By Father James Geraghty

Occasionally an article in L'Etagere inspires some of our older readers to write us, jotting down their happy memories of another time when they and the Church in Southwest Louisiana were young. We remember the happy memories of another time when they and the Church in Southwest Louisiana were young. These memories we welcome and cherish even more because they put flesh on the bare bones of history and give us the opportunity of preserving for the next generation a better view of what life was like. In this spirit we also borrow our forebears' memories and use them to give us the story of Catholic living in our area.

Recently we received a touching memoir from Mrs. Aime Prejean Thibodeaux of Lafayette concerning her childhood at the tiny community of Mire. Reading between the lines of this document we are able to reconstruct the story of the formation of a Christian community which may be visualized as a shrine dedicated to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin at Mire.

Acadia Parish

Mire is that section of the Acadian Parish northeast of Rayne in a low-lying stretch of land with the somber French-sounding name of Marais Bouleur (sometimes written as Roulé). This parish, which is north of the Spanish-speaking parishes of St. Martin, Barataria, and Terrebonne, consists of about 140 families. The name Marais Bouleur is a French word meaning “whistling swamp.”

The window display of the church shows a map of the Acadian Parish of Louisiana with a star marking the site of the town of St. Martinville and another star marking the site of the church at Mire.

Rouleau’s story begins with the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin at Mire. It is in this section of Acadia Parish that the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was first celebrated. The story of the church at Mire begins with the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The church at Mire was erected on land donated by the Marais Bouleur community. In 1863 the church was dedicated to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Father Moise Hebert, the assistant priest at Rayne, was the one who cared for the mission. He was a very young parson and he was well loved by the parishioners as he had provided religious needs to the community and said Mass on Sundays in the newly built church. This church was before the church was finished and the public school facilities were used.

The church was said to have been built by an old man who lived in the area. The old man was said to have been a very old man who had built the church.

The new church was never blessed since its completion. On April 14, 1863, the blessing took place. The Most Reverend Bishop John B. Jeanmard blessed the church. Many priests and visitors were there for the blessing of the church. The Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

This is the present Church of the Assumption at Rayne, dedicated in 1906 to replace the former edifice heavily damaged by Hurricane Ashley.