



THE CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Diocese of Amarillo



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NAZARETH, the First Fifty Years



In the early 1800's, a family of McCormick brothers came to Buffalo, New York. They married, and had large families. It was one branch of this family that came to Castro County as the first Catholic settlers at the site of the present parish of Nazareth. The mother's mother had been a brave girl who carried messages on horseback in the Revolutionary War. Her side saddle was brought with the family to Castro County, but was burned in a fire that destroyed the son James McCormick's home.

The McCormick brothers acted at times as salesmen for Irish linen and lace and other items. Two of the brothers, Aloysius V. McCormick and James A. McCormick, were traveling through this area at the time that the government was opening it to settlers. In 1890, the two came to Castro County, where Aloysius filed on a section of land, and built a dugout home, settled down with his brother to live on the land and prove up on the claim. At that time Thomas P. McCormick (my great grandfather), another brother, was living close to Buffalo, New York, at Hornsville, now known as Hornell, where he had a dairy farm. The two brothers wrote to him of the opportunities of this fertile, new land. Thomas, attracted by their description of the land and glad to seek a milder climate for the sake of his wife, brought his family to the Panhandle in the spring of 1892, arriving in Amarillo on April 10.

The brothers from Castro County met the family at the hotel, with a team of mules hitched to a lumber wagon. The trunks, dry goods boxes, and the piano were loaded into the wagon. Mr. and Mrs. McCormick, the baby Maurice, and the driver sat on the spring seat. The others, including the children, John, Frances (my grandmother), Amelia, and a neighbor of the McCormicks in New York, Michael O'Keiff, who had come with them to look at the land, found seats on the load. They started on their sixty-mile journey, across the grass to Castro County at four in the morning. They passed the little town of Canyon, which at that time was comprised chiefly of a feed store and a few dugouts, and at noon they stopped for lunch, and to let the mules rest. The frail little wife of Thomas would eat nothing, for the fire used to fry the bacon and boil the coffee had been made with cow chips. They drove until almost dark, when Aloysius stopped the team and announced that they were home. There was nothing to be seen as far as the horizon reached, not even a fence post. He had stopped the wagon at a small mound of dirt. Jumping down, he opened a trap door, and there was home, the dugout, a hole dug in the ground, about

20 by 12 feet, covered in planks and dirt thrown on top, with no windows.



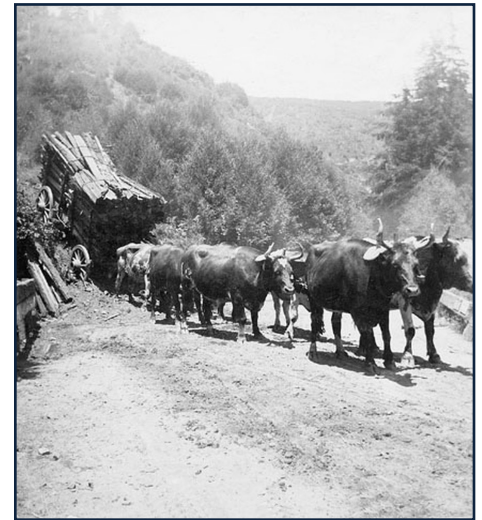
The next morning, T. P. McCormick took his family to Tulia, fifteen miles to the east, and rented a three-room house for his family. He and O'Keiff each filed on a section of land, and O'Keiff went back to New York, sending his two sons to prove up on the claim.

The McCormicks got in touch with other Irish families, hoping to build a Catholic settlement here. Tom's family was growing. His wife was convent-bred. Her mother had died when she was very small, and her father had been drafted into the Civil War. An uncle placed the little girl, Frances with the Sisters of Charity at St. Mary's Convent in Mobile, Alabama, who trained her and kept her until she married. Frances Taffe McCormick wanted the advantages of Catholic training for her children, but it would be possible only if they could gather enough Catholic families to support a parish and a Sisters' school. Their efforts at first seemed to promise success. The Irish settlers started coming, principally from the area of Austin and East Texas.

Two families, that of Connell Carr and his wife and daughter Nellie, and one of the Burns families, moved in with the McCormicks at Tulia until they could obtain their dugout homes and put up a windmill. Most of the Irish settlers, as they came, built what were called half dugouts, three feet below the ground and three feet above, with small windows.



Tom McCormick then rented the Lassiter home, a two-roomed house with a half dugout behind it, located about twelve miles east of Nazareth on the present Tulia-Dimmitt highway, so that he could be closer to the house that he was building on his land. Lumber for the home had to be hauled from Amarillo by ox team. Frequently the range cattle tried to draw the oxen loose from the wagons, and the drivers had to fight them off with bull whips and fence posts.



In the summer of 1892, Aloysius McCormick went back to Cincinnati to marry Susan Harvey, a girl from Kentucky whose father had come from Donegal, Ireland. The young couple came to Amarillo by train, and made the two-day trip to Castro County in a buggy which had the back seat taken off in order to carry the six-month supply of groceries that was being brought along.

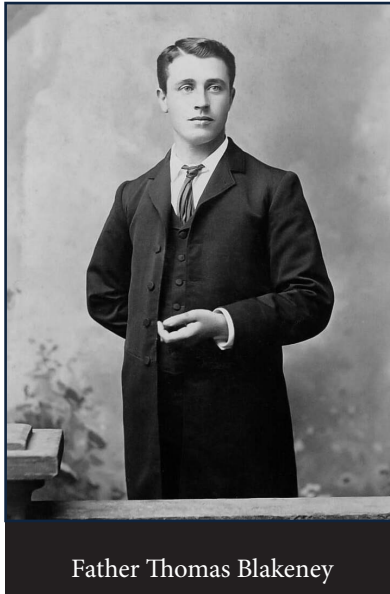
They too lived with Tom McCormick family for some time, and indeed the Lassiter home served as headquarters for all the Irish settlers as they came. There were three families of Burners, none related, and Brogans, O'Donnells, Daughertys, of the others, perhaps thirty families in all, located south and west of the McCormicks. Michael Gallagher

took up land twenty miles north and stayed. At his death in 1928 he left a bequest to St. Mary's Academy in Amarillo sufficient to make possible the first addition to that institution. The Leo McDade family sixteen miles north of the McCormicks, were there when the McCormicks came, but the latter did not know it, and found them only accidentally. Young James McCormick became lost in a snowstorm, while looking for some horses that had strayed away, and the house where he stopped for the night was the McDade's. After that, the McCormicks had a stopping place on the way to Amarillo.

The sorrow of death came early to the little group on the plains. In the last days of August, 1892, Mrs. John Burns died, at the birth of her baby. One of the McCormick men took her body by wagon to Amarillo, to be shipped back to Austin. Her baby lived two weeks, and was buried on the prairie where the town of Nazareth now stands, the first Catholic soul to be buried in Castro County. In those same days, on August 29, 1892, Thomas McCormick's son, Thomas Leo, was born. There were births and deaths in the new little community, but no priest within hundreds of miles to supply the rites of the church.

First Priest Comes

Thomas McCormick wrote to Bishop Edward J. Dunne of Dallas, asking that a priest be sent to them. The Bishop sent word to Father Thomas J. E. Blakeney, then pastor of Henrietta in Clay County, with the entire Texas Panhandle as part of his mission territory. The priests followed the usual procedure among priests in the Panhandle during the next



decades of mission service. He wrote to the McCormicks, telling them when he would be at the nearest railroad station, and asking them to meet him there.

McCormick met Father Blakeney at Amarillo, with wagon and mule team, and brought him to the Lassiter place, where he said the first Mass in Castro County, probably in February, 1893. The first entry for Castro County in the mission register of the Henrietta church is dated February 23, 1893. The entry is made under the name of Wynne, Castro County. In order to get mail to their community, Thomas McCormick served as postmaster for some time. The mail was brought out to his home from Tulia by a man named Billie Wynne, and hence the community became known as Wynne.

Thomas Leo McCormick who was born at Wynne the previous August, was baptized at home, according to the family Bible, on January 22, 1893. His baptism is not recorded in the Henrietta register.

Father Blakeney stayed for at least several days on this visit, and cele-

brated Mass a number of times.

Tom McCormick gave the priest a section of land at Wynne, with a dugout on it, in which Father Blakeney offered Mass. The land passed out of his possession at a later date.

Thomas McCormick finished his home, a very fine one for those pioneer days, and one room was set aside for the celebration of the Mass. In this home, located about three miles east of Nazareth and one-half mile south of the Tulia-Dimmit highway, Mass was said in Castro County at such times as a priest visited there, for a period of ten years, until the home of Mrs. Wilhelmina Thier was used in 1903. Mrs. McCormick named her home Shamrock, and the community was also sometimes known by that name.

A. V. McCormick also built a frame home, hauling the lumber from Amarillo. One requirement of the law, in gaining title to the land, was that improvements, principally buildings, be placed on the land. A. V. McCormick filed on two sections. He placed his house on the division line between the two, so that it was located partly on each section, a practice sometimes followed by the pioneers.

The Irish Settlers Leave

Unfortunately for these early Irish settlers, they had come to West Texas at a time when the country was entering one of its severe droughts. The average rainfall for this region, about twenty inches, is the minimum required for raising crops. In the years when the rainfall drops below that, farming suffers heavily. There recurrent periods when there are one, two, or perhaps several

years of dry weather, seem to burn the crops and render the land worthless. One such period of drought had been recorded in West Texas in 1864, and another in 1881. In 1886 and 1887 occurred an exceptionally severe period of dry weather, when even the grass suffered and the cattle industry was stricken. The years from 1892 to 1894 were dry. 1893 was one of the driest in the history of West Texas. It was called the "Grasshopper Year," and caused a general exodus of those farmers who had come, filled with enthusiasm, to take up the lands opened by the government in the years just preceding. The first settlers planted the crops and used the methods that had been successful on the well-watered lands from which they came. It was some time before experience provided the means better suited to farming in a sub-humid climate.

Discouraged by the parched land that they met in this period of drought, most of the Irish settlers went back to their homes in eastern Texas and elsewhere, abandoning their claims and what ever improvements they had made on the land. Many left within a year, and in two years time all were gone. The hope



of having a Catholic settlement, with church and school, receded. Only the McCormicks and Michael Gallagher remained. The William D. Keliehor family settled at Arney, about ten miles north of the Wynne settlement, in 1893, and they stayed.

Life in the Plains

The McCormick families lived out their claims and proved up on the land. It was not an easy life on the plains, and yet there were compensations. The fresh prairie sod was extremely fertile, and not every year was dry. Their garden was productive, and the melons are remembered particularly as being delicious. A large orchard was planted, producing more fruit than they could use. Mrs. Tom McCormick had brought two hundred jars of canned fruit with her from New York and these jars were refilled every year. Cows and pigs and poultry furnished them with butter, eggs, milk, cheese, and meat. In the first years, the plains were alive with antelope and rabbits and game fowl, and they had fish in the ground tank. Their principal crop was sorghum, supplemented by millet, wheat and corn. For a decade the land was free from molesting weeds. Wheat and sorghum were used for feed. The McCormicks had range cattle, with a few milk cows for use by the family. They tried horses and sheep at different times.

The ranchers resented their presence at first, as cattlemen usually dislike the "nester." It was suggested, with some reference to a gun, that the McCormicks leave the country. They found at times that their fences were cut, and their stock run off, but Tom McCormick had come to love the plains, and did not want to leave them.

During these years the McCormick men continued their selling trips. When A. V. McCormick died in 1908 at the age of fifty, he had been selling Irish linens for thirty-eight years. He worked on the farm in the spring and summer months, and traveled during the fall and winter, selling Irish linen and lace, and other articles. A fertile selling area was the cotton belt southeast of them, and he went there during the cotton-picking season.



The family at home lived a life quite sufficient to themselves. The children played together. Everyone could ride, and it was considered quite a lark to run off the mustangs, who tried to lure away the farm horses. Prairie fires were probably the greatest menace, and after they had passed, only the hated loco-



weed was left growing on the range. The children spent many hours digging up and destroying that weed. At one time the McCormick's lost seventy-five head of horses from the effects of eating loco.

It was seldom, in the early years, that the family saw a visitor. Once a wagon train passed their home on the way from Oklahoma to New Mexico, camping in the McCormick pasture. Thirty wagons, filled with people! They swarmed over the place, asking for every bit of the milk and butter and cheese available. The big patch of mustard greens and roasting ears was offered to them. And the glamor of the talk and the music at night! All the instruments in the caravan played to the stars of the prairie sky. It was an event never to be forgotten by the children.

There was piety and prayer in the home. The rosary was said every night. One essential thing was lacking, however, the closeness to church and priest. Occasionally the priest would come to them and stay a few days. The McCormick men met him at Amarillo. At Michael Gallagher's they stopped to change teams, and Mike always came down to the McCormick's for Mass.

Once or twice a year the McCormicks went to Amarillo, or later to Canyon, for Mass. They drove in the lumber wagons, in all kinds of weather, sometimes traveling all night to be on time for Mass in the morning. While the McDades were at Canyon, their home furnished a stopping place on the journey. At that time, Masses in Amarillo were said in private homes, one of them being that of Connell Carr.

Father Blakeney left Henrietta in 1896. There are no further entries for Wynne in the baptismal register until 1901 when Father David Dunn entered one under the name Dimmitt. The McCormick children born in the intervening years were baptized at Amarillo and Canyon. The members of the McCormick family, however, remember the visits of Father Daniel O'Sullivan and Father John Lenert in this period. Father Andrew M. Kearney may also have visited at Wynne. On June 11, 1901, Father David Dunn baptized Michael and Irene in the McCormick home. He visited them occasionally, and when on a trip to Amarillo Mrs. McCormick slipped in getting out of the wagon and injured her leg, he came more frequently.

McCormick Determines to Leave

The countryside was settling up fast around the McCormicks, but none of these newcomers were Catholic. A school was opened at Big Lake. Mrs. McCormick, however, wanted Catholic training for her children. Crop failures and other difficulties made it impossible to send the children away to a boarding school, and it seemed improbable that they would ever have a Catholic settlement around them. In discouragement, Tom McCormick decided to leave the country he loved, to find a home for his family at a location where there were a Catholic church and school. He knew of the settlement at Rhineland, in Knox County, where Father Joseph Reisdorff was building up a Catholic community.

With horse and buggy, McCormick made the long trip to Knox county, hoping to find a home there. By that time, however, Father Reisdorff considered his colony at Rhineland to be quite well established, and he was interested in finding a new location where he might find another Catholic

settlement similar to those of Windthorst and Rhineland. He heard Thomas McCormick's story, and entertained the possibility of using this cheap and fertile new land in Castro County as the basis of his third colony. He advised McCormick to return home and wait until he, Father Reisdorff, should have an opportunity to come and look over the possibilities of the area.



Father Joseph Reisdorff

McCormick brought with him from Rhineland in April, 1902, the two Hyland brothers. They needed more range for their stock, and McCormick needed hands.

In June, 1902, Father Reisdorff, with a group of four farmers who were interested in buying land, came to Castro County. He tells us that he found rich land, with small farms, and crops of corn, milo maize, Kaffir corn, California wheat, vegetables of all sorts, and fruit trees ten years old, bearing half-grown fruit. Each of the five men purchased a section of land at \$2.50 an acre. Here Father Reisdorff decided to found his new colony, calling it Naz-

He returned to Rhineland to close up his affairs there, and in August, 1902, came to the site of the new colony, living at first at the home of T. P. McCormick, and beginning his campaign of advertising for the new colony of Nazareth.

Within this period occurred the first baptism and first marriage in the new parish. Harold McCormick, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. V. McCormick, was baptized October 26, 1902. With this entry begins the parish register of Nazareth signed by Joseph Reisdorff as rector. The first wedding was that of Joseph E. Hyland and Frances McCormick, (my fraternal grandparents) performed by Father Reisdorff on January 7, 1903, at the Thomas McCormick home.

Joseph Hyland built a one-room office for the priest in the McCormick front yard. Father Reisdorff advertised his colony widely, inserting ads in a number of German Catholic papers in various sections of the United States. Much of his effort was directed toward the Middle Western States, where numerous German Catholic farming communities had already been established, and which might have younger sons desirous of obtaining homes where farm land was cheap. Dozens of letters were sent out to prospective buyers.



MR. AND MRS. JOE HYLAND

The first wedding entered in the parish register of Nazareth is that of Joseph E. Hyland and Frances McCormick, performed by Father Reisdorff on January 7, 1903 at the McCormick home. No wedding picture of the Joe Hylands was available. This one is of a much later date.

Letter Fr. Reisdorff sent out:

*A Short Guide to the Catholic German Colony (Community) Nazareth,
in Castro County, Texas*

In order to come to the newest Catholic Colony, "Nazareth" one would take a train from any point in the U.S. to Amarillo, Texas.

In Amarillo one would take the Pecos Valley Train to Hereford, Texas. In Hereford one goes to our agent, W. H. Ranzor. He brings all Catholic Settlers (searchers for land) for a very small cost to Nazareth and if they so desire, he will bring them back to Hereford again.

The community of Nazareth in Castro County, Texas was founded in the year 1902 with the approval of His Excellency Bishop of Dallas. In the fall of the year 1903 a small church and rectory were built. The same fall a school will be built. The land our town of "Nazareth" lies on a beautiful hill in the center of the community with five acres set aside for the church property.

In Nazareth there will be regular worship and especially there will be instructions for the growing youths. The community of "Nazareth" is a 14 miles square; made out of 196 sections of land which makes 125,440 acres, of which 18,000 acres have been sold to Catholics. This community lies about 25 miles southward of Hereford. Hereford is the nearest train station to this community. Twenty-five miles by land is easy for their roads are good and level. No sand-roads.

LAND

The soil here is darker, somewhat sandier, richer in humus base--three to four feet deep and some places 5 to 6 feet deep. This deep soil is easy to cultivate. And even though it is somewhat sandy not enough so that the winds in September and March can blow it away as in the case of other areas in Texas.

This area is prairie land--no trees here other than what man has planted. Almost all sorts of planted trees thrive here very well.

WATER

Water here is clean and abundant at a depth of 25-150 feet, depending on the lay of the land. The water here is definitely healthful especially for kidney disease and tuberculosis, if the sickness has not advanced too far. Sufferers of asthma will recover here without medicine.

CLIMATE

Here on the plains is the healthiest climate found in the United States. Clean air in summer; never oppressive heat, but in the winters very cold. The highest temperature last summer (1904) was 94 in the shade, just once. The coldest temperature last was 9 above zero, and only twice. The winter days are about one-half spring weather. The nights in summer are always cool so that often one needs one cover and many times needs two for comfort.

RAINFALL

On the average there is here on the plains more rain than in the central south Texas and in Oklahoma. For accurate information go to the Weather Bureau in Galveston, Texas.

WHAT GROWS IN CASTRO COUNTY?

Wheat, oats, barley, corn, milo/maize, sorghum, millet, alfalfa, Johnson grass, mesquite-grass, grama grass, cotton and tobacco and all sorts of fruits and vegetables. Only the boll-weevils do not thrive here.

There are potato bugs and cabbage worms here as in the old country. Snakes have already become scarce. I have not seen any in 18 months.

PRICE OF LAND

Land is still cheap. It now costs from \$4.00 to \$8.00 an acre. There still remain some sections that can be bought for \$3.25-\$3.75. For almost two years the land here cost \$2.50. It is evident that already the land price has considerably increased. In Hereford one paid from \$6.00 to \$15.00 per acre.

PURCHASING TERMS

1. Fifty dollars down payment to make and hold the deal.
2. As soon as the papers are completed they are sent to the bank of your choice where the buyer pays one-fifth of the cost and for remaining payments he has from 1 to 4 years to pay with 7% yearly interest payment. But he can pay the total amount in one payment.
3. School land 1/2, 3/4, or the whole amount. Everyone who purchases a section of land or more must contribute \$50.00 to the church to defray the expense of necessary repairs.
4. If only 1/2 section was bought \$25.00 was paid to the church.

5. Speculators who buy land here to be sold at a higher price, must pay \$100.00 to the church.

A larger church will soon be needed here because of the increasing population. And to build a new church much money is necessary and the speculators can best afford to give a generous amount. Our temporary church is built so that later it can be converted to a rectory.

Now, dear homeseeker, I have told you everything in this guide that would be of interest and use to you. Now, if you are looking for cheap and good land come here immediately and see for yourself the truth of what I have told you in this guide. Our land here has been surveyed and the measurements have been obtained from the Land Office in Austin Texas. We can show you the correct acreage and boundaries of each section. Therefore, it will give you no further doubt.

If you still need more information, put a 5-cent stamp in your letter to me.

Respectfully,
Joseph Reisdorff,
Rector and Colonifator from
Nazareth, Castro Co., Texas

The First German Families

As early as September, 1902 interest was being shown in the lands at Nazareth. Bernard Huseman, an Indiana farmer, had made a trip to Rhineland, and hearing from Father Reisdorff an enthusiastic account of the proposed settlement of Nazareth, came to Castro County and invested in a farm for his son, Ben. Other buyers followed. In November, Joseph Doerr and his sister, Mrs. Wilhelmina Thier, visited Nazareth and bought a section of land.

To all newcomers when they arrived, the McCormick families gladly opened their homes. Thomas' home sometimes had three families at a time, and sometimes the new settlers stayed for weeks, until their own homes were ready. To the McCormicks, after years of solitude, this company was welcome, and the arrival of the colonists meant realization of the hope of having Catholic church, priest and school.

Thomas McCormick took the prospective buyers around to look at the neighboring land. He was a salesman born, and it has been said that he persuaded the newcomers to buy and the owners to sell. The thrifty German farmers had the money to make the payments. They were amazed at the vegetables that could be grown on the land and took some back north with them to show what could be raised in Texas.

In March 1903, Mrs. Wilhelmina Thier and her family, accompanied by her brother, Joseph Doerr, came to Nazareth from Cleburne, Texas. Mrs. Thier had brought her family from Helmsmen, Germany, in 1890. The father had come earlier and found work in the railroad shops at Mount Carmel, Illinois, where the family lived for a time. The mother's health brought them to Cleburne, Texas. During their ten-year stay at Cleburne, the father died. Mrs. Thier read of Father Reisdorff's colony, and it appealed to her as a place where she might make a living for her seven children. She and her brother visited Nazareth in the fall of 1902, and family savings were invested in a section of land close to the center of the proposed colony, at a cost of about eight dollars an acre.

The Thiers and Joseph Doerr arrived at Nazareth in the middle of a blizzard on March 3, 1903, finding a home with the A. V. McCormicks and later with the Henry Langes until their house could be built. The trip to Hereford for lumber took two days, one to go and one to come. While the building was in process, the family furniture was stored on the ground nearby, covered with a tent. The Texas wind one day blew the tent off the furniture, a mile or so away. *(continued on page 10)*



The McCormick families had lived in the vicinity of Nazareth, Texas, since 1892, and Mass had been said in the home of Thomas McCormick. In the first part of March 1903 Mrs. Wilhelmina Thier moved to Nazareth, with her family of seven children, and her brother, Joseph Doerr, who lived with the family. She built the home shown in the picture, reserving one room for use as a chapel. The room is marked with an X in the picture. Mass was said in this room from May to November 1903, by Father Joseph Reisdorff until a one-room building had been built for a church. Left to right in the picture are Joseph Doerr, Stephen Thier and Anthony Thier (sons of Mrs. Thier) and Mrs. Wilhelmina Thier herself. The picture was probably taken by a traveling photographer. Date of the picture, 1910.



A small one room church was built. This picture shows the interior of that one-room church. Mrs. Thier's oldest son, Stephen built the altar and the benches. The old altar, used in the Thier home, was incorporated in this altar. Mrs. Thier supplied most of the linens and other furnishings for the altar, sending over those that had been used in her home. The stations were furnished by Mr. Joseph Doerr, Mrs. Thier's brother, who lived with the family. This picture was taken in 1908.



In 1907 or 1908, a front part with a steeple was built on this one room. The crowd stands in front of it. Taken in 1911.



St. Joseph's Verein, Nazareth, Texas, 1913. Attached to the back of the church building may be seen the roof of the room built in 1903 which was used as the church until the front part was added in 1908 or 1909. The roof and chimney extending to the right of this one room are those of the section added as living quarters for the priest.

(Continued from page 8): One room in the new home was reserved for use as a chapel, where Mass was said by Father Reisdorff from May 17, when it was ready, until November, 1903, when the first church was completed. On Sundays, all rooms were given over to the use of the little congregation, and those receiving Communion had their breakfast at the Thiers. The hosts for Mass were made at home, baked with flat irons and cut with scissors.

The Thier and Doerr families had not been farmers, but since farming was the only way of making living in the new home, Joseph Doerr, with the help of young Stephen Thier, began to farm their section of land.

For some months these few families comprised Father Reisdorff's congregation, The advertising campaign continued. Beginning with the issue of September 24, 1903, the priest began a series of advertisements in the Southern

Messenger, which at that time was the only newspaper being published in the English language in Texas.

The First Church is Built

The first little church was built, as had been planned. It was a one-room frame structure 32 by 16 feet, located on part of Mrs. Thier's section for which Father Reisdorff had traded a part of his section to the west. It was paid for by levying an assessment of fifty dollars on each section of land that had been bought in the colony, whether the owner resided in Nazareth or elsewhere.

The pastor had brought two carpenters from Rhineland, Englenert Gier and John Schumacher, to construct the building, and they were aided by the parishioners.

The altar which had been used in Mrs. Thier's home was made over by her son Stephen for use in the church at first. He made the benches, and Mrs. Thier transferred the linens and other church articles from her home. Joseph Doerr, who had been suffering from severe pain in his back, offered the stations for the church, asking for relief from his trouble. He lived to be a very old man.

The Holy Family Church was blessed by the Reverend David Dunn of Amarillo on November 18, 1903, who preached on the Holy Family. The choir sang Canone's Mass, and Father Reisdorff was the celebrant.

The room which had been built for the priest in the McCormick yard was moved over near the church. This room probably formed part of the two-room rectory which was placed close to the church.

In January, 1904, Father Reisdorff reported the progress of his colony to the *Southern Messenger* in the following advertisement:

(quote)

Nazareth Texas
A New and Promising Catholic Colony

A new colony for practical Catholics has been started in Castro Co., Tex. A small church and pastor's residence adjoining have been built, and the church is dedicated to the Holy Family, Jesus, Mary and Joseph. We confidently expect to build a school house here in the course of six or eight months. There are seventy-one souls in this colony, now, all practical Catholics. Quite a number of the settlers here are young families, that have sold out in other parts of the country and have come West to grow up with the country. The number of children of school age is about 12 to 15. We have divine services regularly on Sundays and Holydays all the year round. There is plenty of good, fertile and fine land here for sale, at very low prices. Land here is selling at \$3.25 to \$4.00 per acre. The climate is probably the healthiest that can be found in the world. Water is abundant and of the best quality; it is said by chemists to be chemically pure. The land here is a dark, rich soil, three to four feet deep and very well adapted for wheat, oats, alfalfa and all feed plants, as well as for all kinds of fruit trees. Anyone wishing for a cheap, healthy and good home, should come to Nazareth in Castro County, Texas. For further information apply to

Rev. Joseph Reisdorff
Nazareth, Texas

The First School

The church also served as the first school for the colony. A curtain was drawn before the altar during school periods. Mrs. Wilhelmine Thier's daughter, Louise, served as the teacher in the 1904-1905. Ben Heidergerken taught the school in 1905-1906. Father Reisdorff paid these teachers from his personal funds. In 1904 or 1905, he built a separate school building, a frame structure 15 x 30 feet. Frank Woelfle, who was the first teacher paid from public funds, served from 1906 to 1909.

Woelfle was also the church organist. Some friends from Kentucky donated an organ to the little parish in 1904.

Religious instruction was provided for the children by Father Reisdorff himself, who gathered them together on Sunday for this purpose, and once or twice during the week. Louise Thier also taught Christian doctrine at different times.

Father Reisdorff Decides to Go

Gradually other settlers were coming into the colony, from Kentucky, Indiana, Minnesota, from East Texas, and other places. In 1905, Father Reisdorff enlarged the church, adding a portion 16 by 16 feet to the south end.

The priest-colonizer came to feel that the parish was well enough established for him to go, to start anew elsewhere. He did not leave, however, until arrangements had been made for a priest to take his place. It must have been at least partly due to his influence that the Benedictine Fathers of Subiaco Abbey, Arkansas, were chosen to succeed him, for they had followed him at both Windthorst and Rhineland, the two Catholic parishes which he had previously established.

Father Reisdorff's last entry in the baptismal register of Nazareth was dated September 10, 1905. In January, 1906, he reported in the *Southern Messenger* that the Benedictine Fathers would take charge of Nazareth in a short time. The colony then had eighteen families, with fifteen more coming, who had purchased land where a town had been laid out, with a store and post office, a telephone line to other towns, and a mail service every day except Sunday. Services were held in church every day of the week and the parish had a Catholic school. The Catholics of Nazareth owned fifty-three sections of land, and good land within five miles of the church could still be bought for \$5 to \$12 per acre.

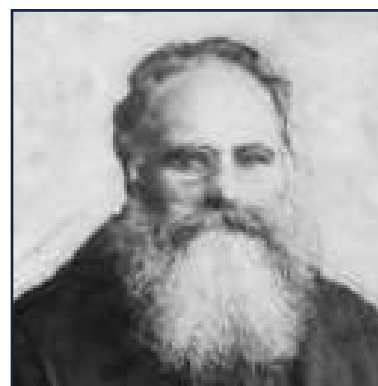
In April, 1906, Father Reisdorff states in the *Southern Messenger* that fifteen more families had come to Nazareth, and that at that time Father Bonaventura Binzegger, O. S. B., had charge of the place.

Fr. Reisdorff is reported in the Catholic Directory as having been ill for the next year or so. In 1908 he began advertising to attract settlers to a Catholic colony at the site of Umbarger, which he named Bethlehem, and after a disappointment at Putnam, Texas, he went to Slaton, where he established

a solid parish and died in 1922.

It is Father J. Reisdorff that the parish of Nazareth regards with gratitude as its founder. Many men and women share in the merit of the parish as it stands today, the McCormicks and the sturdy families who followed them, but their leader, the one who welded the elements together and formed them as a parish, was Father Joseph Reisdorff.

The Benedictines



Fr. Bonaventura Binzegger, O.S.B.

Fr. Binzegger, O.S.B., was a venerable and gentle old priest when he was sent to Nazareth in 1906. The work at the Abbey was becoming too much for him, but he felt that he could serve the needs of these few families on the Texas plains.

His first ministrations were given to a family who drove nearly a hundred miles by buggy to receive them. The family of Henry O'Mahoney had settled close to Lubbock in 1900. It was with the deepest interest that they heard of the establishment of the parish of Nazareth to the north of them. At the wedding of their first daughter they had brought the priest from Amarillo. When this daughter had a baby to be baptized, and the second daughter was ready to be married, a little party set out, in two buggies for the church at Nazareth. A two days journey brought them

to the home of their friends, the Thomas McCormick's, where they were entertained, and on the following day, May 15, 1906, Father Bonaventura baptized the child, Mary Margaret Lupton, child of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Lupton. He gave instructions in the Catholic Faith to the bridegroom, and May 17, he married Walter Lupton and Mary O'Mahoney. Father Reisdorff was still in Nazareth at the time, and attended the wedding ceremony.

Very soon after his coming to Nazareth, Father Bonaventura began the instructions for the first First Holy Communion class, administering the sacrament to them, a group of eight, on June 3, 1906. The two Friemel children in this class were from the family of Pius Friemel, the first Catholic settler at Umbarger.

Until the parish Umbarger was started, the Pius Friemel family attended Mass at Nazareth, and paid pew rent there. They made a practice of taking the children to Nazareth and leaving them there for a few weeks of instruction, when it was time for them to make their First Communion or be Confirmed. On December 3, 1907, Father Bonaventura said the first Mass at Umbarger and performed the first Baptism there, that of Charles Friemel, the oldest child of Ernest J. Friemel.

It was during the pastorate of Father Bonaventura, too, that Holy Family Parish received its first visit from a bishop and first had the sacrament of Confirmation administered in its church. On July 14, 1907, Bishop Edward J. Dunne of Dallas confirmed a class of twenty-two in Holy Family Church. A reception was held for the Bishop in the home of Thomas McCormick, at which

Frank Saalfeld delivered an address of welcome. At that time Nazareth was reported to have thirty-two families, a church, and a school with fifty-four children in attendance.

The parish continued to grow, making another enlargement of the church necessary. In 1907, Father Bonaventura increased the width of the building from sixteen to twenty-four feet. In the latter part of that year, he organized the first of many societies which have marked parish life at Nazareth. This was the Christian Mothers' Society. Mrs. Wilhelmina Their, chosen first president, served in that capacity for eight years.

Early Times

The usual source of supplies for early Nazareth was Hereford. A trip there often consumed three days' time one to go, one to do the buying, and one to return. Most of the families made one or two trips a month for supplies. Flour, salt, and sugar were the most necessary articles of purchase.

The earliest settlers had no way of knowing how far it was to town. Their method of calculating the distance was to tie a rope around the wheel of the wagon, count the number of times it went around in a minute, and multiply the distance by the length of time it took to make the trip.

Nazareth was developing into a farming community. Much of the land had to be plowed for the first time. It was fertile, though scarcity of rain entailed many crop failures. Many of the settlers had made the down payment on their land, and had to depend on what they pro-

duced to pay the rest. The crops planted in these years were wheat, oats, corn, broom corn, maize, cane, barley, and millet. In the very early years a little flax was raised. Grain was marketed in Hereford, but for small produce, such as eggs, butter, and vegetables there was practically no market. Most people produced their own, and merchants were in the habit of buying from the commission houses. This source of weekly income, from garden and cows and chickens, so much depended upon the later farmers in years of crop failures, was largely denied to the first settlers, and cash was often scarce.

Cattle and sheep were raised and wool was sold. Ben Huseman recalls an incident which occurred soon after he arrived on the plains. His herd of 1800 sheep had to be sheared, but the shearers refused to do the work until they were paid. Huseman's balance th his bank in Hereford was \$26.00. He had to add to his borrowings to pay the shearers, but discovered that bank would not lend him more money. As he stood in the street in despair, an officer of the other bank in the town approached, asked him if he wanted money, and offered to lend him as much as he needed.. He paid the shearers ten cents for the bucks and five cents for the rest of flock, receiving for the wool the amount of \$1212.12.

There were no tractors in the early days. Horses and mules furnished the power for farm machinery. The McCormick men were out at Salt Lake City on a selling trip about the time that the German community was being established, and bought a herd of mules to bring back to the new settlement. There were still mustangs in the intervening county



and even though the men built a corral to keep the mules in at night, the mustangs broke through and took some of the mules away with them. Part of the herd they brought through and sold to the newly-arrived German farmers to carry on their farm work. Broom corn furnished the basis of a little business in the early years of the community. Litsch and Ben Huseman procured a broom-making machine, and brooms were manufactured, being sold within the community and in the neighboring towns of Hereford, Tulia, and Canyon.

About 1904, Father Reisdorff platted the town-site of Nazareth. In 1905, the Heidgerkens opened a store, building a two-story structure that served as dwelling, store, and also housed a cafe.

The Home Mercantile, the oldest general store in Nazareth, Texas, served the community for 90 years in two different locations. The first store was erected in 1905. After it was dismantled in 1928, Ed Kern and Conrad Schulte built a new Home Mercantile Co. Store less than a half block away from the original site. This was the first brick and concrete building in Castro County.

At the Home Mercantile store— open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. — farm families purchased staples such as basic groceries, bulk flour, notions, threads, sewing ma



terials, bulk cookies, candies, liquor, and oysters, a popular favorite in the heavily German community. Merchandise and food sold at the Home Mercantile were unusual for a rural Texas Panhandle town. Gingersnap cookies were measured out from big barrels. Cringing clerks scooped smelly oysters from gallon cans into paper cartons. There was also a bulk cookie counter about seven or eight feet long that was lined with little glass doors on both sides. Flour and sugar were sold in 100, 50, or 25 pound sacks and were stacked on a counter at the back of the store. Arsenic, mouse poison, and calcium cyanide were stored right across from the bulk flour. Cyanide was kept in quart jars labeled with a skull and crossbones. No one considered these items dangerous to have on an open shelf. Every other morning, a delivery of fresh vegetables and produce were delivered from Amarillo and dropped off at the front door. Eggs, cream, and milk were all locally produced and bought by the store to resell.



About a quarter of the back northwest portion of the store was taken up by a cold storage locker. People rented storage boxes for their meats because they had no big freezers at home. There was also a storage room where locals would hang their locally butchered beef for the eight to 10 day curing process. The store butchered, wrapped, and packaged the meat before placing it on quick chill plates at about 20 degrees below zero. That was the secret to keeping good meat- freezing it quickly.

The main suppliers of dry goods for the store were Amarillo Paper and Thomas Hardware. Bolts of materials, ribbons, and laces were displayed in glass showcases. Local resident Loretta Warren sold her Texas Star quilts and crocheted baby caps and sweaters in the store in order to pay for her funeral.

The store was always a gathering place for Nazareth. Community members who sat on a long window ledge at the front of the store to talk and watch life go by. On Thursday nights, the store stayed open until 10 p.m. for poker games, with the poker players often buying sandwiches. Some of the most interesting evening social events were the boxing matches held in the middle of the store. No referee was appointed for these matches. In those days, anyone who wanted to box just showed up, with most of the contestants being young boys from the community looking for an outlet other than farming and school.

The store also opened up on Sunday mornings after Mass so people could get the paper and anything else they needed. From 1937 to 1980, Home Mercantile also housed Nazareth's post office. The store's owner, Rose Warren, was the town's longest-serving postmaster. Mail was delivered around 6:30 or 7 a.m., and if customer packages were not wrapped properly, Rose would re-wrap them.

In 1980, the post office moved from the store to a new home on St. Joseph Street. In 1985, Rose Warren wrote a transaction on the back of a brown paper bag and sold Home Mercantile to Duane and Nan Davis who operated the store with a lunch counter selling hamburgers.

Nazareth's iconic Home Mercantile store closed its doors for the last time in 1995.

Mail had been carried to the site of the town since the days when the McCormicks first came to the country. Both Aloysius and

Thomas McCormick had acted as post master. For five years the Aloysius McCormicks brought the mail out from Dimmitt. The husband did it while he was at home, and when he was away on selling trips, Mrs. McCormick made the drives by buggy to get the mail. For some years, a small room in the their home served as a post office, and Louise Thier took care of the mail. Mail arrived once a week at first, but as the community grew, it came oftener. In 1908, Godfrey Binzegger was appointed postmaster.

There was very little need for government in the little town. The church trustees provided such control as was necessary. Frank Saalfeld was chairman of the church committee for a number of years during the time that the town was being started, and with the pastors he worked for its development. This little town was a convenience to the settlers, shortening many trips for supplies and repairs.

Father Anselm



In 1909, Father Bonaventura Binzegger retired from active work, returning to the Monastery at Einsiedeln, Switzerland, where he closed his long life in 1916. His last entry at Nazareth is dated February 7, 1909. Father Anselm remained in Nazareth for eight years, and his work during that time determined

the framework within which the parochial life of the community would develop in succeeding years. The parish is indebted to Father Anselm for bringing the first sisters to teach in Nazareth schools. He obtained the services of the Olivetan Benedictines of Jonesboro, Arkansas, in 1909, and in 1915 he brought the Benedictine Sisters of Fort Smith, Arkansas, to teach in the schools. The Benedictine priests and sisters have given many years of service to the parish at Nazareth, adding incalculably to the depth of religious spirit prevailing in the parish.

Father Anselm saw the advantages to be gained by lay organizations within the parish. His predecessor had organized the women of the parish. In 1911, he organized the St. Joseph's Verein for the men of the parish, associating it with the Catholic State League. In the following year, the solidarity of the Children of Mary was established for young people. The Catholic Order of Foresters was brought into the parish in 1915. Holy Family Court No. 1795, the only one in the State of Texas, was instituted June 6, 1915.

These and succeeding organizations have developed a close-knit parish life, and to a considerable extent are responsible for the habit of frequent Communion so noticeable in the parish.

During Father Anselm's pastorate, the community was augmented by the arrival of a number of families from, Nebraska, Ohio, and Oklahoma. Father Peter Post, spent some time in the parish during this period taking care of a number of mission churches on the South Plains while here. An addition to the Nazareth rectory was made in the early part of

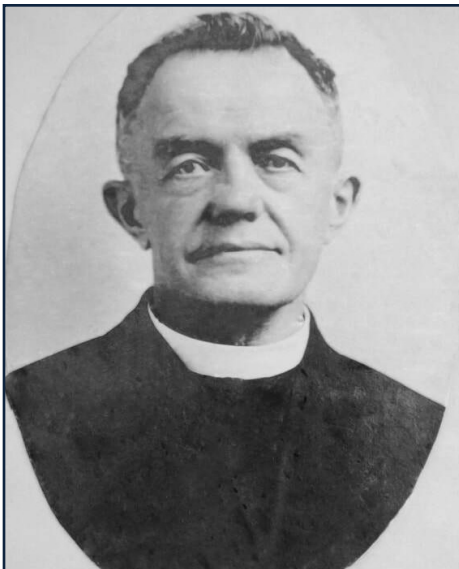
Father Anselm's term at Nazareth.

On November 5, 1914, Bishop Joseph P. Lynch of Dallas, who had succeeded to the See at the death of Bishop Dunne in 1911, paid his first visit to Nazareth parish, confirming a class of seventy-eight persons. He returned for a canonical visitation in 1916, that time giving permission for the erection of a new church in Nazareth. The first church, already twice enlarged, was becoming much too small for the congregation. It was left to Father Anselm's successor to build it, however. Father Anselm's last baptism in the parish is dated November 14, 1916.



which served the parish well for thirty years. Bishop Lynch blessed the church on April 15, 1918, at the same time confirming a class of fourteen.

The Second Church

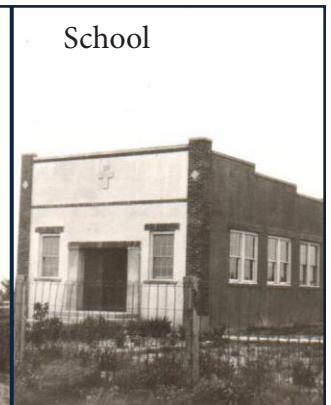
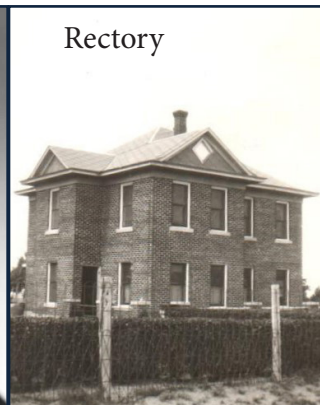
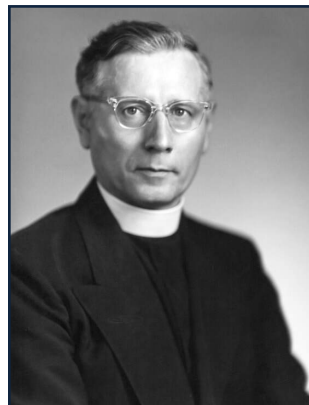


Father Matthew Saettele, O.S.B., known as the missionary and church builder, became the next pastor of Nazareth. His first entry in the baptismal register was February 4, 1917, and his last, December 30, 1917. He stayed not quite a year, but in that time he bore out his reputation by building the second church for Holy Family Parish. He first collected the funds, which considerably exceeded the cost, set by the Bishop as not to exceed six thousand dollars. The building was a plain frame structure,

To Father Matthew is ascribed the introduction of the League of the Sacred Heart into the parish, in 1917. In that year the United States entered the First World War, in which eight young men of Holy Family Parish served the nation. A two-room public school building was erected in 1917.

Father Matthew was followed at Nazareth by the Rev. Conrad Herda, O.S.B., whose first baptism in the parish occurred on February 13, 1918, and last on May 18, 1923. He added substantially to the parish plant by the erection of a brick rectory and the sisters' convent, two buildings which were by that time greatly needed. The increased school enrollment made necessary the construction of another two-room public school building in 1923.

The Reverend Andrew Quante, O.S.B. worked zealously in the parish for several years. His first baptism is recorded August 30, 1923, and his last on April 5, 1925.



His successor was the Rev. Justin Wewer, O.S.B. whose first and last entries in the baptismal register are dated May 11, 1925, and June 13, 1929. Father Justin modernized much of the parish equipment, and in his pastorate, in 1928, the one room parochial school building, housing the first and second grade pupils was erected.



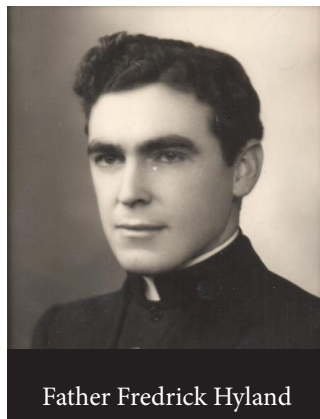
On May 22, 1927, the Nazareth Council No. 2654 of the Knights of Columbus was instituted, with thirty-seven charter members.

Within this period occurred the formation of the Diocese of Amarillo, an organizational measure intimately affecting the life of every parish on the High Plains. The diocese was erected August 25, 1926, and on April 28, 1927, the Most Reverend Rudolph Aloysius Gerken was installed as its first bishop. The new Bishop paid his first official visit to Nazareth on October 5, 1927, when he confirmed a class of sixty-eight, and he returned for a canonical visitation on November 11, 1928.

The Rev. Thomas Buegler, O.S.B., was in Nazareth during the first years of the depression, and one year it was impossible for him to get his salary. Father Thomas took a great interest in parish societies. During his pastorate the Nazareth Council of the Knights of Columbus won the state award for outstanding activity, in 1930 and 1931.

On May 19, 1931, Bishop Gerken paid his last visit to Nazareth, confirming fifty-three persons. In 1933, this first Bishop of Amarillo was raised to the Arch Episcopal See of Santa Fe, and his place was taken by the Most Reverend Robert E. Lucy, installed at Amarillo May 16, 1934.

In 1933 the Diocese of Amarillo was attaining greater maturity during this time. It is reflected in Nazareth by the formation of study clubs, the organization of the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women and greater participation in diocesan activities. The school was making advances scholastically, and a modern and larger building was in sight.



Father Fredrick Hyland

In 1936, the Holy Family Parish had the great happiness of seeing the first of its sons elevated to the Priesthood. The Rev. Fredrick Hyland (my uncle) of Nazareth, ordained at Amarillo by the Most Rev. Robert. Lucey on May 12, 1940.

The Third Church



On January 30, 1942, the Very Rev. Gregory A. Boeckman took charge of Nazareth. Father Boeckman had been the first priest ordained for the Diocese of Amarillo. Upon his arrival in Holy Family Parish, he began planning for the erection of the imposing church which he built in 1949.



In the early part of his pastorate, America was engaged in the Second World War, during which the parish of Nazareth bore an honorable part in the sons that it supplied for the nation's defense. One mother, Mrs. John Pohlmeier, had six sons in the Armed Forces at one time, and the parish of not one hundred fifty families has supplied eighty-two men and women to the nation's forces in this decade, a truly patriotic record. Quotas for war bond purchases and Red Cross drivers were greatly over subscribed in Nazareth. Its charities for war relief were also notable. American Legion Post No. 528 was organized in Nazareth in March, 1946.

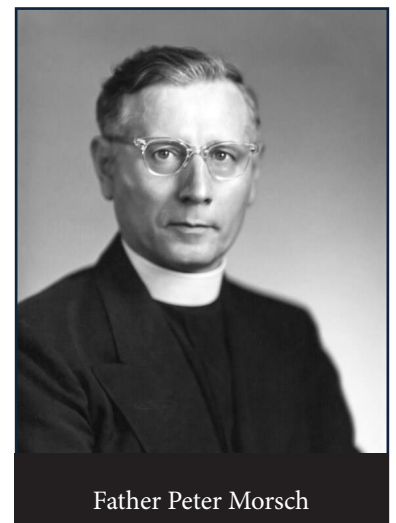
Father Boeckman fostered the activity of parish societies during his pastorate, reorganizing the St. Joseph's Society and the Children of Mary. The Catholic Daughters of America were organized in the parish when Archbishop Gerken Court 1368 of Nazareth was instituted October 15, 1944, with a

charter membership of fifty-four. Parish organizations have, on the whole, been vigorously active through out the history of the parish.



The first visit of the Most Rev. Laurence J. FitzSimon to Holy Family Parish was on April 11, 1943, when he confirmed a class of forty-four. On March 16, 1947, he made a canonical visitation, and confirmed seventy persons. His third official visit, on May 8, was to bless and lay the cornerstone of the third church in Nazareth. This building was completed at a cost of \$20,000, and was dedicated by the Most Reverend Bishop on November 9, 1949. On March 12, 1950, the sacrament of

Confirmation was administered for the first time in the new church, when Bishop Laurence J. FitzSimon confirmed a class of forty-three. This beautiful church of the Holy Family is a monument to the faith of the parish and to its builder, the Very Rev. Gregory A. Boeckman. Soon after its completion, on May 1950, Father Boeckman resigned his pastorate because of failing health. He was transferred to the parish of Happy, where he built a church for mission of Tulia before his death on January 5, 1952.



Father Peter Morsch

The pastor of Nazareth, at the date of its golden jubilee, is the Very Rev. Peter Morsch appointed pastor of Holy Family Church on May 13, 1950. He has succeeded in reducing the debt on the new church by almost one half.

The beginning of Father Morsch's pastorate was marked by the presentation of the papal medal, Benemerenti, to a parishioner of Nazareth, Stephen Thier. It was pointed out that in his lifetime Stephen Thier had assisted in the erection of three churches. His life epitomizes the accomplishments of the parish of Nazareth. Within fifty years, the lifetime of one man, it had built three successive churches, each one larger than the last, to house a congregation which has grown from a few isolated souls to one counting one hundred forty-five families. Although the recognition was given to one man, to a member of a family which had served the church faithfully through the half century, nevertheless it signals the achievements of the group, in which each member did his part to build the devout, flourishing parish of the Holy Family which exists at Nazareth today.

An evidence of the deep religious spirit of the parish is the number of its young men and women who have entered the priesthood and the religious life. Three men of the parish bear the title of priest, and twenty-two women of the parish are members of the religious sisterhoods. The parish is deeply grateful for this blessing from the hand of God. The parish of Nazareth stands at the beginning of its second half century. May God grant that it will grow in numbers and in grace, a vital, living part within the body of Holy Mother Church.



Centerpiece of the Holy Family Parish Cemetery is shown here. The Crucifixion group was donated by the parishioners. Most of the work was done by the pastor, Father Gregory Boeckman, and his parishioners.



NOTEWORTHY

On Mar. 7, 2020 The Nazareth Swiftettes were No. 1 for the fourth year in a row.

Nazareth won the 1A State Championship for the sixth time in seven years. It's the Nazareth girls' 24th overall State Title. All have come since 1976. No school in the State of Texas has won more.

Thomas Patrick McCormick wanted to be buried in the Holy Family Cemetery in Nazareth. He wanted his grave to be a reminder for all generations to come of the suffering and hardships that the founders experienced in assuring a Catholic future for Nazareth.



In Nazareth, drive down the dirt roads, down the one they call 529, past the abandoned dairies and homes, past dry wells and forgotten tractors, out to a stand of trees. Kochia grows tall and prickly.

Before the brush returned, a house stood here. The old T. P. McCormick homestead, where man first decided that this piece of Castro County might have a future. It's where the priest came, where the first Mass was conducted, where the first land office was established, where the first mail was delivered. In 1900, it was the only thing for miles. This is where the dream began.

Now it's just the weeds and the Siberian elms and the wind. There are ragged holes in the well shack, the pipe rusted and dry. They hauled most of the big house away decades ago, just as the Swiftettes were starting their run. Only a room or two is left, falling plaster the only clue human beings ever occupied this space.

Night at the Museum

Ecumenical Calling of Artists

The Museum sponsored an ecumenical art competition where first prize was \$4,000 and a permanent home in the museum, second place was \$750 and third place \$500. The pieces were to be of a religious nature in the medium of the artist choice.

The public voted on the art pieces and the three pieces with the most votes were presented to Alex R. Gregory, Curator of Art at the Amarillo Museum of Art to choose first, second, and third place.

Alex selected “To Understand you have to be like a child” by Father Richard Zanetti as first place. “Rising Son” by Randy Friemel as second place and “Maximilian Kolbe” by Tyler Llewellyn as third place.



First Place: “To Understand you have to be like a child” by Father Richard Zanetti



Alex Gregory, Curator of Art at the Amarillo Museum of Art, announces first, second and third place.



Randy Friemel accepts his check for second place, “Rising Son”



“Maximilian Kolbe” by Tyler Llewellyn as third place.



"Life's Hand Book" by Darla Parks



"Journey of Our Lord" by Johnna Luther



Jay and Darla Parks admire some of the art. Darla is the artist of "Life's Handbook."



"Sermon on the Mountain" by Chris Johnson

Forty two pieces of art were entered by 27 artists.



Night at the Museum

Ecumenical Calling of Artists

Sr. Olivia Pendergrast



Sr. Olivia Pendergrast's estate was preserved by Mary Schooler; kept in the basement of Schooler Funeral Home. Cleaning out the funeral home basement Mary's son, Jim came across Sr. Olivia's papers and personnel belonging. Thankfully he and his mother decided the Diocesan Museum was the best place for these items. Sister's estate has been processed and stored in the archives with the rest of our Diocesan History.

Among her greatest achievements was Sister Olivia's recognition as the woman who "founded Hospice in the Texas Panhandle". Under her patient leadership, Saint Anthony's Hospital created the Life Enrichment Department in October, 1980, which Sister Olivia directed for a number of years. The innovative center provided assistance and resources to terminally ill patients. The program was honored in 1984 with the Most Outstanding Hospice award for the State of Texas, conferred by the Texas Hospice Organization. After the President's personal review, St. Anthony's Hospice and Life Enrichment program also received recognition in January, 1991 as the 357th "Presidential Point of Light" in President George Bush, Sr.'s 1000 Points of Light initiative. In a hospital newsletter, the Spectrum, Sister Olivia spoke about her call to Hospice and how it had changed her: "While I was working in neonatology at Spohn, we used natural childbirth and music to make the birth process more pleasant." So, people began to say "Would you come see my mother who is in ICU", or "Would you come see my relative who is dying." I realized

something needed to be done about making death a happier transition experience." "I always felt called to the ministry. Most people who feel a calling, I think, feel it early in childhood. But, they may or may not follow it. It's like throwing yourself away if you don't follow it. I couldn't do it. It's a challenge but if one stays centered in God, all things come under his guidance." "I have changed tremendously. I'm not simply a Catholic nun anymore. I have grown in the 'universalness' of spirituality, become more economical. In sharing pastoral challenges, I have grown in the deep appreciation of the common concerns and common journey to God."



BSA Hospice began operation under the leadership of Sister Olivia Prendergrast. A group of compassionate community leaders met to develop an organization dedicated to raising money to pay for the "extras" of BSA hospice patients and educating the community about hospice care. That organization became "Olivia's Angels" in 1990.

Today, Olivia's Angels is associated with the Harrington Cancer and Health Foundation and helps to fulfill the needs, dreams, and wishes of many hospice patients. Sometimes these are relatively small such as denture repairs, eyeglasses, or a haircut at home. Sometimes they are much larger such as purchasing an airline ticket so that a loved one can spend time with a patient.

Olivia's Angels enriches the lives of hospice patients primarily from donations and the annual Hospice Holiday Tree.



Professor Alan R. Perry visited the archives office of the Pastoral Center to review our files of World War II Prisoners of War who were detained in Hereford, Texas. He was accompanied by his mother and sister. Professor Perry's scholarly interests focus upon Italy in World War II, contemporary Italian folklore, Italy in the Cold War, and Italian popular culture and literature. He has published numerous articles and an anthology (*Il santo partigiano martire: La retorica del sacrificio nelle biografie commemorative* with Longo Editore of Ravenna, 2001) on the ways Italians commemorate and remember WWII. He has also focused extensively on the journalist Giovannino Guareschi, himself held as a prisoner by the Nazis in Poland during the war. In 2008, the University of Toronto Press published Prof. Perry's *The Don Camillo Stories of Giovannino Guareschi: A Humorist Portrays the Sacred*. Recently he has studied the Italian POW experience in Pennsylvania and with Flavio G. Conti is the co-author of *Italian Prisoners of War in Pennsylvania: Allies on the Home Front, 1944 - 1945* (Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2016). Currently he and Conti have a contract with Arcadia Publishing to present a pictorial history of these POWs who were detained at the Letterkenny Army Ordnance Depot near Chambersburg.

Thank you for your
continued generosity!

Contributions

May 31, 2022 to August	
Don Allen	150
Joe and Theresa Artho	120
DCCW	200
Marlene Casasanta	50
Marilyn Commons	25
Margaret Diller	100
Don H Dolle	25
Kathrine Monceballez	25
May Hochstein	25
Floyd and Becky Lane	25
Sharon Moylan	50
Melanie Nicholson	40
Rev. Francisco Perez	100
Dee Ramirez	30
Jane Roberts	50
M/M Richard Rouillard	25
Roxann Schwertner	50
Delia Teal	10
Don White	50
Bishop John W. Yanta	75
	1225

MEMORIALS

Don Bednorz	50
by Mary Bednorz	
Phil Wedding	50
by Catherine Wedding	100

IN HONOR

Anniversary of Phillip and Doris Nell Smith	50
by Dixie Surratt	100



Bishop John Walter Yanta, who ushered the Diocese of Amarillo into the Third Millennium, passed away Aug. 6 on the Feast of the Transfiguration after years of dealing with a number of serious health ailments. He was 90 years old.



This shrine was entered in the *Calling All Artists Program* by Lazaro Iglesias. Lazaro has so graciously donated this to the museum.

Father Joseph Reisdorff

Father Reisdorf was born in Nievenheim, Germany, on October 4, 1840. On the 16th of March, 1872 he was ordained a priest in St. Louis, Mo., where he remained as assistant pastor for nearly twenty years. In 1892 he came to Texas to establish German Catholic colonies. The first colony was Windthorst, Archer Co. From there he went to Rhineland, Knox Co.; from Rhineland to Nazareth, Castro Co., from Nazareth to Umbarger, Randall Co.; from Umbarger he went to Putnam, Callaghan Co., but in that place he had no success. His last colony was at Slaton. All of the colonies he established are now thriving parishes, with the exception of Putnam. Had he lived to the 16th of March he would have had the happiness to celebrate his golden sacerdotal jubilee. 1922

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You may stop by daily (Monday through Thursday) 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: 414-1076 or even better: sgarner@dioama.org

Did You Know?

This Newsletter and all the displays in the museum are made possible solely by your donations!