Silver Jubilee
of the
Dedication
of the New Church
of
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart
Church Point, Louisiana

November 25, 1954 — 1979
October 1979, Our Holy Father Pope John Paul II visited U. S.

POPE JOHN PAUL II

1979

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The Church
of
Our Lady
of the
Sacred Heart
of
Church Point, La.

A History of:

E.G. Brouillette and Thomas R. Murrel, Trustees

PARISH COUNCIL

Father Wilfred Sylvester; Father Herbert deLaunay; Ronald Carriere, Principal, Our Mother of Peace School; Helen Istre, CCD Coordinator; Betty Bellard, appointed permanent secretary, December 1977, Debbie Venable, Rose Daigle, Stella Dohmann, Remi Richard, Sr., Calbert Latiolais, Levoreil Lyons.
On Sunday, November 25, 1979, our congregation of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church, Church Point, Louisiana, celebrates the 25th Anniversary of the Dedication of its parish church. May Jesus Christ be praised! May the Blessed Virgin Mary, His Mother and our dearest patroness, continue to intercede for us!

The dedication of the newly-built church took place on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 25, 1954. The silver jubilee, quite appropriately, occurs this year on the Feast of Christ the King. "Quite appropriately," we think, because, whereas the parish members in 1954 had every right to be thankful for their new church, the parishioners today, in observing the Silver Jubilee, have reason to rejoice in the service that has been given to Christ their King during the 25 years of worship in the church.

The very physical condition of our church today suggests rather accurately its history during the past quarter century. For example, the church itself has grown older, and by that very fact shows quite inevitable deterioration from the wear and tear of that time. The acoustic-tile ceiling, the air-conditioning system, the kneeling cushions— all carry clear signs of need for repair.

More so, the changes in the church's interior makeup and furnishings clearly reflect the rather drastic changes that have taken place in the Liturgical and Ritual life of the whole Catholic Church, particularly since Vatican Council II. Gone is the old altar (transferred from the old church). The drapery hangings have disappeared from high above the main altar. Statues which once populated the sanctuary walls have been moved to other positions in the church, or have been removed completely. Even the tabernacle has been moved to its own Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

These alterations— very painful and sometimes resented— were part and parcel of the very significant changes that have affected the Christian life, not only of our own parish members, but of the Catholic world— for better or worse.

Whatever the changes—physically, liturgically, spiritually— the life of the parish has gone on. As many as 1,729 of our members have departed for eternal life (God rest their souls!). Surprisingly more than that have been baptized, 3,375. Yet, our congregation has dwindled somewhat in numbers since 1954.
Still, the pulse of our parish is strong. And there are signs that our spiritual life and religious activity are deepening. Certainly, the Catholic Faith in our older members is as solid as ever and the religious convictions of the younger families seem to be taking root.

Just as the church building itself, which rose in 1954, still stands as firm and inspiring as when its doors first swung open to the faithful, so now 25 years later, it remains the heart and center of a living Catholic Parish dedicated to the service of Jesus Christ under the mantle of Mary.

Reverend Joseph Woerdeman, Pastor

Father serving the sick and the aged.

Rev. J. Wilfred Sylvester
Associate Pastor

Rev. Herbert deLaunay
Associate Pastor

Father with his beloved children.
SILVER JUBILEE
OF THE
DEDICATION
OF THE NEW
OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART CHURCH

In the foreword, of the 1954 Dedication booklet, Bishop Jeanmard compared the beginning of our church parish to a tiny seed planted at that time (1851) in the vast mission field of Southwest Louisiana. He said, "This is the tiny seed that grew and sprang heavenward like a tree and the birds of the air came to nest in it." The tiny seed is still growing and we thank God for the many priests who labored so zealously to keep the faith ever strong during times of change and seeming upheaval. We thank God for the patience of the older parishioners with the impatience of the young, thereby keeping us on an even keel. We are grateful for twenty-five years filled with God's choicest blessings.

Today we celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the dedication of our church. We rejoice in the knowledge of what this church has meant to us. We the parishioners are the Church—we understand this but how would we function without our sacred home where Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament awaits our coming? In hours of sorrow and joy; in thanksgiving and supplication our Lord awaits His children.

St. Alphonsus Liguori wrote this in his "Visits": "In the Psalms we read: The sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for her young. Your altars, my King and my God, like the birds of the air, my Love, you too have made a nest—a home upon our altars. There we can always find you. There you are forever our Companion."

FIRST BAPTISM — NEW CHURCH — (BEFORE DEDICATION)

ANGELA LORRAINE ANDRUS
Daughter of: John A. Andrus and Rose Marie Melancon
Godparents: Willard C. Beaugh and Angelien Beaugh
Born: October 19, 1954 — Baptized: November 6, 1954
Baptized by: Rev. M.L. Bakowski

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ANGELA LORRAINE ANDRUS married CHARLES ALLEN LEBLANC on April 20, 1974 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church.
FIRST SERMON preached in newly dedicated church. Right Reverend Monsignor OIan A. Broussard of Opelousas, who was assistant in Church Point 1932 to 1933, delivered the dedication sermon. Msgr. Broussard said, “From this hour on, this church will be the house of God.”

FIRST BAPTISM — NEW CHURCH — (AFTER DEDICATION)
CHARLEMAGNE DAVID DAIGLE
Son of: Benton Daigle and Lima Matte
Godparents: Preston Matte and Etheline LeDoux
Born: November 19, 1954 — Baptized: November 27, 1954
Baptized by: Rev. Michael L. Bakowski

FIRST BURIAL — NEW CHURCH — (AFTER DEDICATION)
MRS. JEFFRY LYONS — Nee: Emeline Chaline
Died: November 24, 1954
Buried: November 25, 1954 in Church Point La.
She was from St. Edward’s Parish, Richard, La.
She died at the age of 91.
Priest: Rev. M.L. Bakowski

INTERIOR OF OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART CHURCH
The picture above offers a good display of the sanctuary area of the new church in the first years after its dedication. Older parishioners will remember details well. Young members will note the tremendous changes that have been made since.
**THEN — 1954**

Right Reverend Monsignor C.A. Bienvenu, Pastor  
Reverend Michael Bakowski and Reverend Gene Speyrer,  
Assistant Pastors  
P.R. Horecky and T.R. Daigle, Trustees

Executive Committee for the drive for the New Church Building Fund:  
Right Reverend Monsignor C.A. Bienvenu, Honorary Chairman;  
Mike Scanlan, General Chairman; Edward Jack Daigle, P. Roy Horecky and Ben Ray, Executive Vice-Chairmen; T.R. Daigle, Secretary; Homer Bellard, Treasurer; Oscar Guidry, Publicity; Albert Venable, Moise Savoy, John Latiolais, Edward Thibodeaux and Levy Fontenot, Board Members.

**ORGANIZATIONS:**  
Knights of Columbus  
Ladies Altar Society  
Catholic Daughters of America  
Junior Catholic Daughters of America  
Mothers and Patrons Club  
C C D  
Holy Name Society  
League of the Sacred Heart  
St. Ann Sodality  
Junior Sodality of Our Lady  
Senior Sodality of Our Lady  
St. Vincent de Paul  
Columbian Squires

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**NOW — 1979**

Reverend Joseph Woerdeman, Pastor  
Reverend Wilfred Sylvester and Reverend Herbert deLaunay,  
Associate Pastors  
E.G. Brouillette and Thomas R. Murrel, Trustees

**PARISH COUNCIL:**  
Father Wilfred Sylvester, Father Herbert deLaunay; Ronald Carriere, Principal; Helen Istre, CCD Coordinator; Betty Bellard, Secretary; Debbie Venable, Rose Daigle, Stella Dohmann, Remi Richard, Sr., Albert Latilais, Levoreil Lyons.

**ORGANIZATIONS:**  
Knights of Columbus  
Ladies Altar Society  
Catholic Daughters of America  
Junior Catholic Daughters of America  
Parents Support Club  
C C D  
Legion of Mary  
Come Lord Jesus  
Charismatic Prayer Group  
Parish Council  
C.Y.O.

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In 1850, when served by the Jesuits from Grand Coteau, this church was called Plaquemine Brule Chapel; later, Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel. In 1883 when Father Eby came it was known as Sacred Heart of Mary Church. This parish was one of four carved from the Jesuit mission field at Grand Coteau.

Three cemeteries are in use: Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Cemetery #1 adjacent to the church; Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Cemetery #2 on the Lawtell Highway; St. John's Cemetery, Lewisburg, #3.

The Priests buried in our cemeteries are:
The Very Rev. Canon A.F. Roger — November 19, 1928, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Cemetery #1.
Rev. Father August Eby — January 27, 1938, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Cemetery #1.

PASTORS: 1954 — 1979
Rev. Joseph Woerdeman 1977 — present

ASSISTANT OR ASSOCIATE PASTORS: 1954 — 1979
Rev. Michael Bakowski ........................................ 1950-1958
Rev. Gene Speyrer .............................................. 1951-1957
Rev. Marcel Gaudet ............................................ 1958-1963
Rev. Rosaire Veilleaux ........................................ 1960-1962
Rev. Leslie H. Prescott ....................................... 1961-1964
Rev. Denis Romero .............................................. 1962-1968
Rev. Lawrence Gronan ....................................... 1964-1967
Rev. John Windt ............................................... 1967-2 months
Rev. J.M. Dussault .............................................. 1967-7 months
Rev. Francis Bourgeois ...................................... 1968-1971
Rev. Alcus Trahan ............................................. 1967-1974
Rev. Edouard Fontaine ........................................ 1971-1974
Rev. Mr. Clayton J. Hanks 1974-1975 (Deacon)
Rev. Jean-Louis Caron ........................................ 1975-5 months
Rev. J. Robert Romero ......................................... 1975-1979
Rev. J. Wilfred Sylvester .................................... 1979
Rev. Herbert deLaunay ....................................... 1979

MISSIONS, CHAPELS, STATIONS SERVED BY OLSH:
St. Edward's Chapel — Richard, La., was dedicated June 3, 1939. On June 17, 1940, St. Edward was erected into an independent parish.

In 1937, a chapel was made from the public school in Lewisburg, La. On October 15, 1939, a new chapel was blessed. It was called St. John's Chapel.

In 1937 Mass was being said in Branch and Higginbotham in the public schools. In April 1948, St. Edmund's Chapel in Branch, La. was dedicated.

In 1939 Mass was being celebrated in the Pitreville School. In 1944 the old school was renovated and became the Pitreville Chapel. Of these four chapels, only St. John's Chapel in Lewisburg is still served by Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church.
A new brick school had long been a dream of Monsignor Bienvenu. In 1970 the children changed from the original wooden building to the new brick Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School. In 1971 Our Mother of Mercy School paired with Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. The name chosen for the Catholic School was Our Mother of Peace. The school has two facilities. Our Mother of Peace Primary, including kindergarten, first and second grades is housed at Our Mother of Mercy Church Parish and the Our Mother of Peace Elementary with the third through eighth grades is housed at the Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church site.

In June 1979, all religious left the school. Not being able to secure teaching religious, the parishioners decided to continue a Catholic School with lay teachers. Our Mother of Peace School was very fortunate in getting Mr. Ronald Carriere as principal and a fine staff of lay teachers. May God bless the parents who are sacrificing to keep the Catholic School. May God reward them with strong Catholic children.

The CYO building was constructed from classrooms when the old Convent school was vacated.

The old Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church building was purchased by Emery Sonnier for $2,539.45.

In 1954 the High School of Religion enrolled 225 students which included 56 students from 11th and 12th grades. Teachers that year were: Dr. C. L. Keller, Dr. Robert LeBas, Dan Tucker, E. G. Brouillette, Burton Guidry, Mrs. Ella B. Savoy (deceased), Mrs. N. H. Gardiner, Mrs. Kermit David, Miss Ruby Murrell, with Miss Rose Daigle in charge of the school.

In 1979, the enrollment of High School students is 303. Mrs. Helen Istre is full time coordinator for the School of Religion.

In 1954 the elementary grades registered 272 students. In 1979 the same grades have 343 students registered in the School of Religion.

June 1955, the stained glass windows were installed in the newly-dedicated church by Geza Zelenka, representative of the Geol Payne Studios of Paterson, N.J. and the work of installing the new pipe organ was done by Robert Smita, factory representative from Memphis, Tenn.
Upon the death of Monsignor C.A. Bienvenu, who had served 34 years, Monsignor Curtis Vidrine was appointed pastor of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, assuming that post in December 1970. He simplified the church decor. In the rectory he painted, carpeted and paneled most of the downstairs rooms. He contributed greatly to church and community and he has the thanks and gratitude of everyone for his work on behalf of Church Point. After serving the parish of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church for three years, Monsignor Vidrine assumed the pastorate of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors Catholic Church in Welsh, Louisiana.

In February 1974, Father Albert G. Nunez was installed as Pastor of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church, by the former Pastor, Monsignor Curtis Vidrine. Father Nunez worked toward eliminating the parish debt and so did not undertake many physical changes. However, the school cafeteria, which was built in the early 1940's, was remodeled and air-conditioned and is now furnished with modern convenient equipment.

Father Nunez was appointed Pastor of St. Ann's Catholic Church in Mamou, Louisiana, effective July 3, 1977.
Rev. Joseph Woerdeman

Rev. Joseph Woerdeman, since July 1977, Pastor at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, is a native of Indianapolis, Ind. and was educated at St. Meinrad Minor and Major Seminaries. He was ordained at St. Meinrad on June 5, 1943, by Joseph E. Ritter, who later became Cardinal Ritter, Archbishop of St. Louis.

After His ordination, he did graduate work for several years in English literature at Catholic University in Washington, D.C. There he became a friend of Bishop Warren L. Boudreaux, formerly Auxiliary Bishop of the Lafayette Diocese and now Bishop of the newly formed Diocese of Houma-Thibodeaux. It was this early association with a cajun of southwest Louisiana which eventually led to Father Woerdeman's transferring to the Lafayette, La. Diocese.

Following his ordination, Father did parish work and taught at St. Meinrad's Minor Seminary. He was in the U.S. Army Reserve and went into active duty following the outbreak of the Korean "Hostilities". After his six years as Army Chaplain in Korea and Germany, he returned to work as a parish priest in Lafayette, Ind. Diocese and remained there until he moved to the Lafayette, La. Diocese. His first assignment was as Associate Pastor at Sacred Heart Church in Ville Platte. And from there, he was reassigned as Pastor of St. Eugene Parish in Grand Chenier.

On July 16, 1977, Father Bede Becnel, Vicar of the Southwest Acadiana Deanery, installed Father Joseph Woerdeman as the new Pastor of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church. Father Gayle Nunez, former Pastor was present to participate in the formal transfer of keys, sacred books and vessels, to the incoming Pastor.

The new Blessed Sacrament Chapel represents one of the major changes caused by the Church's new liturgy.
1979

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church

Our Mother of Peace School
Our Mother of Peace Cafeteria

1979

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church

Our Mother of Peace School
Our Mother of Peace Cafeteria
Bishop Gerard L. Frey was appointed third Bishop of Lafayette on November 7, 1972.