorful canyon,

which was discovered by Coronado.



Paul Green

Pulitzer-prize playwright Paul Green of North Carolina is writing a drama to be presented in the amphitheater under the stars. One of the characters depicted undoubtedly will be Coronado, for the play will reflect the history of the Panhandle.

On the meandering Canadian river, not far from the site of the Battle of the Adobe Walls, an \$18-million dam is being built. It will supply water to a dozen cities.



Bishop Thomas Drury

On Nov. 3, 1961 Pope John XXIII split the Amarillo diocese by establishing the Diocese of San Angelo, Tex. This change left the Amarillo diocese 44,450 square miles, so that it is still one of the largest territorially in the nation. The first Bishop of San Angelo, the Most Rev. Thomas J. Drury, was formerly a priest of the Amarillo diocese.

## Important 103 Year Old Cross Donated to Museum



Sacred Heart Cathedral  
AMARILLO, TEXAS



Would you believe we now have the 103 year old cross that sat on top of the original Sacred Heart Cathedral? Patrick Kartochvil donated the cross that was given to him by Msgr. Harold Waldow. As you can see, the cross was in dire need of repair after it was knocked to the ground with a wrecking ball in 1975. The Cross is being repaired as this newsletter goes to print. The cross was stored in a garage at St. Mary's Cathedral for close to 45 years after having graced the Cathedral from 1916 to 1975.

Another reason to come visit the museum!



### Seamstress Needed

Does your parish have a sewing circle, or are you a seamstress? We are looking for someone to make an Incarnate Word Sister habit. We contacted the Incarnate Word Mother house and there are not any more original habits so, we will have to have one made. We would like a white one that the sisters wore in St. Anthony's Hospital (see pictures) and if you are feeling really industrious, the regular black habit would also be a great bonus to the museum. We will of course pay for supplies and to have the habits made.

### Looking for Recommendations

I believe I have researched and presented almost every interesting bit of history of our Diocese in the CHS newsletters, however, I am sure I must have overlooked something, so, this is where I need your help. Please send some ideas, Diocesan related. If you do not have an idea for a whole story... send a vintage picture (identified) or an antidote about an early priest or settler. Enclose them in your donation envelope with your donation, or without a donation.

Also, I guess you are aware that there have not been any programs lately other than the open houses for the museum. It saddens us having a presenter spend their time and energy preparing for a program and then having only a handful of people show up. So, we are also looking for program ideas... Mother Church or Diocesan related. Perhaps there is something you would like to present, we are open to ideas.

All original Photographs will be scanned and returned.



1928 insurance meeting at the Captiol Hotel: Front Row: E. Diego, C.M.F., Bishop Gerken, J.J. Dolje, Cesareo Gutierrez C.M., Second row: Justin Weber, O.S.B., Alphonse Bock O.S.B., Edward J. Clinton, Charles Dvorak, R. Roldan. Standing: J.J. Mahoney, Francis J. Pokluda, F. J. Hullweg, O.M.I., F.J. Herkert, Turibius Christman, O.F.M., Arnold A. Boeding, Michael G. French, Charles Schrieber, S.M.F., F. X. Pruess.

## New Acquisitions



This organ belonged to Sammie Scott of Scott's Flowers. Sammie Scott would use the organ as a center piece in the display window of his flower shop. The organ was donated to the museum by his daughter, Mary Ruth /.



This beautiful secretay was donated to the Museum by Katie McKillip-Harstrom. It had belonged to her mother.



This Picture of Sacred Heart Cathedral was painted by Peggy "Dolores" Detten at her time at St. Francis Parish and was donated to the museum by her family.



This cross is from St. Anthony's Hospice.



This sick kit was donated by Michael Armstrong.



Mona Parra Family donated an array of items from her family's time at Sacred Heart Church, Canadian. This included a three piece nativity set.



September 4, 2019 to November 20, 2019

### CONTRIBUTIONS

Joanne M. Adams	50
Donald & Judy Allen, Sr.	50
Joe & Theresa Artho	50
Lorraine Beckham	25
John & Mary Bednorz	25
Monica L. Bermea	25
Kathy J. Borman	50
Thomas Campbell	25
Msgr. Norbert Kuehler	300
M/M Danny Detten	10
Joan Ellison Estate	408.84
Billie J. Glenn	25
Veronica Matejko	20
Katherine Monceballez	25
Jerry J. Poirot	25
Sandy & Tom Riney	100
Donald White	100
Toby and Rebecca Vincent	500
Leo and Audrey Wink	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>2313.84</b>

### MEMBERSHIP

Joe & Theresa Artho	50
Joan Durbin	25
Donald Rettenmaier	25
Sandy & Tom Riney	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>

### HONORARIUM

### IN MEMORY OF:

★  
have  
**YOURSELF**  
a  
**merry**  
**LITTLE**  
Christmas



Father Paul Wattson visits the Hereford Mission.

Thank you for your  
continued  
generosity!

Remember  
to send in  
your ideas.

Catholic History Society  
Board Members

Bishop Patrick Zurek - Honorary Chair

Susan Garner - President/Editor

Msgr. Norbert Kuehler - Vice-President

Kathryn Brown - Secretary

Ann Weld - Treasurer/Curator

Natalie Barrett

Jim Jordan

Peggy Newcomb

Rev. Tony Neusch

Rev. Francisco Perez

Rev. Scott Raef

Doris Smith

Deborah Summers

Don White



You may stop by daily (Monday through Friday) to view the museum, for a guided tour it is recommended that you make an appointment.. The museum is open by appointment for church and school groups. This includes evenings and weekends.

Susan: 383-2243 Ext. 120 or even better: [sgarner@dioama.org](mailto:sgarner@dioama.org)