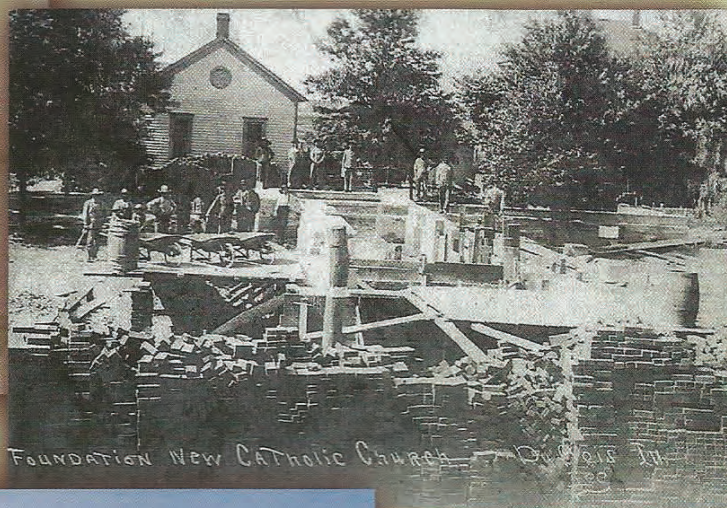


St. Charles Borromeo Church
1877 - 2002
125th Anniversary



Building the Original Church



**Laying the Foundation of
the Present Church**



"Cathedral of the Prairie"



“Cathedral of the Prairie”

Completed in 1910

*This booklet of history and pictures from
the early years of St. Charles Church and its Parish
through the celebration of its 125th anniversary
is presented for your reading enjoyment.*

*A very special "thank you" is extended to
Norma Richardson and Mary Ksycki for the
preparation of this booklet. Their dedication and
efforts expended in its preparation are sincerely
appreciated.*



St. Charles Church Sanctuary



Baptismal Font

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St. Charles Borromeo

Patron of Our Church



St. Charles of the noble family of Borromeo was born in 1538 in Italy. At age 22 he was made Cardinal by his uncle, Pope Pius IV, and a short time afterwards he was nominated Archbishop of Milan. While Archbishop, he founded schools for the poor and seminaries for the clergy. He composed the Roman Catechism containing the teachings of the Council of Trent. He is recognized as the Patron of Seminarians.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF DUBOIS, ILLINOIS

Research of a variety of records revealed information about how the community of DuBois developed and how so many people found their way to this area.

The first settlers came to a largely wooded area, dispersed by stretches of prairie land in the southeast section of Washington County, named "Coloma", now called DuBois. It was not farm land as the immigrants had expected. The plentiful wooded area provided ample wood for building as well as heating. The early settlers' homes were log cabins.

Information concerning these brave and adventurous people was researched in the Washington County Histories copies of 1879, 1948 and 1976. Various other books, newspapers, and pamphlets were researched. Conversations with parishioners of St. Charles Borromeo Church and members of DuBois and surrounding communities also provided some history, memories, and stories passed to them by word of mouth from their ancestors.

Some history books indicated that in 1817 inhabitants were noticed in Washington County and it was brought to the attention of the Legislature at Kaskaskia. During the 1818 legislative session, which was the year Illinois became a state, the County of Washington was created. Originally all of Clinton County was part of Washington County.

On December 27, 1824, Clinton County separated from Washington County and the present boundaries were set at that time. This event brought about an interest in immigration and from then on there was a steady increase in population and settlements in the county.

The earliest record of people settling in the southeast section of the county, in DuBois, is listed as 1827 when George Palmer settled on Section 29 and a certain John Vaughn built a log cabin on Section 30. In the next ten years there are several names on record including the following: Phillips, McCord, Anderson, White, Tilley, Phelps, Spencer, and others. Many of these people came to this area by wagon train from Kentucky and Tennessee.

The first German immigration to this area occurred in 1849 when John W. Schwind and his wife, Katherine Bender, arrived at New Orleans and traveled up the Mississippi to St. Louis. They came to Washington County and settled on 240 acres of land he received as a grant from the United States Government. It was prior to the completion of the Illinois Central Railroad. That farmland was three miles northwest of Coloma. This information is on record and is an example of how some immigrants came into this area.

In 1853, there is a record of the men who plotted, recorded, and gave the town the name of Coloma. No reason was given in this particular record as to the reason for the choice of the name "Coloma". The men were: L. J. Bridges, D. Topping, E. H. Topping, and J. W. Tilley. Darius Greenup was the surveyor.

In 1854, the Illinois Central Railroad was opened through DuBois. As early as 1855 the Illinois Central Railroad records listed shipments to DuBois, however, Coloma was used as a shipping address until 1867. In 1868, records list DuBois in all shipping transactions. The name of "Bois" for the railroad station started in either 1896 or 1903. The name was used to avoid confusion with DuQuoin where boxcars intended for DuBois for shipment of cattle, fruit, and grain were often left on the sidetrack.

The Kuhn Cooperative Mine of the Bois Coal Company opened in 1865. It was operated by mule power; it was never modernized. When it closed in 1965, it was the oldest mine in Illinois.

On April 1, 1869, Coloma was officially named "DuBois" after Jesse K. DuBois, a Southern Illinois friend of Abraham Lincoln. He was a Whig and later a Republican who was commissioned in 1857 and again in 1861 as the Auditor of Public Accounts.

In 1870, Polish immigrants came to take advantage of cheap land that land agents were selling. There were two groups of agents. Henry Holbrook was the DuBois area agent for the McAllister and Mackel Land Company. The company bought 32,000 acres of railroad property in 1854. The owners were capitalists from Philadelphia who were friends of Governor Bissel of Illinois. German and Polish immigrants bought land.

The second group of agents was from the Radom area. Brigadier General Jan Bazyli Turczyn (Turchin) became an agent for the Illinois Central Railroad. As the railroad was completed, people were needed to use it for travel and shipping. General Turchin was hired to entice Polish people to come to Radom with a promise of a Polish city, a Polish church, a Polish school, and cheap farmland. Notices were placed in cities with large concentrations of people from Poland, namely, Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee, as well as other cities. He also advertised land in Poland.

Although the majority of the Polish immigrants came to this area in the 1870's, there were a few who had come earlier. The neighboring town of Radom had many settlers who immigrated prior to 1870. The reason for this was the recruitment efforts of Turchin and Michalski, both land agents for the railroad.

The people of Poland suffered under foreign tyranny for more than one hundred years. In 1859, about 54% of the small farms in Poland consisted of less than 40 acres. As children were born, the farms were divided among them. In the Poznan region, the small farm contained less than 6 acres, barely enough land to raise sufficient food to feed a family. In the Austrian partition of Poland, the situation was even worse. The government divided the family farms to where the people owned only one acre.

This land pressure, plus the fact that Bismarck was hard on the Polish speaking people, was reason enough for those who could leave to do so by taking advantage of Turchin's advertising. Land was listed at five dollars an acre, and in some cases, transportation was free on the Illinois Central Railroad to the area where the land was purchased.

Large numbers of Polish people immigrated to America and to this area in the 1870's. Many immigrants who were farmers were not prepared for what they had purchased as farmland as much of the land was wooded.

In 1879, DuBois had a population of about 250. It had blacksmiths, a drug store, freight hauling, a grain elevator, grocery stores, harness makers, hardware stores, a livery station, mills, two physicians, saloons and taverns, one hotel, and four churches.



City Hall in 1907

Today, the population remains at 250, and two churches are active; St. Mark's United Church of Christ and St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church.

ST. CHARLES PARISH BEGINS - 1868

Most often the beginnings of a great enterprise are very humble, marked with a great deal of painstaking effort and hard labor. The early history of St. Charles Parish in DuBois is indeed one that is filled with many difficulties which could be overcome only by the generous sacrifices and wholehearted cooperation of a people of deep faith and a burning love for their God and their Church.

Few records of the early days of St. Charles Church are available. The first entry in the Baptismal record of the parish was inscribed on December 26, 1868, by Father Charles Klocke. The infant baptized was Katherine Oberhofer, daughter of Lawrence and Anna Meier Oberhofer. The congregation at that time consisted of about ten Catholic German families. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered in the home of Martin Kuhn, who lived just north of DuBois, and presumably in the homes of others. Other Catholic immigrants coming into the area joined in the religious services with homilies in German.

St. Charles Church was named after Father Charles Klocke, the first priest to serve the spiritual needs of the first Catholic settlers in the DuBois area. Father Klocke traveled from DuQuoin, Illinois occasionally saying Mass for settlers in the mission parish at DuBois and other communities.

Father Klocke was instrumental in forming St. Charles Parish and was its administrator until 1877. He was appointed as its first pastor in 1878. He died in 1891 and is buried in the Sacred Heart Cemetery, DuQuoin, Illinois.

The first marriage record in St. Charles Parish was that of Joseph Drezka and Magdalen Przygoda on August 16, 1877.



Rev. Charles Klocke
1868-1878

Rev. Charles Klocke

THE FIRST ST. CHARLES CHURCH - 1877

The first meeting of the trustees of the Roman Catholic Church at Coloma Washington County, Illinois, was on March 2, 1871. At this meeting, Adam Kuhn was elected to serve as Secretary and William Oberhofer as Treasurer. Reverend Charles Klocke was listed as the pastor-administrator.

The highlight of the pioneering period was the building of the first St. Charles Church in 1877. At the time the new church was being built, the parish was predominantly a German and Polish community. German and Polish immigrants, who lived as far away as Posen and Scheller, joined other early settlers of the area to help Father Klocke build a house of worship.

The wooden structure stood southeast of the present church. It was 75 feet long and 36 feet wide. With walls yet to be plastered and with planks laid on empty kegs serving as pews, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered on the third Sunday of Advent, December 16, 1877.



The first St. Charles Church

The first baptism in the original St. Charles Church was that of Laura (Lena) Paulina Molter on December 16, 1877.

In 1878, Rev. L. Riesen, a German, came from Pinckneyville to serve the people of St. Charles Parish. He was the second pastor.

Father John Wollowski, who was Polish and arrived in Radom in 1876, was assigned to assist him. He was handicapped by the loss of a hand, in the Insurrection of 1863, and therefore, was unable to offer Mass. However, he was able to help with preaching and hearing of confessions. He retired to a farm six miles south of DuBois and 3 miles west of Tamaroa. From there he offered his services to various parishes in the territory. He died on January 17, 1884, and was buried in the Sacred Heart Cemetery in DuQuoin.

It was through the efforts of Father Wollowski that St. Charles Parish eventually received a pastor of Polish descent to minister to the increasingly large number of Polish settlers in this community.



Finishing the first St. Charles Church

St. Charles Parish was placed under the care of the Franciscan Order Friars, who had a monastery in Radom, Illinois from 1879 to 1898. Father Dezyderjusz Liss, of Polish descent, was the first Franciscan Friar to be appointed pastor of St. Charles Parish in 1879. He remained pastor until 1881 at which time he left for Europe.

The same year that Father Liss was appointed pastor, Bishop Baltes of Alton conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation for the first time in St. Charles Church. Eighty two persons were confirmed on June 8, 1879.

Father Urban Stanowski, also of Polish descent followed Father Liss as pastor of St. Charles Church. He was assisted by Father Markus Thienier. A trying period developed for the congregation.

Father Stanowski removed some benches from the church to make a sanctuary rather than enlarge the church. This resulted in the church being 20 feet smaller (from 75 to 55 feet long). He also had the church painted at large cost which, at that time, the people could not afford.

Father Stanowski then built a chapel, the Chapel of St. Francis, on Bald Hill, 8 miles southeast of DuBois near Scheller in Section 17 of Jefferson County to help the people in that area.

Homilies at St. Charles Church were in German. This created a problem for the Polish and English speaking parishioners who did not understand the German language. To solve this bilingual problem, Father Stanowski wanted to divide the DuBois parish. He suggested

the German people could have the church in DuBois, and the Polish people of the parish could move 5 miles to the West of DuBois in a church yet to be built. His suggested solution to the language problem was not practical.

Father Stanowski wanted to build a school at Bald Hill by the Chapel of St. Francis. The parishioners insisted that it be built in DuBois on church grounds.

The language problem and dispute over the location of a needed school building finally brought on dissension in the parish. The controversies and misunderstandings resulting from the debt contracted by Father Stanowski by borrowing money for the building of the Chapel of St. Francis, building of a sanctuary, painting of the church, which the parishioners were unable to pay or didn't want to pay, caused the church to be closed on April 12, 1883.

Only after deposition to the Bishop and placing \$1,219 in the bank in DuQuoin, with Father Klocke as mediator, did the Bishop permit the church to be reopened on September 30, 1883.

In 1883, Father Anastazt Czech was named pastor. He stayed only four months, because he couldn't agree with the Superior of the Franciscan Monastery, Father Urban Stanowski.

Father Cyril Augustynski followed Father Czech. He too felt that his hands were tied trying to administer to the spiritual needs of the parish because of the rules of Father Stanowski. Father Augustynski did pay off the debt, beautified the church, and only after two years did he leave DuBois.

Father Damian Koziolok was named pastor in 1885, but he was still under the control of Father Stanowski. Again, the church was closed; this time for two years.

The reason for its closing in 1885 was the result of continuing controversies between Father Stanowski and the parishioners regarding the location of a school and his desire to build another chapel west of DuBois, as he did before on Bald Hill. The people didn't want their church divided and wanted a school to be built near their church.

Father Stanowski's intentions regarding the church and school, may have been well intended. He realized the church building would soon be inadequate, because of the continuing growth of the parish, and schools would be needed.

While this period of particularly bitter internal quarreling was unfortunate, the parish survived. On May 29, 1885, Father Stanowski was appointed pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka Church, 20th Street and Cass Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri. He, as a Franciscan Friar, served that parish on a part-time basis. This arrangement was not particularly to the liking of the parishioners. After repeated requests from the St. Louis Archdiocese, Rome released Father Stanowski from his vows.



St. Charles Cemetery

In 1891, Father Stanowski became a secular priest and began over four decades of service to the St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish which were to prove among the greatest years of its growth and prosperity. The present St. Stanislaus Kostka Church was completed in 1893 under Father Stanowski's direction. Today, it is a National Historical Landmark.

Father Stanowski died on January 23, 1927. After his death, he was recognized by the St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish for his outstanding leadership. He was one of the oldest activists in the province of national civic affairs, an organizer of great talents, and a model manager, who was able from meager means to organize a powerful Polish settlement in St. Louis.

On September 11, 1887, after a sad two years without any celebration, the church reopened under the direction of Father Sebastian Cebula. Father Cebula replaced Father Stanowski as Superior of the Franciscan Friars Monastery and also as the pastor of St. Michael's Parish in Radom. Prior to coming to Radom, Father Cebula was the pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in St. Louis from 1879 to 1885. In 1881, he built the first St. Stanislaus Church and School, which served the large Polish community of St. Louis.

To help Father Cebula, Father Lucas (Luke) Mierszowski became the DuBois pastor serving from 1887 to 1894. He was well liked during his seven years of administration.

The parish began to prosper under Father Mierszowski. A five acre tract of land east of DuBois was purchased for a cemetery. Prior to 1888, the DuBois parish buried the dead in the Radom Cemetery. According to parish records, the first burial in the St. Charles Cemetery was that of Joseph Grabowski, Sr. on December 11, 1888.

Father Mierszowski continued to minister to the Chapel of St. Francis at Bald Hill neighborhood. The chapel building served as a church on Sundays and a school during the week.

One record of a marriage ceremony performed by Father Mierszowski at the chapel on Bald Hill was that of Lawrence Miloszewski and Rose Boczek, both of Bald Hill, on November 7, 1888.

In 1891, Father Mierszowski built the first two room school next to the parish church the way the parishioners desired. The school was 56 feet long and 26 feet wide. He also built a convent for the teaching Sisters of Notre Dame next to the parish church. The Sisters from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, were missioned to the small community of DuBois.

The convent opened in September and classes started in the new school on October 1891, with 32 students. The sisters not only taught the students and diligently guided them in their faith and love of God, but also took care of the church linens, priests vestments, choir, altar boys, and the school children who boarded during the week.

The joy and enthusiasm of the people was running high, when suddenly in 1894, the beloved pastor was appointed to take care of St. Michael's Church in Radom.



The first St. Charles School

In 1894, Father Wladyslaw (Walter) Michael Czech attended the parish. He added a choir loft that reached across nearly half of the church to make room for more people. It looked like a two story church.

He also built the first rectory—two story—which served the priests from Saturday to Monday. The rest of the week, when the pastor returned to Radom, the children who lived too far away to walk to school daily boarded. Before then, the priests who had Mass on Sundays occupied two rooms above the sacristy of the church.

Father Czech was followed, in 1895, by Father Theodore Kalamaja, who likewise was deeply esteemed by the parishioners.



The first rectory

After him came Father Rembert (Charles) Stanowski, a Polish Franciscan priest from the Radom Monastery. Records indicate that he was a brother of Father Urban Stanowski.

The parishioners, however, were not satisfied with the part-time service of the Franciscan Friars, and were beginning to insist on a full time pastor. They wanted a priest who would be with them every day of the week -- not only on weekends.

The Franciscan Friars lived by the rules of St. Francis. These rules did not allow Franciscan priests to live alone. As a result, the Franciscans could not comply with the wishes of the people for a full time pastor. And, at that time the DuBois parish was not large enough to support two priests.

Father Remigisz Berendt, a missionary apostolate, was hurriedly sent to DuBois, but that did not help. His thunder blasting sermons from the pulpit for six Sundays did not change the minds of the parishioners. Father Berendt's assignment to DuBois closed the administration of St. Charles Parish by Franciscan Friars. Thus it was that St. Charles parish finally passed from the hands of the Franciscan Monastery to the guidance of the secular clergy.

Between October 10 and December 23, 1895, 19 children (all under eight years of age) and 5 adults of the parish died from diphtheria, croup, or influenza. While this is the only period of time in parish records that the cause of death was listed, it is believed to have been done because of its epidemic proportions.

To most people the year 1898 recalls events of the Spanish-American War, which to many of us today is already ancient history. But to the St. Charles parish the year 1898 has more significance. For that is the year the first secular priest was appointed as pastor of St. Charles parish.

Coming to the Belleville Diocese at the request of Bishop Janssen, who was in need of priests of Polish extraction, was Father Joseph Ceranski. As a newly ordained priest, he was appointed pastor of St. Charles Borromeo parish in DuBois on July 16, 1898.

Father Ceranski was the first secular priest of Polish descent to work in the Belleville Diocese.

In 1898, things were quite a bit different than they are today. The parish was much larger then, comprising not only what is the DuBois parish, but also the present Tamaroa, Posen, and Scheller parishes. There were close to 300 Catholic families in the DuBois parish. The town of DuBois had many businesses in 1898. The two most flourishing in those days were the coal mine and the mill.

Transportation was also vastly different in 1898. Most of the sick calls at the turn of the century were made either on horseback or in a lumber wagon. Few parish members had a small buggy or a buggy with two seats.

Father Ceranski was born September 2, 1873, in a small village of Penskowo not far from Pilki, in the Principality of Poznan (Poland). He came with his parents to America at the age of six. He attended public school in Marathon, Wisconsin. His education continued in Wausau, Wisconsin, and then he went to a Polish seminary in Detroit, Michigan, finishing his studies to become a priest at St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

He was ordained a priest by Archbishop Katzer on June 19, 1898, at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Cassel, Wisconsin. He had his first Mass on the Feast of St. Aloysioziego on July 3. Following his ordination and two weeks of vacation, he came to DuBois as pastor.

The parish grew to such an extent that the church building could not accommodate all of the parishioners. A new parish was organized in 1898, 11 miles southeast of DuBois in Scheller. Father Remigisz Berendt, a Franciscan Friar from Radom, was the first pastor. Establishment of St. Barbara's Church in Scheller resulted in 25 families less in DuBois.

The Chapel of St. Francis property in Bald Hill Township was sold by Father Ceranski on May 19, 1900. The two acres of land was sold to Joseph Miloszewski of Scheller, Illinois.

Father Ceranski had expected the community of DuBois to become a fairly large city. The "key" to community growth in the early 20th century was the magic of the railroad for transporting people and produce.

The church continued to be too small and was approaching its 25th year. Father Ceranski, in 1901, started voluntary donations for building a new church adequate enough to accommodate the expected population growth. Each year through 1910, he received nearly \$1,000.00 specifically for a new church.

In 1902 another parish opened nine miles west at Posen. Father Andrew Janiszewski, a newly ordained Diocesan priest, was named pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church. So, DuBois lost 40 more families.

In 1905 a third parish group separated. The Immaculate Conception parish was organized at Tamaroa, taking another 35 families from the DuBois parish. The Tamaroa parish was organized and its church was built under the direction of Father Ceranski. Father Remigius Berendt, a Franciscan Friar from Radom, served as pastor of the parish from 1906 to 1908.

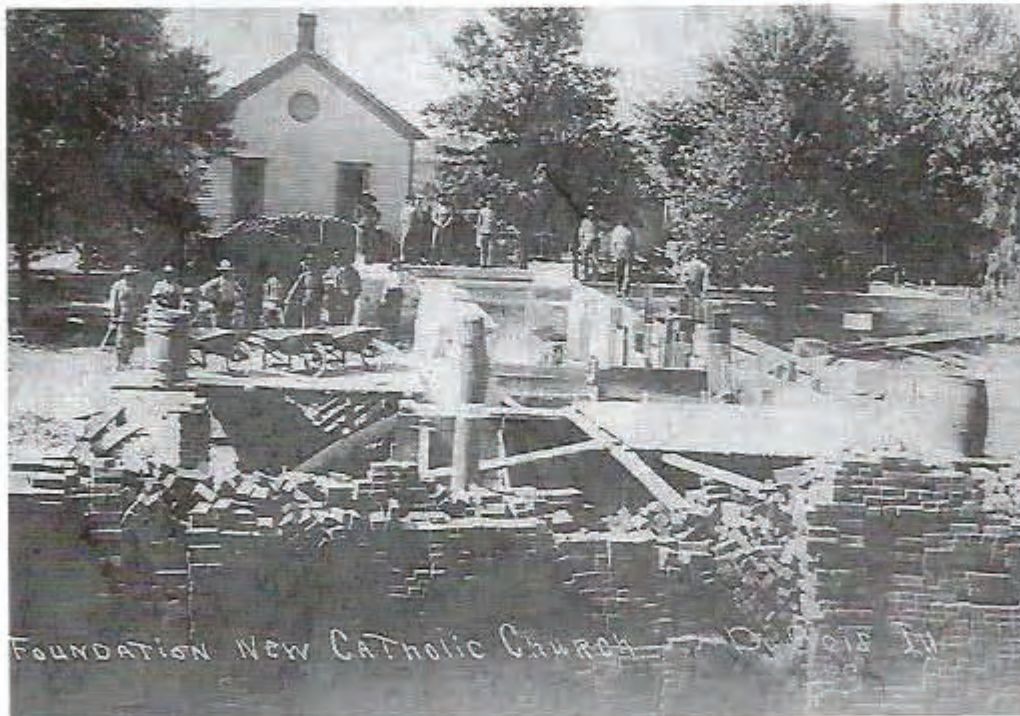
Despite the loss of families to newly organized parishes, the church continued to be too small, and plans were developed for a new church large enough to accommodate future decades of parish growth.

BUILDING OF ST. CHARLES CHURCH BEGINS - 1908

By the beginning of 1908, the parish had \$8,000.00 in its new church fund. On August 13, 1908, since the parish did not have a sufficient amount of money on hand to build a new church, Bishop John Janssen, authorized the trustees to make a loan of \$15,000.00 and gives notes in this amount in order to complete the new church building.

Father Ceranski served as the architect of the new building. He combined the best features of churches he had seen in his travels in the church he would build in DuBois. It was St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in St. Louis, built in 1892, which most closely resembled the ideas he had in mind. St. Charles Borromeo Church was patterned after St. Stanislaus Kostka Church with modifications.

Digging of the foundation began in May 1908. The work progressed quickly. Ernest Waldman was contractor. John Malawy was a carpenter.



1908 - The Foundation of St. Charles Church

Father Ceranski asked his longtime friend, Bishop Paul Rhode, at that time Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago and later Bishop of Green Bay, Wisconsin, to lay the cornerstone. Bishop Rhode officiated at the cornerstone laying ceremonies on October 5, 1908.

The first member of St. Charles Church to become a priest was Rev. Stanley Czerniejewski. He was ordained in Belleville, Illinois, on June 16, 1910, and celebrated his first Mass on June 19, 1910, in the original St. Charles Church. He was born in Jefferson County on August 16, 1886, the son of Michael and Pauline Preis Czerniejewski.

In 1914, the Franciscan Order of Friars released St. Michael's Parish in Radom, Illinois, to the care of secular priests of the Diocese of Belleville. At that time Father Czerniejewski was appointed pastor. His pastorate saw difficult economic conditions, because of the World War I depression.

Father Czerniejewski and his parishioners built the present St. Michael's Church. It was dedicated on September 30, 1924. He died on June 1, 1938, and is buried in St. Michael's Cemetery.



Rev. Stanley Czerniejewski
1886 – 1938

THE SECOND ST. CHARLES CHURCH COMPLETED - 1910

The beautiful St. Charles Borromeo Church stands as the crowning achievement of Father Joseph Ceranski's accomplishments in DuBois.



“The Cathedral of the Prairie” – Completed in 1910

The church was finished in November 1910. It is 131 feet long, 80 feet wide, and 58-1/2 feet high, with twin towers reaching a peak of 116 feet. A combination of Roman and Byzantine architecture, it is truly an imposing building.

No records were available as to how much of the work on the new church structure was done by parishioners or contractors. Where the bricks and windows were made is unknown. We did learn that one parishioner, Adam Kerry, used his horses and wagon to haul bricks from Waltonville, Illinois to the church site.

Twelve magnificent stained glass windows were installed on the sides of the main body of the church, and seven smaller ones surround the upper part of the sanctuary. Stained glass adorns domes of the church and the circular window at the front of the church as well as many smaller windows and doors.

Each of the large stained glass windows depicts a biblical or religious scene, some with an emblem, a religious emblem, or a saint. The name of the window donor is in the lower center of each window. The third window from the rear on the left side has a significant emblem related to the parish. It has 35 stars – one for each young man from the parish who served in World War I. The one gold star represents the one man, Michael Czerniejewski, Jr., who did not return. Saints are featured in each of the sanctuary windows.

The church was built at the surprisingly low cost of \$30,000.00. \$8,000.00 was already on hand when construction began. Before the church building was completed, many significant, special donations were received for completion of its interior. Donations were made for the windows, confessionals, relic center, sanctuary lamp, bells, organ, statues, and various other items.

The first Mass was celebrated in the new church on the feast day of its patron, St. Charles Borromeo, on November 4, 1910. It wasn't until the following year, on June 13, 1911, that Bishop John Janssen of Belleville, dedicated the new church, one of the finest in the Diocese, as it still is today.

One year after completion of the new church, the 1911 St. Charles Church Financial Report, reflected its debt on promissory notes of only \$14,645.00.

The former church building served as a parish hall for the next ten years. By that time the school enrollment had increased to the extent that the two class room school needed to be enlarged.

In the early 1920's, because of a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mrs. Anna Ksycki began a campaign that resulted in the purchase of the statue of the Sorrowful Mother, "the Pieta", that adorns the church today.



The "Pieta"

In 1922, a building program brought about some interesting changes. The wood from the original church was salvaged for building a three classroom school with a basement to serve as a parish meeting hall, a dining room for parish functions, and a dining area for the boarders who occupied the original two classroom building for living quarters.



School Built in 1922

Rev. Stanley J. Ksycki, the second member of St. Charles Church to become a priest, was ordained on June 5, 1932 by Bishop Althoff. He celebrated his first Solemn Mass at St. Charles Church on June 7, 1932. He was born in Bolo Township on September 18, 1906, the son of Joseph and Anna Polczynski Ksycki.

Father Ksycki, who served the spiritual needs of people in many local communities, was called to his eternal reward on January 23, 1976. He is buried in St. Charles Cemetery, his home parish cemetery.



Rev. Stanley Ksycki
1906 - 1976

On August 5, 1933, John and Cecilia Andrews donated a tract of land adjacent to St. Charles Cemetery, a triangle section in the northwest section of the cemetery.

Father Ceranski continued to improve the parish facilities. In 1934, a beautiful occasion was witnessed on Christmas morning when a newly installed Delco Plant provided electrical power for the first time in St. Charles Church. As Silent Night (Cicha Noc in Polish) was sung, many stars appeared by means of electric lights. Prior to this time, gas lamps provided light for the church.

In May 1934, a social with entertainment provided by the parish children brought in \$200.00

Electrical power became available to the town of DuBois and in the church on February 14, 1935.

In 1938, the old rectory was dismantled and a new brick veneer parsonage was built. It is still in use today. In the church, new liturgical altars and a new set of stations, the Way of the Cross, were installed.



Rectory Built In 1938

In 1946, the interior of the church was painted for the first time since the building was completed in 1910. The walls were painted, and the arches, domes and walls behind the altar were artistically decorated in time for the celebration of Father Ceranski's 50th anniversary as a priest. Until then the walls were gray, the original color of the concrete walls.

Rev. Joseph Ceranski

The year 1948 was an eventful one for St. Charles Parish. It was the year of anniversaries. Father Ceranski celebrated two gold jubilees—first, his ordination to the priesthood on June 21, and second, his becoming pastor of St. Charles Church on July 16. Father Ceranski was also named a Domestic Prelate with the title of Right Reverend Monsignor. October 5th was the 40th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the present church. December 26th was the 80th anniversary of the first baptism in the parish.



Rev. Ceranski - 1948

Beginning in 1952, Monsignor Ceranski was aided in the parish work by an assistant pastor. The first was Father Joseph Wiczorek. In 1955 he was followed by Father Raymond Malec and in 1956 by Father Donald Lenzeni. Then, in 1958, by Father Emil Maziarz.

A privilege granted to only a few clergy, that of serving in the Vineyard of the Lord, for sixty years, was commemorated by Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph Ceranski on Monday, June 23, 1958. The jubilarian also celebrated another distinctive jubilee that day—being pastor of the same parish, St. Charles Borromeo, for sixty years!

The celebration was twofold. The Solemn High Mass of Thanksgiving was offered by Msgr. Ceranski at 10:00 A.M. with Bishop Albert R. Zuroweste presiding in Cappa Magna and preaching the sermon. In the evening, at 7:30 P.M., a reception was held for the parishioners and friends with a brief speaking program and presentation of a jubilee purse to the pastor. Assisting at the Monday Mass was Revs. Edward Borawski and Stephen Kraus, deacons.

Msgr. Ceranski's assisting officers were Rev. Michael Kilmas, presbyter assistant, Rev. S. J. Ksycki, deacon, and Rev. John Terepka, subdeacon. Rev. Melvin Haas and Rev. Donald Lenzeni, the later assistant to Msgr. Ceranski, were the masters of ceremonies. A dinner for clergy followed the Mass.

The celebration on that Monday also commemorated the golden jubilee of St. Charles Borromeo Church which was constructed during Monsignor Ceranski's pastorate. By this time Msgr. Ceranski had baptized well over 1500 souls, performed almost 500 weddings, and buried more than 70 of his parishioners.

Monsignor Ceranski was called to his eternal reward on August 9, 1962, after serving 64 years of pastor of St. Charles parish. He was buried in St. Charles Cemetery.

In 1962, following the death of Msgr. Ceranski, Father Paulin Dobkowski was appointed pastor of St. Charles Church. Father Dobkowski was respectfully known in the DuBois community as "Father Doby".

Many parish functions continued as they had in previous years. One such activity that most parishioners may readily recall is the parish picnic. The tradition continues today. Many may also recall the school plays at graduation time. Recall of the enjoyable performances also causes recall of some of the great leaders in our school. School Sisters of Notre Dame: Sister M. Leopold, Sister M. Stanisa, Sister M. Leonina, and many other dedicated sisters including Sister M. Elia and Sister M. Protosia, served many years either teaching or caring for the children of St. Charles School.

The first time St. Charles Church celebrated Mass in English was in 1964.

St. Charles School and a convent were built in 1964 at a cost of \$144,000. An auction was held later to dispose of items from the former wooden school and convent.



St. Charles School



St. Charles Convent

In 1968, twenty-two years after the first painting of the interior of the church, Father Dobkowski organized, directed, and completed an extensive redecoration and updating of St. Charles Church.

The redecoration included painting of the church walls, ceiling, and window frames, caulking of the windows, marbling of the columns and the capitals were then highlighted with gold accents. The statues were repainted, too. A new floor was installed in the main body of the church, and carpeting was laid in the aisles and sanctuary. New benches, light fixtures, and a new organ were installed.

While interior redecoration was being completed the circular steps at the entrance of the church were removed and a large porch and steps were installed. Slate was removed from the roof and a new roof was installed. Father Doby's nearly 7 years as pastor of St. Charles Parish were busy ones as evidenced by the new school and convent along with redecoration and extensive maintenance of the church.

Father Doby was appointed pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Benton in 1969. He then was pastor at St. Mary Magdalen Church, Todds Mill 1978-1982, St. Michael's Church, Radom 1982-1986, and Immaculate Conception Church, Tamaroa 1986-1992. In 1992, he was named a Domestic Prelate with the title of Reverend Monsignor; he then became pastor of St. Paul's Church in Johnston City. He celebrated his 40th anniversary as a priest on May 5, 1994. He retired on July 14, 1998, and resides at the Hincke House in Belleville, Illinois.

In 1969, Father Raymond Malec, formerly of East St. Louis, became pastor of St. Charles Church. He was assistant pastor to Msgr. Ceranski at St. Charles Church from 1955 to 1956.

Father Malec updated the exterior of the church by tuck pointing it. According to an article in a local newspaper, the Nashville News, it was one of the largest jobs of its kind ever undertaken in this area.

Father Malec, as a part of an updating and modernization process, renovated the rectory and removed the pulpit along with other decorations from the church.

In 1971, Father Malec became the Chaplain at St. Joseph's Hospital in Murphysboro, Illinois. Today, he is retired and living in the Hincke House in Belleville, Illinois.

Father Emil Maziarz followed Father Malec as pastor in 1971. He served as assistant pastor to Msgr. Ceranski at St. Charles Church from 1958 through 1962.

Father Maziarz is remembered for starting the scriptures home study groups. Groups met to read and discuss the scriptures in the homes of parishioners. Father Maziarz periodically led these meetings.

In 1975, Father Maziarz became pastor of Holy Angels Church in East St. Louis, Illinois. After his retirement, he visited the St. Charles Parish and celebrated weekend Masses when the pastor had to be away from the parish. Father Maziarz passed away on September 24, 1996. He was buried in St. Adalbert Cemetery in Fairview Heights.

In 1975, Father John Terepka followed Father Maziarz as pastor. Shortly after his arrival Father Terepka let a contract, in July 1975, to clean, putty, caulk, and paint all of the windows, doors, and doorframes of the entire church. The shutters and dormer shutters on the steeples were also painted.

Father Terepka was pastor nearly one year when he was appointed pastor at St. Michael's Church in Radom. This was his third assignment at St. Michael's. Father Terepka, well known as "Father John", served the Radom parish as an assistant pastor, then pastor from December, 1955, to September 1964, and from 1976 to July, 1983. Father John was pastor of St. Mary Magdalen Parish in Todds Mill until his retirement in September 1987.

After his retirement, he returned to celebrate Mass at St. Charles during absences of the pastor. Father John's gentleness and affection for the St. Charles Parish was always apparent during to his homilies and after church on his weekend visits.

Father Terepka passed away on October 1, 1993. He was buried in St. Michael's Cemetery in Radom, Illinois.

Father Hyacinth Mazuchowski became pastor in 1976. Several improvements were made to the church properties following his appointment. In May 1976, a gas-fired boiler was installed in the church, an air conditioner was added to the rectory, and a drainage system was installed for the rectory, convent, and church.

Father Mazuchowski was the pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Church when the parish celebrated its centennial in 1977.

Father Mazuchowski was pastor until 1982 when he became the Chaplain at St. Clement's Hospital in Red Bud. He has also been the Chaplain at the Good Samaritan Hospital in Mt. Vernon, and the pastor of St. Barbara's Church in Scheller. Today, he is pastor of St. Stephen's Church in Flora, Illinois.

Father Hyacinth remains a well-liked and respected friend of St. Charles Parish. Springtime brings Father Hyacinth back to DuBois for his favorite hobby - fishing!

August was a popular month for improvements. The comfort of air conditioning was added to our Church in August, 1978. Installation of an air conditioner was made possible through the generosity of Clarence and Helen Sherman.

In 1982, Father Robert Gore followed Father Mazuchowski. Father Gore had the exterior of the church tuck pointed and waterproofed and the gutters and downspouts repaired in 1983.

Father Gore served as pastor from 1982 to 1988. After leaving DuBois, he was appointed pastor at St. Francis of Assisi at Aviston, Illinois.

Father Albert Jerome, then pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Posen, served as administrator of St. Charles Church on two occasions. The first time was from the summer of 1988 to August, 1989, pending the appointment of a new pastor, and the second time was in the autumn of 1993 during the sabbatical leave of Father Jurek to study in Rome.

Father Jerome is respectfully known as "Father Al" to the St. Charles Parish. Father Al is a devoted, highly respected priest and pastor, and a loyal friend of St. Charles Parish. In spite of the tremendous responsibility of being the pastor of St. Ann's Church and School in Nashville, Illinois, his friendship is demonstrated repeatedly by always sharing and being available to assist without asking. Father Al became pastor of St. Barbara's Church in Okawville, Illinois, in July 1999.

On July 11, 1989, Father Daniel J. Jurek, then pastor of St. Mary's Church in Sesser, Illinois, became the 10th Diocesan pastor of St. Charles Parish. Father Jurek earned the title of "Father Dan", because of his personal, sincere concern not only as pastor, but teacher and friend of St. Charles Parish.

In 1990, three acres of land north of St. Charles Cemetery were donated by Francis and Bernice Grabowski for addition to the St. Charles Cemetery. Further improvements in September, 1990 included a new furnace.

Father Dan continued to implement changes in the liturgy of the Catholic Church as a whole. He formed the first St. Charles Borromeo Parish council. Its constitution and by-laws were adopted on August 25, 1991, and amended August 9, 1999. He also organized and directed the formation of four advisory committees to assist the parish council in its duties. The Administration, Liturgical, Social Outreach, and Spiritual Formation Committees have actively assisted Father Dan in all matters of parish life related to the spiritual, educational, social and financial aspects.

One hallmark of the documents of the Second Vatican Council was the call for widespread consultation in pastoral governing of the Church. In addition to the Parish Council, Father Dan formed the Parish Finance Council in 1993. The framework for the operation of the Parish Finance Council was adopted on March 25, 1993.

In June, 1993, it was again necessary to tuckpoint and waterproof the main body and the steeples of the church to prevent any future deterioration from the weather.

In late 1993, Father Dan took a sabbatical to attend the Autumn Session of the Continual Education Program at the North American College in Rome.

In June 1994, Father Dan became pastor of Immaculate Conception Church at Tamaroa in addition to being pastor of St. Charles Church.

In that same year, Father Dan was instrumental in forming a four parish cluster. In addition to St. Charles Church in DuBois, the other parish cluster members were Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Posen, Immaculate Conception Church in Tamaroa, and St. Mary Magdalene Church in Todds Mill.

In October, 1994 piano music became a part of Masses and worship celebrations. Steve and Norma Richardson donated a Kimball console piano to St. Charles Church. Organ and piano music are now available to accompany the youth and adult choirs.

In December, 1994, Father Dan appointed two parishioners, James Boczek and Norma Richardson, to form a Renovation Committee to conduct a needs assessment for possible renovation of our Church.

In April, 1995 five subcommittees were formed and began assisting in the proposed renovation project. They were as follows: Arts, Environment and Liturgy, Financial, Historical, Structural, and Administrative.

The Renovation Committee completed the renovation project needs assessment, and on May 27 and 28, 1995, the parishioners were surveyed during the weekend Masses to determine whether the church steeples should be repaired and whether the parishioners thought the church interior needed to be renovated. The parishioners were also asked whether they would be willing to support it financially. The majority of the St. Charles Church parishioners voted "yes" on this survey.

In the summer of 1995, a Seminarian, James (Jim) Parker was assigned to St. Charles Parish. He was the first Seminarian to be assigned to St. Charles Parish. Jim's home parish is St. Augustine of Canterbury in Belleville.

On June 29, 1995, Bishop Wilton D. Gregory, Diocese of Belleville, gave permission to begin repair work on the steeples, conduct a fund drive for the repair work and renovation, and hire an architect to prepare preliminary plans for the repair and renovation of the church interior and, of course, determine the estimated cost.

The first phase of the St. Charles Church repair and renovation project was completed in October, 1995, with repair of the twin steeples and the beginning of a Capital Fund Drive.

Father Jurek talked about the renovation project, including the repair of the Steeples, the interior redecoration of the church, and the necessity for a fund drive at Masses on September 30th and October 1st. During this same week, all parishioners received a letter and brochure that outlined the preliminary plans, the Capital Fund Drive, the proposed work, and information on the last renovation work done in 1968.

This was followed by two weekend opportunities to make a commitment of financial support of the renovation project at the school gym where Renovation Committee members assisted and answered questions. Following the second weekend opportunity to make a commitment, 14 teams (27 parishioners) visited those who were unable to personally make a commitment earlier.

The fund drive resulted in financial commitments of \$165,538.75 and 28 household commitments of prayers as of November 11, 1995. Although the fund drive was scheduled to end in November, financial commitments toward the renovation project continued through 1997.

On March 25, 1996, the Renovation Committee sent a "Request for Proposal" for the renovation of St. Charles Church to architectural firms who specialize in church renovations. These firms were invited to submit resumes of their professional experience with church renovations. ARTEC, an architectural firm, of Belleville IL was selected on July 12, 1996, to assist us with the renovation project.

Trevor Murry, a Seminarian, was assigned to our parish for the summer, 1996. His home parish is Immaculate Conception Church, Tamaroa.

On October 20, 1996, at a Special Parish Meeting, St. Charles Church parishioners were given a "first look" at the proposed floor plan and sketches of proposed designs and colors for renovation of the interior of our Church that had been developed by the Renovation Committee and designed by ARTEC.

In June, 1997 Trevor Murry was assigned for the second time to assist our parish. He began studies at the Pontifical North American College in Rome in August of that year.

On November 30, 1997, a parish meeting was held to inform parishioners of the continued decline in St. Charles School enrollment and the results of a recent survey concerning keeping the school open.

An excerpt from our Pastor, Father Dan's January 30, 1998 letter to the parishioners reflected sadness as he informed the parish of the school closing.

"It is with a heart filled with sadness that I share with you the recommendation made to me by the Board of Education and Parish Council at their combined meeting on

Wednesday, January 28, 1998, concerning the future of our Parish Grade School. They recommend that we close our school at the end of the present school year." Bishop Gregory accepted the recommendation.

St. Charles Parish added Pulaski Day activities to its list of fund-raisers in 1998. The Pulaski Day Parade was founded by Marcella Kujawa, a St. Charles Church member. Since 1995, it has become an annual event in DuBois, usually the first Sunday in March.

On May 24, 1998, the last class of St. Charles School graduates received their diplomas during a touching Sunday morning Liturgy service. Although the school closed, the memories will live on for those who attended St. Charles School. The school that opened in 1891 with 37 students closed in 1998 with 37 students in attendance. Registration fluctuated over the years with the highest attendance of 136 in 1967. The commitment for the 1998-1999 school year enrollment was 28 students.

Phillip DeVous, a Seminarian, was assigned to our parish for the summer of 1998. Phillip's home parish is St. Joseph's Church in Ridgway.

The Diocese of Belleville Board of Consulters gave their approval for St. Charles Church renovation project on July 10, 1998.

Two parishes, St. Charles and Immaculate Conception, along with family and friends, helped Father Daniel J. Jurek, celebrate his 25th anniversary of ordination on July 12, 1998. The inspirational ceremony started with the sounds of trumpets. The procession entered the church led by the Acolytes, KC members, visiting clergy, Father Dan's parents, Stanley and Ruth Jurek, and the celebrant, Reverend Daniel J. Jurek. The homilist for this Mass was Father Dan's personal friend, Father Al Jerome.

Following the Mass, a dinner was served in St. Charles Parish Center and visiting continued into the evening with music and fellowship.

Father Dan attended St. Meinard College where he received his B.A. degree in American History and a Masters in Divinity degree from St. Meinard School of Theology. He was ordained on Saturday, June 2, 1973 by the Belleville Diocese Bishop Albert R. Zuroweste.

In August of 1998, two alumnae of St. Charles School celebrated their anniversaries as members of their religious order. Sister Martin (Irene) Ksycki, O.L.V.M. celebrated her 50th anniversary as a member of the Congregation of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters with the Motherhouse in Huntington, Indiana Sister Joccile (Theresa) Ksycki, S.S.N.D., PhD celebrated her 60th year in the Notre Dame Order with the Motherhouse in St. Louis, Missouri.

Renovation of the church started after Mass on Sunday, October 11, 1998. The Rite of Remembering and Leave-Taking took place after Mass with members of our parish family carrying, in procession, articles of worship from the Church to the Parish Center (former school). These articles were: the bowl of baptismal water, vessels of Sacred Chrism, Oil of the Sick, Oil of Catechumens, funeral pall, sacramentary and lectionary, and Blessed Sacrament.

The church benches, altars, music and sacristy needs were then moved into the Parish Center where weekday and weekend Masses were held until the renovation was completed.

Throughout the next four months, that included an icy January, the work stayed on schedule with diligent company workers and gracious hard working parish volunteers for which the parish was grateful.

December 26, 1998 marked the 130th anniversary of St. Charles Parish. The first record of St. Charles Parish was an entry in the Baptismal record on December 26, 1868.

RENOVATION - 1999

Renovation was completed in February, 1999. Re-entry was celebrated on February 14, 1999 as parish members returned the symbols of our faith into St. Charles Church. The members carried, in procession, the bowl of Baptismal Water, vessels of Sacred Chrism, Oil of the Sick and Oil of Catechumens, funeral pall, Sacramentary and Lectionary, and the Blessed Sacrament.

St. Charles Borromeo Church stands as a memorial to our ancestors who provided our parish with a stately building to worship God and entrusted the parish to ensure it stands for future generations.

The Bishops' Committee on Liturgy provided new guidelines for liturgy and Catholic worship in 1977. Because of that committee's work, they wrote a document entitled "Environment and Art in Catholic Worship". St. Charles Parish followed that document in determining the need to improve our worship space.

In one major project, our parish paid off previous roof expenses, repaired the steeples, and completed interior renovation of our place of worship. The project work was accomplished through the use of contractors and the parishioners.

If one looked inside the church while renovation was in progress, one could see through the scaffolding plaster throughout the church being repaired and painting being done. Painters moved from the center to the front of the church. Painting in the rear section of the church was done last. The platform for the altar was built, windows were installed in the wall at the rear of the church (above the radiators), places in the hardwood floor that were deteriorated were replaced, the floor on the north side that was sinking was raised and new supports were installed. A new room was beginning to look like the restroom rather the open space where the church bells are rung.

While the plaster repairing, the painting, the window installation, etc., were being done by contractors, most of the other jobs were being done by parish volunteers to save the parish as much money as possible.

The last few weeks of the work were unbelievable. Volunteers gave their evenings and weekend hours sanding, cleaning, and varnishing the hard-wood floors, cleaning the statues and stations, cleaning the pews and moving them back into the church, plus making all the final arrangements for completion of the interior renovation project. The last few days before our move back into our church were even busier as the final finishing touches were completed on everything the volunteers did to save our parish oodles of money. Without the help of volunteers, the project cost would have soared.

By letter dated May 19, 1999, Father Dan provided the parishioners with an up-to-date accounting of the interior and exterior work that had been finished and what still needed to be done to our Church building.

As of May 19, 1999, the total cost of the renovation project (including the steeple repair of \$61,711.95 and roof payment of \$17,000.00) was \$488,175.56. Fund drives, donations, contributions, interest, and memorials, plus \$260,000.00 borrowed from the Diocese for the steeple repair and interior renovation (which was to be paid back over a ten year period with a 6% interest rate) left the parish with a debt of \$239,000.00. Of that debt \$39,000.00 was for the tuck pointing and exterior painting of our Church scheduled for completion in the summer of 1999.

Robert Zwilling, a Seminarian, was assigned to assist our parish for the summer, 1999. His home parish is St. Joseph's Church in Stringtown, Illinois.

Bishop Wilton D. Gregory rededicated St. Charles Borromeo Church on June 13, 1999. The rededication of St. Charles Borromeo Church was one of the most impressive ceremonies in the history of the parish.

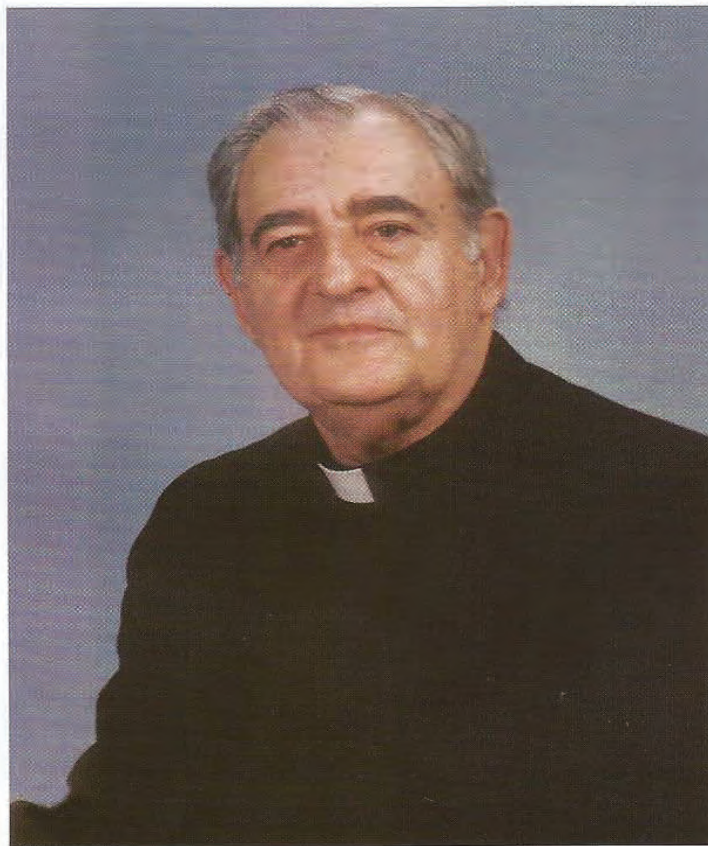
The ceremony began as Bishop Gregory stood at the entrance of the Church and blessed the baptismal font. He then blessed the water and the parishioners as he proceeded to the Church sanctuary. In this ancient and beautiful ceremony of rededication, Bishop Gregory anointed the altar, incensed the altar, people, and walls of the church. Then, members of the parish brought up, in procession, the altar cloth and candles. Father Dan received from Bishop Gregory a flame to begin the festive lighting of the Church in preparation for the celebration of the Eucharist. For those who attended the rededication ceremony, it was an inspirational experience.

THE MILLENNIUM - 2000

After eleven years, Rev. Daniel Jurek's ministry to St. Charles Parish concluded on July 11, 2000. He was assigned to St. Mary's Church in Mt. Vernon.

On that same day, Rev. Melvin Vandelloo became the pastor of St. Charles Church. Rev. Vandelloo and Rev. Jurek traded parishes. Rev. Vandelloo also was assigned as pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Tamaroa. Rev. Vandelloo was officially installed as pastor of St. Charles Church on Tuesday, July 18, 2000 and Immaculate Conception on Thursday, July 20, 2000.

Rev. Vandelloo, a Carlyle native, was ordained on May 26, 1953. Prior to coming to St. Charles, he was assigned to St. Mary's Church, Mt. Vernon, Illinois for 17 years. Prior to St. Mary's, he was pastor at St. Andrew's Church in Murphysboro. In addition to his duties at St. Mary's, Rev. Vandelloo served on the Belleville Diocese Personnel Board from 1984 to 1999 and served as Dean of the East Deanery from 1986 to 1999.



Msgr. Melvin Vandelloo

On August 6, 2000 Rev. Vandelloo joined 21 other priests from the Belleville Diocese in a prayer service at St. Peter Cathedral in Belleville, Illinois to celebrate his title of "Monsignor".