

A decorative border of small, repeating floral and leaf motifs surrounds the central text.

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary

OF

DEDICATION

AND

HISTORY

OF

ST. CATHARINE'S CHURCH

MOUNT UNION, PA.



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BRIEF HISTORY

OF

*St. Catharine's Parish*

MOUNT UNION, PA.



Rev. J. A. Kerkoska, Rector

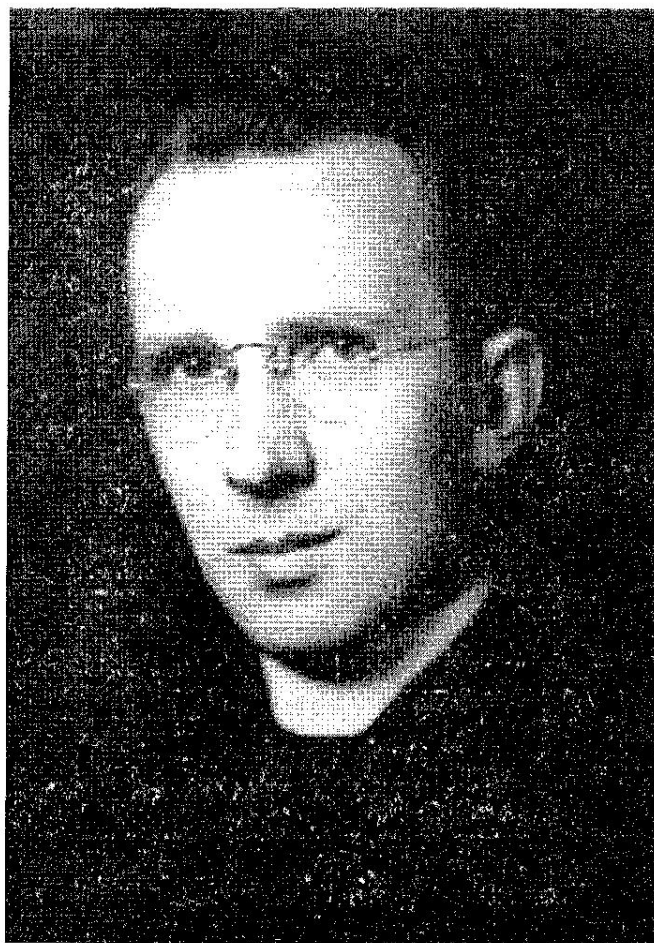


*Brief History of Catholic Church*  
*Mount Union, Pa.*

P R E F A C E

This is the first time any attempt has been made to write a history of St. Catharine's Church. The work of writing this history has been on my mind for a number of years prior to the undertaking. It was brought about and necessitated on account of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the dedication of the church, and made more urgent because of the few old parishioners who remain to tell the story of the happenings of earlier years. As the years come and go, these old parishioners become fewer and the time is not far distant when no one will be left to give his recollections of early days of St. Catharine's Church. That these details, these bits of interesting primitive history might be collected and perpetuated and preserved for the interest and benefit of the rising generation as well as for the generations which shall come, I have written this history. It will become invaluable, for it has been my ambition to give the important facts and incidents by dates and various data. The anxiety connected with the preparation of this history, together with the care and worry cannot be told to the reader in this space. The undertaking proved to be decidedly burdensome, having very little data on hand, but with the end continuously in view, and the probable good that the effort might do to St. Catharine's congregation, and with this consolation drudgery disappeared and I felt that it might be something that would prove a benefit to the Catholics in Mount Union and perpetuate a portion of local history which would otherwise dwindle into oblivion.





REV. JOHN A. KERKOSKA  
PASTOR OF ST. CATHARINE'S CHURCH

*Rev. John A. Kerkoska*

*Rector of St. Catharine's Church*

**F**ATHER Kerkoska was born in N. S. Pittsburgh, Pa., November 20, 1898. He is the second child of a family of six. When two years old, the family moved to Ford City, Pa., where they have resided ever since. As a boy Father Kerkoska attended St. Mary's Parochial School, and after he had completed the elementary grades he enrolled as a student at St. Procopius College, Lisle, Ill., where he took his high school, college and philosophy courses. In the fall of 1918 he entered St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, Pa., for the theology course. Due to the fact that he had not attained the canonical age, was not ordained with his class mates. On this account he went to St. Francis Seminary at Loretto, Pa., in September 1922 and was ordained there on the first of November, 1922 by the Rt. Rev. John J. M. Cort, D. D. He celebrated his first solemn Mass November fifth, in the Holy Trinity Church at Ford City.

Fresh from his studies and filled with priestly ardor, he took up his initial duties at Mount Union, Pa. When he arrived, the treasury was decidedly at low tide - in fact, the new church was encumbered by some debt resulting from extensive repairs of church property. So great however was his assiduity, so great was his perseverance that he succeeded not only in paying off the debt but also made preparations for beautifying the church property and for the erection of a parsonage whereon the finishing touches were terminated January 1926.

Having spent seventeen full years among his flock, Father Kerkoska momentarily casts a retrospective glance over the road which he has so earnestly traveled. He sees his long years of service before him, and breathes a sigh of joy because he feels and knows that those he has left behind have been years well spent. He is somewhat weary, but as he sees the faces of those whom he has set aright shining with celestial radiance, he quickly summons his waning strength and valiantly plods on again.

Since his first appointment on November 14, 1922 Father Kerkoska to this present day remains the pastor of St. Catharine's Congregation of Mount Union, Pa., and its Mission St. Mary's Shade Valley, Pa.





JOHN DOUGHERTY



CATHARINE DOUGHERTY



VICTORIA DOUGHERTY

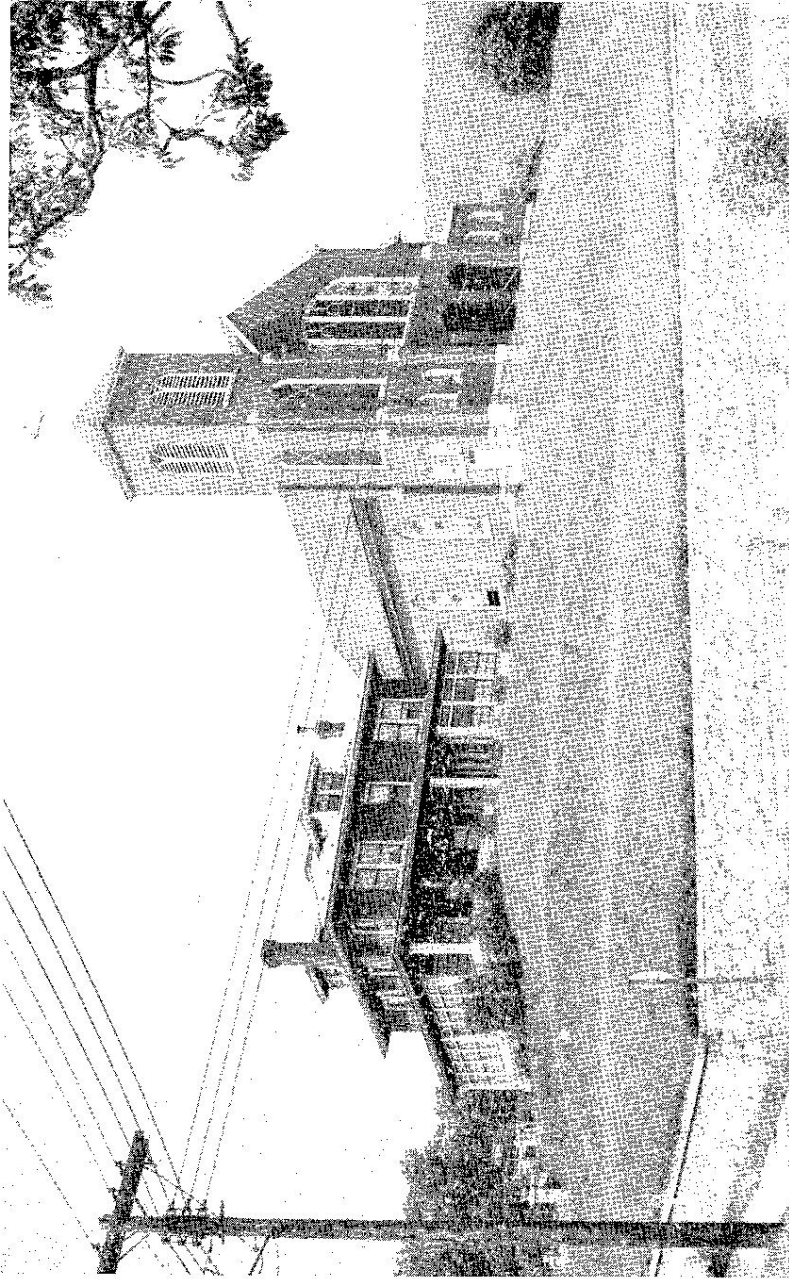
## INTRODUCTION



WHEN the Pennsylvania Canal was started in 1829 and 1830 it was considered one of the greatest achievements of the age, and the completion of it was hailed with extraordinary enthusiasm in 1839. The construction of the Pennsylvania Canal brought to Mount Union and vicinity a great number of Irish and German settlers, who with their descendants have even at this day, added greatly to this town's spiritual and material prosperity. There is however unmistakable evidence that many years previous to aforesaid dates Catholics, inhabited the Juniata Valley; the history of the region relates that in 1776 Hugh Brady, Felix Donnelly, Bartholemew McGuire, and many others of their countrymen, exiles from their native land took their abode in these parts, lived good and honorable lives, and distinguished themselves in the Indian Wars and the American Revolution. The early history of the community however adds that one the most respected among the first settlers of Mount Union was "Old John Dougherty" as he was then known.

John Dougherty was born in Waynesburg, now McVeytown July 25th, 1803 and died in Pittsburg, November 12, 1886. Mr. Dougherty was one of the influential men in early days of Mount Union, and possessed a genius which was extraordinary. John Dougherty married Catharine McElheney of Doyleburg, Franklin County, and to this union eight children were born: Edward, Mary, Theodore, Eugene, Victoria, Victor and Gerald. In the Spring of 1847 he with his family came to Mount Union, moving here from Hollidaysburg on a canal boat. He was known throughout Central Pennsylvania as a man having done much for progress and civilization throughout the central part of the State. He was a great railroad man, and as an inventor he probably gave to the world the Sectional Canal Boat. Although he met with considerable opposition from corporation and monopolists, yet he was a staunch friend of the laboring poor and was always interested in benefaction to mankind. At one time he owned most all land from Division Street west in what is now Mount Union today. In combination with a Mr. George W. Speer, was instrumental in laying out Mount Union (1846); getting a charter (1867) and in giving the names to the different streets as we have them today. It is claimed by good authority also that John Dougherty named Mount Union.





ST. CATHARINE'S CHURCH AND RECTORY

### MOUNT UNION MISSION



THE present site on which the Church now stands is a part of a large tract of land (8 acres) donated June 21 - 1872 by Mr. John Dougherty, and his good wife Catharine, to the Catholic people for church purposes. (See Deed Book, Volume "D" 3, Page 4.) It is worthy of note here that the new church was dedicated under the title St. Catharine, in memory of Mrs. Catharine Dougherty. The few Catholics that were in the vicinity at the time would assemble for Mass at the Dougherty home and at stated times were visited by a Priest on his missionary journeys, and later on from Huntingdon when a church was established there. Among the priests who served the place we find such well known names as those of Fathers J. Walsh, J. Tuigg (later Bishop Tuigg), O. P. Gallagher L. Woelfel, F. F. O'Shea, P. J. Hawe, Thomas J. Conlin, and a list of others, including many, who are still doing zealous work in our diocese; Monsignor Fox, (1901-1904) Father J. L. M. Quillen (1903-1911) and Father James Tolan in 1912.

The latter part of 1899 and beginning of 1900 was a very happy epoch in the history of Mount Union. The Harbison-Walker Brick Plant which is the largest silica brick plant in the world located here. At this time Mount Union began to attract more people and for the most part Slovak immigrants, and among some of the Catholics who came to work in the Brick Plant were George Komir, John Simon, Andrew Bodnar and John Volivar. During this period Father Thomas Conlin, then pastor at Huntingdon, made frequent visits here and to St. Mary's Shade Valley. When the priest came he used as his chapel for the services one of the large rooms in the Dougherty home.

Father Peter Fox succeeded Father Conlin at Huntingdon in 1901 and like his predecessor labored four years with zeal and energy for the spiritual welfare of the Catholics in Mount Union. The memory of Father Fox is still fresh in the minds of the older members of the congregation who recall his priestly labors among them with reverence and gratitude. The late Holy Father Pope Pius XI in recognition of his distinguished services to the church, conferred upon him the honor of Domestic Prelate with title—Monsignor. Monsignor Fox is now Rector of St. Mark's Church, Altoona.

In the year 1906 the congregation increased. No doubt the construction on the Pennsylvania Railroad brought many Catholics to the community. Father Keenoy was then pastor at Huntingdon and was succeeded by Father McQuillen. Both of these priests enjoyed the confidence and good will of the parishioners in this community who recall their services for the advancement of religion, and their zealous efforts to stimulate the faith in the hearts of their spiritual children. Father Keenoy has passed to his eternal reward March first 1928; while Father McQuillen is now the pastor of Sacred Heart Church, Altoona.



The beginning of 1912 the congregation was still a Mission and attended from Huntingdon. Father Tolan came to Huntingdon as pastor, March seventh, 1912 succeeding Father John J. O'Donnell. Father Tolan, the same as the aforesaid priests held services in the Dougherty home until he built the present brick church. Miss Victoria Dougherty as usual, with the help of Miss Mary Beaston found their chief delight in decorating the temporary altar located in the best rooms of her house for the services. Due to the inconvenience of priests and people in these temporary quarters, Rt. Rev. Bishop Eugene Garvey, D. D. saw the necessity for the erection of a church in this community and instructed Father Tolan to build a church for the Catholic people. Father Tolan by his watchfulness and great care labored earnestly to advance the financial condition of parish and increase the devotion of the people to a very marked degree. With his priestly care of the evergrowing parish, Father Tolan found time to visit his people and as a result, with his devoted flock decided to build a church for the convenience of all Catholic people in the neighborhood. Through voluntary contributions by the English speaking people and collections taken up frequently among the Slovak people by Andrew Bodnar, who was also the organist from the early years, and a donation of one hundred dollars from P. P. Griffin, Father Tolan immediately began plans for the erection of a new church. It is said some of the committee at the time were Andrew Bodnar, Henry McGarvey and Samuel McGarvey.

On September 2, 1912 T. C. Peduzzi was awarded the contract at \$8630.10 for the new church. J. Herbert Hall was the architect and received \$150. The new building was to be constructed of red brick and a slate roof. Under the able guidance of Father Tolan and his committee work was begun the following week. The excavation for the foundation was done by Henry and Samuel McGarvey. It was therefore a source of untold joy when the construction work has sufficiently progressed for the cornerstone laying in the fall of 1912. Rt. Rev. Eugene Garvey D. D. first Bishop of Altoona laid the corner stone. The ceremonies were attended by a few priests of the Diocese and prominent citizens of the community. From this day on the construction of the building progressed rapidly and by the end of the year was under roof, and almost completed with the exception of the heating system, light, windows and some concreting.

Services however continued to be held in the Dougherty home until the dedication. The bell for the steeple arrived here February 14, 1913 and was immediately put in place. It is a donation by Patrick Geraghty and was cast by the Chaplin-Fulton Mfg. Co. of Pittsburgh in 1913 and the name St. Patrick engraved on the outside. The electrical work was done by S. Hays Wharton of town at a cost of \$55.30 and completed Feb. 1913. The large cross on the steeple was placed by John Moffet and with

the cost of painting amounted to \$46.22 (March 22-1913). The exposed metal work, such as spouting etc. was completed July 2-1913 by R. C. Miller at a cost of \$17.75.

While the services were not as yet held in the new church, much work was being done in the interior. An extra floor was being laid, the lumber being furnished for \$65.00 by C. H. Fetterolf (July 21). The thirty pews fifteen feet long, of light oak, bought at a price of \$762.00 from the American Seating Co. Chicago, was shipped from Buffalo the first week of July 1913 and on arrival were put in place. The windows for the new church were furnished by M. T. Lamb of New York at a cost of \$1143.25 and were installed the early part of July 1913. The windows in the gallery contain panels depicting the Nativity of Christ. The windows on both sides in the sanctuary depict the Resurrection and the Ascension of Christ. All windows were donated by individuals or families from the parish.

About the middle of August 1913 the three altars for the new church were set up by John Moffet and then painted by Joseph Heidel for \$28.50. The altars are a donation from St. Matthew's Church of Tyrone through the Cullen family, and now present a very attractive and devotional appearance. The statues of St. Joseph and Blessed Virgin Mary on the side altars, and the Sacred Heart and Holy Trinity on pedestals adorning the sanctuary are live size images and very beautiful in appearance and were bought from the DePrato Co., and are largely due to the donations of individual members and societies. The large and attractive Stations of the Cross, made of a composition were erected in the church shortly after the dedication, and are also donations of individuals and societies. A beautiful deep red carpet furnished by Wm. Reed and Son of Huntingdon for \$135.89 adorns the sanctuary, and this practically finished the interior work of the church.

Carl F. Ergler of Huntingdon was awarded the contract of concreting the basement and steps leading up to the new edifice at a cost of \$326 62. This work was completed within a few days and now everything was in readiness for the dedication.

By Sunday August 31, 1913 the new church building was completed and on that date, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Eugene Garvey D. D. assisted by the Rev. Morgan McDermott (then assistant at the Pro-Cathedral Altoona, and now pastor of the Church of the Holy Child Jesus, Windber Pa.) in the presence of priests and people from surrounding villages, blessed and dedicated the new church to the honor of St. Catharine of Sienna. The Mass was celebrated at 9:30 a. m. by Father Tolan, and the sermon for the dedication was preached by the Rt. Rev. Eugene Garvey D. D. The Bishop congratulated Father Tolan and the congregation upon the completion of the new church, and urged that a continuance of the good will manifested in the past, be continued. The music for the occasion was furnished by the choir of Holy Trinity Church



Huntingdon under the direction of Mr. John Cullinan. The Rev. Howard T. Miller, present rector of SS. Philip and James Church, then a seminarian finishing the first year of theology and choir master of the seminary choir at St. Francis Seminary at Loretto Pa., sang and accompanied at the organ. The ceremonies of the dedication closed with the hymn "Te Deum".

The local newspaper "Mt. Union Times" under date of September 5, 1913 has this to say: "There were about 500 people present at the dedication and a number were here from out of town. A special train came in over the East Broad Top, bringing many participants for the worship. About \$400 was raised on Sunday toward the liquidations of the church debt."

Quite naturally, during the early years of this parish, since there was no resident pastor here, records of baptisms, marriages, funerals, etc were not registered here. The records from Huntingdon parish books show that the FIRST marriage in the new church, that of Fred Dughi and Theresa Peduzzi on Wednesday September 10-1913; witnesses Guido Peduzzi and Miss C. E. Dughi, officiating priest Father Tolan. FIRST Baptism that of Leonardo Bellucci, born December 21, 1912, son of Gabriel Bellucci and Philomena Necce, and was baptized September 28, 1913 by Father Tolan. FIRST funeral, Edward Adiutori age 23 who died March 23-1914 and was buried March 25 1914, officiating priest Father McCook.

The last item for the closing of the 1913 year as not yet mentioned is an up-to-date steam heating system purchased from and installed by W. H. Long in November at a cost of \$578.58.

The Bodnar Family is well known to many parishioners even to this day. Andrew Bodnar one of the pioneers has labored fervently in many ways to the erection of the new church as mentioned elsewhere in this history. His brother John always at hand, served as altar boy, sexton, for many years and in every way contributed to the material comfort of the priest. Another brother Stephen, followed in his brother Andrew's footsteps and continued as organist after Andrew's departure. The last of the brothers, Michael who possessed a deep bass voice contributed much to the singing.

Another familiar family name was the McGarveys, Henry and Samuel brothers. were on the building committee. These committeemen after much noble deeds done for the church and its progress in this vicinity have long passed to their eternal reward. One sister survives and resides across from the church on Market Street. To many of us she is familiarly known as "Anna Vesta" who devotes her time exclusively to the care of the altars and sacristies of the church. She repairs the vestments, arranges and changes the flowers, renews the candles, looks after the candle-labra, keeps immaculately clean cloths on the altars, attends to the

changing of the linens used by the priests and a myriad other little works necessitated by the various services. To those who know Miss McGarvey personally, she is a kind and humble person, peaceful and satisfied with her lot in life. She is most active for her advanced age, and her duties, heart and soul are for the little church on the hill.

The increase of foreign born Catholics induced Father Tolan to have a priest come at intervals who could speak their language. Records show that Father John Leckman administered to their wants during the month of November 1913 and in the month of March 1914 and perhaps in later years also. No pastor as yet had been appointed in charge but from the month of December 1913 Father Tolan was given assistant priests who would alternate with the pastor of Huntingdon in celebrating Mass here every Sunday and twice a month at St. Mary's Shade Valley.

### *Mount Union Parish.*

**T**HE month of July 1921 brought consolation and joy to the Catholics of the community, for their church was no longer a Mission but was raised to the dignity of a Parish, became an independent parish with the first resident pastor in the person of Rev. Micheal E Zamba, who took charge on the first of July, 1921. He made his residence in the Miss Victoria Dougherty home until a rectory could be built for the priests. Father Zamba labored zealously and seemed to understand his people very well and from the start urged very strongly a union of both the English and foreign speaking element. The music rendered at all the services prior to his coming was by the Slovak choir under the leadership of Andrew Bodnar who was also the organist, later by his brother, Stephen Bodnar. Father Zamba quite a musician himself formed an English choir with Raymond McGarvey as organist. Later on the two choirs joined having organists Raymond McGarvey and Mrs. Harry Grissinger. During the pastorate of Father Zamba the electric fixtures in the church were installed for the sum of \$90. Mr. John Bodnar who assisted at all services to this time, gave place to boys who were instructed as altar boys by Father Zamba. It was in the mind of Father Zamba to build a parish house here as is evident from the plans and specifications for a brick rectory drawn by D. G. Puderbaugh, architect, of Altoona, which are among the parish records, but an appointment of Father Zamba to another charge forced him to abandon his plans.

Father Zamba who spoke both the English and Slovak language made his work among the foreign speaking population most effective, and his departure on the sixth day of July, 1922 from their midst was a sad one, when he was transferred to take over the charge of St. John's and St. Mary's Orphanages, Cresson, Pa., where he remained a few months until transferred to his present charge, the Church of the Assumption, at Portage, Pa.





REV. THOMAS O'DONNELL

Rev. Thomas O'Donnell, the second resident pastor succeeded Father Zamba on the sixth of July, 1922. He too found this an ever-growing parish, and though his stay here was a short one, nevertheless, endeared himself to his people, by the sincerity of his efforts in their behalf, especially in the care of the sick and his concern for the wayward ones of his flock. Like his predecessor, he instructed more boys as altar boys, and many a time labored untiringly with them, improving the grounds around the church. Father O'Donnell had in mind more extensive improvements, but due to ill health was transferred the fifteenth of November, 1922 to the Summit in Cresson before his plans could be put into execution. At present Father O'Donnell is Chaplain at the State Sanitarium at Cresson.

Rev. John A. Kerkoska newly ordained priest came to Mount Union on the fourteenth day of November 1922 as successor to Father O'Donnell and the third resident pastor. On his appointment to St. Catharine's congregation and its Mission St. Mary's Shade Valley was eager to begin work for the spiritual and material welfare of the parish as his predecessors. Arriving in Mount Union he found comfort and hospitality at the home of Miss Victoria Dougherty who then resided at the corner of Shirley and Washington Sts. Miss Dougherty was an exemplary Catholic and outstanding citizen in the community. When priests were struggling to build and furnish a church for the small flock she gave freely of her time, moral support and financial assistance to establish a suitable place of worship. The appeal of Miss Dougherty to her non Catholic friends for aid in building of the new church, met with a generous and wholehearted response; at last her hopes were fulfilled and the church was completed and suitably furnished. Miss Dougherty was the last of the family of John Dougherty, a pioneer of the town. She had lived in the same home for almost fifty years. After a life of good works, passed away on the ninth of December, 1929 at the age of 86 years and has left a memory of noble deeds done in the interest of religion and the welfare of her fellowman.

The members of the parish for the most part spoke the various languages with which the pastor was well versed. Encouraged by the enthusiasm and wholehearted cooperation on the part of the people, paid off the parish indebtedness of \$500 and at once began a building fund with a view to the erection of a more suitable home as a parochial residence. In the meantime Father Kerkoska immediately undertook much needed improvements to the parish property. The first was to remove the surplus ground which had been excavated for the thirty-two steps and three landings at the entrance of the church on Market Street. At the same time the contract for removing a grade of ground about 150 ft. long at the corner of Market and Washington Sts. was considered. In the early Spring of 1923 R. M. Shoop was awarded the contract for the sum of \$271.50 and the work was begun April 18 - 1923, so that a stone wall and sidewalks could be placed in the near future. On the thirtieth of July the Mount Union Borough completed the laying of a clay pipe Sanitary Sewer, fronting our property on Market Street between Lafayette and Washington Sts., 450 feet and at a cost of \$490.50.

During the years 1924 and 1925 the hopes of building a rectory seemed brighter. Collections were taken frequently and the contributions began to mount and having a considerable sum on hand, the pastor with good people undertook the construction of the present rectory. The contract for a seven room house with two sun porches and a finished attic was awarded to Charles Baldwin of Mount Union for \$10,752.17. Harry Dailey was the architect. Work was begun June 24 - 1925 and on the fourteenth of July the excavation and foundation was completed. The construct-

ion progressed rapidly and on August 4th, the building was under roof. The building is of dark red brick and this work was completed August 22 so all that remained, was the finishing of the interior. The construction work of the interior progressed slowly; however the beautiful autumn weather permitted out-door work and it was during this time that work on the stone wall and sidewalks fronting Market and Washington Sts. was in progress. The contract had been awarded to Arthur Devecchis at a cost of \$2892.93. The railing for the church steps was placed by O. L. Reeder in December 1925 at a cost of \$107.67. Lighting fixtures for the rectory were furnished by F. DeKalb Parsons for \$402.61, and the painting of the rectory, interior and exterior was done by W. W. Nevelle and Edw. Chileote, at a cost of \$230.60. The metal work as spouting etc. was completed by H. L. Long, at a cost of \$82.17. The rectory now completed, Father Kerkoska after spending three years in the Dougherty home was ready to move. It was a bitter cold night of January 29-1926 when he occupied the new rectory. To become accustomed to the new location and lonely surroundings was not so pleasant from the early beginning, but the thought and satisfaction that St. Catharine's Parish has a substantial building for its priests, loneliness gradually disappeared.

The church and rectory seemed to rest in an uncared-for place, notwithstanding their beauty and attractiveness, so on the fourth of August 1927 a contract was let to terrace and sod these grounds. The contract was awarded to C. G. Weirich and J. E. Getz at a cost of \$1940.83. The plans were drawn by Jesse B. Lingle for \$63.58 who also engineered the project at its beginning. Later in the Fall of 1927 sidewalks around the rectory and concrete steps leading to the rectory on Washington St. were placed by Arthur Devecchis at a cost of \$477.70. This entire work was completed in the Spring of 1928 and so the improvements of the Catholic Church grounds is very noticeable. The Church and Rectory occupy ground which rises rapidly from Market Street. They rise twenty or more feet above the street and are sixty or more feet back from the curb line of the street. The change from homeliness to beauty which this terracing and sodding has made is a work of great care and much skill. The terraces are fine, the ground has been carefully prepared, and the sodding has been placed with precision, and has been planted and watered, and is now growing as green as the meadows in the grass lands. The beautiful Grecian retaining wall has a line of white stone covering and a belt of green sod at its base. Concrete steps carry the worshipper up from Market St. and also from Washington St. The view is now exceedingly pleasant to the eye. The Church and Rectory no longer sit in a barren field, but are now the gems which sit in the emerald surroundings which encloses them.

It was also found necessary to secure a place for burial. A beautiful plot of ground covering three acres in Shirleysburg and seven miles south



of Mount Union was surveyed of the Edward McGarvey farm on Nov. 19, 1931. The Rt. Rev. John J. McCort, D. D. delegated the Rev. Joseph F. Sofka, CSSR, to solemnly bless the cemetery, and this was done on Ascension Day, May 30, 1935. The first burial in the new cemetery was that of seven month old Anna Svrcek, daughter of Stephen and Mary Svrcek Jr. who died on the fifteenth of Feb. 1932 and was buried Feb. 18, 1932, Father Kerkoska officiating.

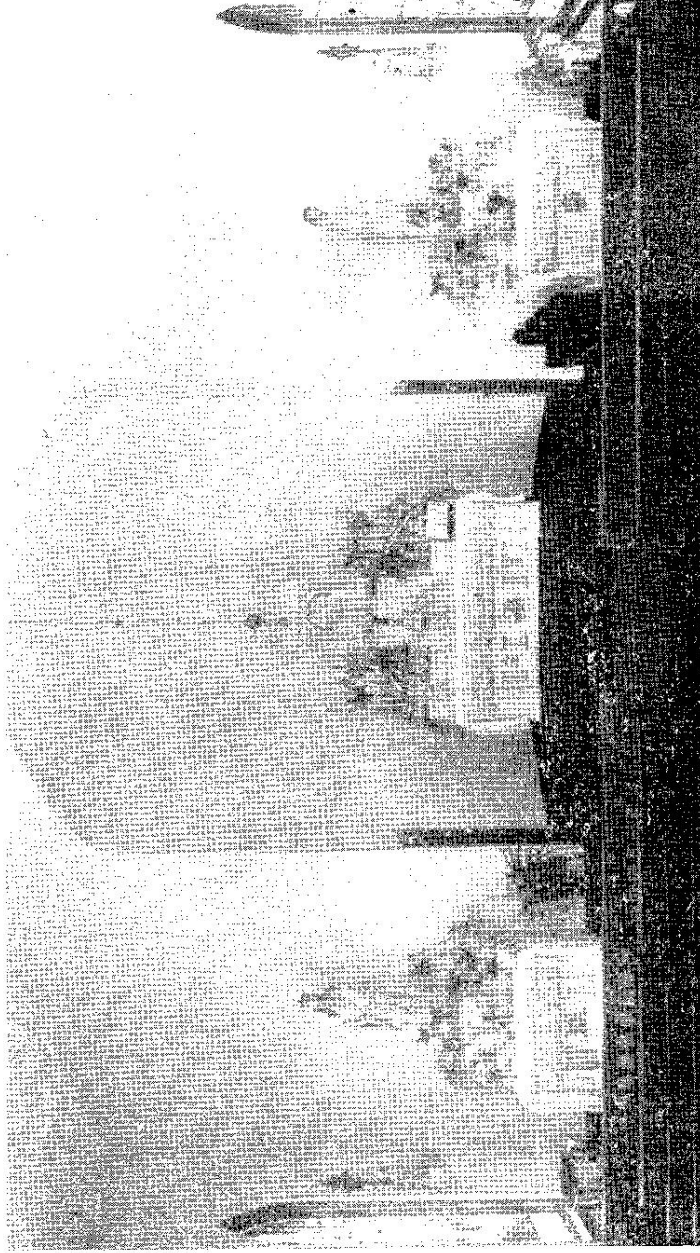
In the year of 1934 the church was badly in need of repairs. After much deliberation and planning and with the permission of the Bishop, improvements were begun in May of 1934. Hubert Clark of Altoona, was the architect. The major improvements on the inside were: removing the plaster and laths and replacing with half inch celotex; placing three tie rods from one side wall to the other side wall at eaves of the roof. On the outside all concrete cornices to be removed and also the heavy slate roof, and a Black Latite roof to replace the slate. These changes to cost \$3213.00. The repairs were indeed extensive but made the edifice more substantial and also added to its appearance. Besides changing the electrical system, three new fixtures were added, and the choir loft changed from a sloping position to a level. The church was repainted on the outside and frescoed a light buff color in the interior. The dome of the Sanctuary was made effective by numerous stars and clouds on a sky blue heaven. The St. Catharine's Guild, and Rosary Society, paid for the redecoration of altars, for new furnishings for the Sanctuary and for the varnishing of the pews. An E-stay Organ was purchased for \$565 which money was a contribution from friends and parishioners.

The Holstein Rubber Products Co. of Hartford Conn installed the streamline pattern of marbleized rubber tile in the center and side aisles of the church. The cost and labor amounted to \$625.00 and was completed in the latter part of March 1936.

It is interesting to note that the people comprising the present parish live in the following places: Ganister Hill, Jefferson Heights, Hill Valley, Mount Union and North Mount Union, Liverpool, Allenton, Shirley Township, Germany Valley, Mapleton, Cedar Crest, Kistler, Newton Hamilton and Vineyard. Though the church is in Huntingdon County, and therefore in the Altoona Diocese, yet some parishioners live in Mifflin County: the pastor has faculties also from the Harrisburg Diocese, in order to minister to the people within those boundaries. Moreover, a variety of foreign languages, yet spoken here by the older people, principally the Slovak, Polish, Italian, Roumanian, Lithuanian, Greek etc. makes this literally and truly a Catholic Congregation. Today the congregation is a large flourishing parish, comprising approximately one hundred ninety-five families whose chief occupation is labor in the brick industry. The parish debt has been reduced to the present sum of \$7000.00 and through the splendid co operation of the people, the present pastor hopes to continue the good work done in the past.

In conclusion, may I ask you to be friends with, and patronize, at your convenience, those who have very generously contributed to the expense of publishing this historical sketch. To all these, and others, who have assisted us by obtaining and supplying historical facts, photographs, ads etc., for this publication, we are most grateful.

Father Kerkoska.



INTERIOR OF PRESENT CHURCH

## ROSARY SOCIETY

**Y**EARS before the present church was built a number of Catholic people would assemble often during the week to recite the rosary. They had bought for themselves a very beautiful and large picture of the Rosary Group, which they have to this day, and when weather permitted they would meet in the open, under trees, and at other times in private homes to pay homage to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The present pastor noting their unity in active Christian faith and in the exercise of their true devotion was much edified and in order that they derive the numerous benefits of a Confraternity, at once applied to the Dominican Fathers at Rome to be affiliated with the confraternity and so on February 7, 1923 received the diploma giving the required permission of the confraternity of the Holy Rosary to be established in St. Catharine's parish according to the laws and regulations of the Confraternity at Rome. It was during a mission in the latter part of October 1926 conducted by the Rev. Paul Palka C. M. that the following Forty-five members were solemnly and with impressive ceremonies received into the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary. Mrs. Magdalena Svetlak, Mrs. Anna Andrejeik, Mr. and Mrs. John Bodnar, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Podnar, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Bodnar, Mr. and Mrs. George Bodnar, Mrs. Flora Boyter, Mrs. Anna Chrim, Mrs. Anna Curti, Miss Eda Curti, Mrs. Mary Danish, Ignatius Gajdos, Mrs. Mary Giacobello, Mrs. Mary Hayduk, Miss Mary Hayduk, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Hancarik, Mrs. Anna Homolas, Mrs. Elizabeth Komir, Mrs. Elizabeth Kormueik, Miss Vergie Kormueik, Mrs. Anna Kurej, Mrs. Mary Kurej, Mrs. Mary Lihan, Mrs. Anna Loss, Mrs. Mary Makowinski, Miss Mary Mizak, Mrs. Mary Nemetz, Mrs. Clara Puchalla, Mrs. Eva Puchalla, Mrs. Mary Puchalla, Miss Mary Puchalla, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Remek, Mrs. Verna Sabol, Mrs. Mary Suchanec, Miss Anna Svetlak, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Syreck, Mrs. Anna Tokar, Miss Anna Tokar, and the Rev. John A. Kerkoska.

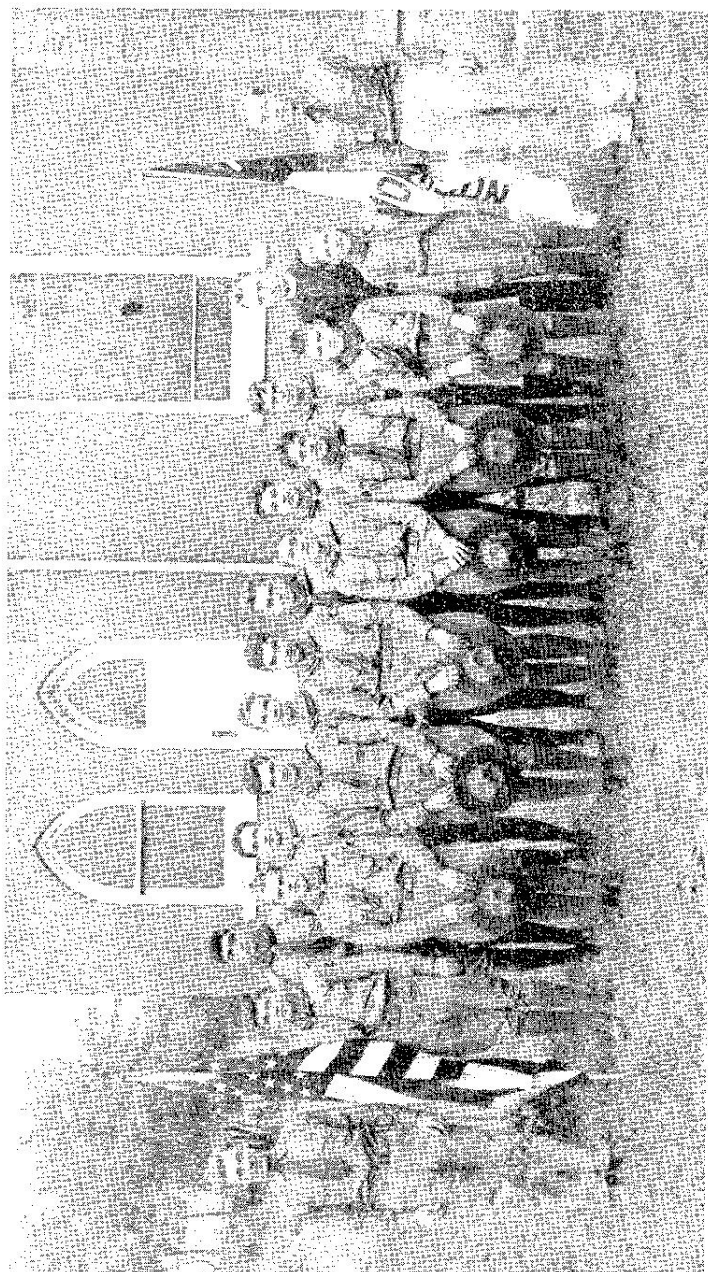
Much credit is due to Mrs. Magdalena Svetlak for her untiring efforts, and who has been with the society from the very beginning and even to the present day is its capable leader. Although many of the above named have moved from Mt. Union, and some have passed to their eternal reward, others have taken their places so that the Confraternity still retains its full enrollment of forty five members. With the help of the Rosary Confraternity much good has been done for the parish, and that not only by prayers, but also by a willing spirit to cooperate in every church affair.



#### ST. CATHARINE'S GUILD

**T**HERE are many good societies into which Catholic men and women have banded themselves for mutual protection. A distinction is here made between such societies and those which exist in the Church altogether from spiritual motives. Our insurance societies are excellent institutions worthy of every Catholic's participation, yet their objects cannot be said to class them under the same head as others which are especially dear because of their higher purely religious aims. The aims of the Guild are to assist in the helpfulness and promotion to the best interests of its members by bringing them together on spiritual and religious lines through social and intellectual endeavor.

On the thirtieth day of November 1924 a little band of Catholic women of St. Catharine's parish conceived the idea of forming a society wherein they might unite and work for the interests of their church. They met at the home of Mrs. Harry Smyers and the subject of establishing of a Guild was fully discussed and the success of other organizations pointed out. Encouraged by their pastor, all labored so zealously and earnestly that the foundation of St. Catharine's Guild was laid and its work in behalf of the church launched. The results of the first elections gave the presidency to Mrs. Elmer Shiley; Mrs. Harry Smyers vice-president, Mrs. John Rourke secretary, and Mrs. J. N. Miller treasurer. Meetings are held twice a month in the homes of the members. In the fifteen years of its-existence the Guild has paid out more than \$2870.00 to improvements of church property and keeping up payments on the interest of loans. Many other instances could be given, especially of aid in local affairs. At the regular meeting held in the parish house September 28, 1939 Mrs. Elmer Shiley has been appointed president, and is ably assisted in the administration of her work by Mrs. B. S. Fleming vice-president, Miss Wilgus Enycart sec.-treas. The Guild is today in every sense an ideal organization, and with all its great work, its varied activities and many responsibilities, continues to remember its deceased sisters, when the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered for the happy repose of the Souls of these departed ones, thus testifying that as they loved each other in life they are not forgotten in death.



### BOY SCOUTS

FIRST ROW: STEPHEN CHALUPKA, SCOUTMASTER, STEPHEN BODNAR, MICHAEL KOMIR, SYLVESTER DINARDI, SANTO IMPERIOLI, JOSEPH REMEK, JOHN MICKLEY, JOHN MILLER, JOHN REMEK, JOSEPH E. TREASTER, ASST. SCOUTMASTER  
SECOND ROW: ANDREW BODNAR, JOHN HUBITSKY, IGN. CHALUPKA, MICHAEL BODNAR, JOSEPH GIACOBELLO, JOSEPH DEANGELO, AND FATHER KERKOSKA. (MISSING ON PICTURE GUIDO ALESI AND JOHN MAGLIERI)

### CATHOLICS BOY SCOUTS



ONE of the most encouraging signs amongst the youth of our nation is the establishment, under distinctively Catholic auspices, of a movement known as the Catholic Boy Scouts of America. This movement is national in scope with its own hierarchial approbation and directorate. It has its own ceremonies of induction, distinctively Catholic in tone, and its own religious guidance program. This movement is directly connected with the Boy Scouts of America and has its individual offices in the same building in Park avenue, New York, with the B.S.A.

It is vastly important to remember that in all nations where godlessness and totalitarianism have gained a foothold, the youth has been regimented in national organizations which have as their sole purpose the weeding out of the minds of these young people all thoughts of God, religious training and education. This to the end that, as soon as each succeeding generation comes on, the nation shall, more and more, be populated by those who have been brought up through their formative years without any knowledge of God and Christianity. It is for this very reason that the communistic element is always so anxious to gain control of the schools. The tyranny travels so down life's highway that it is an axiom of the soviet, "capture the minds of the youth and you have won the battle."

St. Catharine's parish Boy Scouts belong to the Captain Jack District, Juniata Valley Council and were originally organized under Troop No. 1 in July 1928 with the following as scouts and committee: Scoutmaster Rev. J. Kerkoska, Assistant S. M. Stephen M. Benzik. The Troop Committee; H. P. Miller, C. J. McGarvey, O. J. Fox. The scouts: Andrew Chalupka, Stephen Chalupka, Dominic Corda, Michael Gergel, Andrew Hancarik, John Hayduk, Angelo Meloni, William Tassa.

Troop No. 1 held an enviable record for several years, as later Stephen Benzik, very much interested and sacrificing much of his time for the Boy Scout movement in our parish, assumed the important responsibility of scoutmaster. He however had in mind higher aspirations and it was not long afterward that he left for St. Louis, Mo., where he entered the school of Aviation and was very successful in his new work. From thence on the troop not having a capable leader, gradually seemed to lose all interest and finally disabandoned. In the meantime Stephen Benzik's endeavor in his new field of work was marred by a fatal accident. One Sunday afternoon, to be exact, on November 23, 1930 he with a friend went on a short flight in one of the planes over the field, and when about 300 feet in the air the plane developed motor trouble, nosed-dived and crashed to the ground killing Stephen instantly.

In the year 1938 the Boy Scouts of the parish reorganized, held regular meetings and in May 1939 renewed its charter under Troop No. 4 of St. Catharine's Church. Stephen Chalupka a member of the original

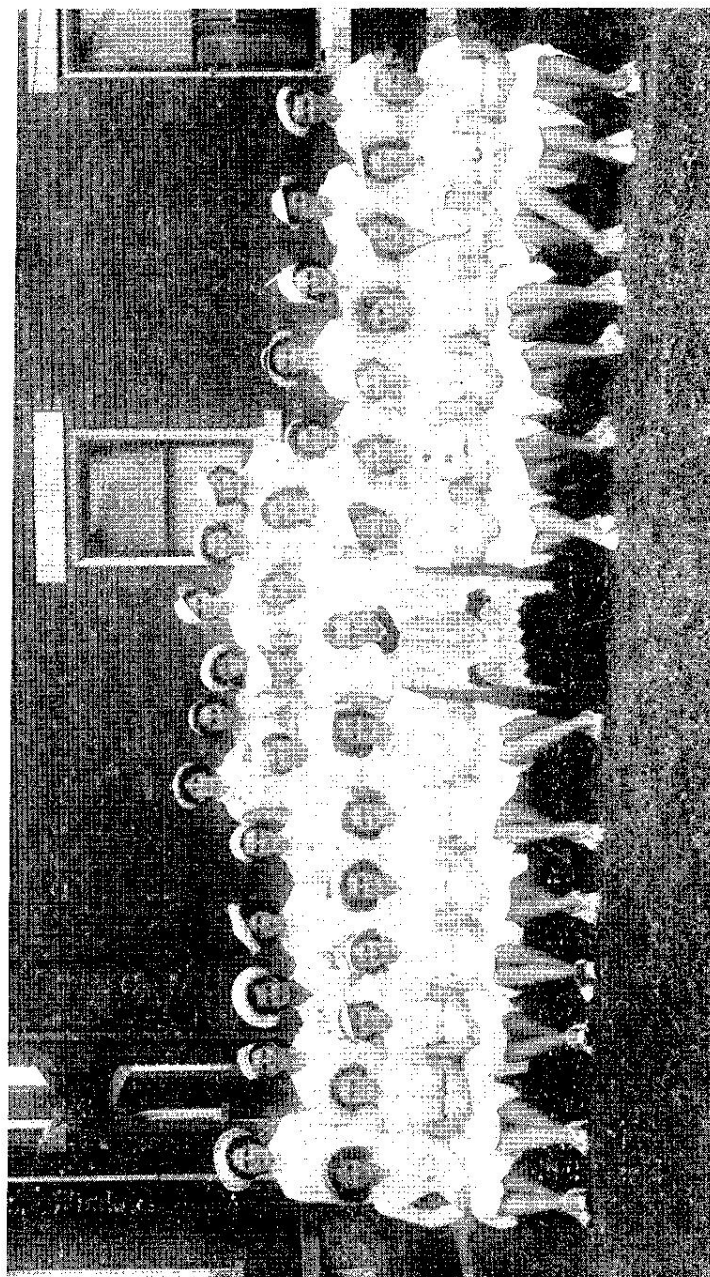
troop took over the duties of scoutmaster and succeeded in bringing the troop back to its former position. At present there are sixteen boys enrolled and all equipped with the official uniform. The troop possesses fine equipment, including its own flags and insignia.

Scout Troop No. 4 sponsored by St. Catharine's parish, was formally installed with elaborate ceremonies Sunday May 28, in the presence of a large gathering of parishioners, scout officials, and visiting scouts. The ceremony used at the investiture was the prescribed ritual for Catholic troops, and was conducted by the Rev. John Hacala, C. Y. O. director, who presented the charter to the Rev. John Kerkoska, pastor of St. Catharine's. The Rev. Edmund Cain, pastor of Holy Trinity Church, Huntingdon, preached a splendid sermon on Scouting. Present in the sanctuary was the Rev. Lambert Beiter, chaplain of the Pennsylvania Industrial school of Huntingdon. Installed as committeemen for the troop were Andrew Puchalla, Chairman; Clarence McGarvey, G. V. Breig, H. P. Miller, and Andrew Giacobello. Stephen Chaplupka as scoutmaster and Joseph Ellsworth Treaster assistant scoutmaster. The Scouts of this troop who were invested are: Joseph DeAngelo, Joseph Giacobello, Santo Imperioli, John Hubitski, Michael Komir, John Maglieri, John Mickley, John Miller, John Remek, and Joseph Remek.

Every Catholic boy desiring to affiliate himself with a well ordered and balanced program of character building and religious training for life in the great out-of-doors should be guided aright into the Catholic Boy Scouts of America. Let the altruism that is being inculcated into the sons of Catholic men and women be of a Christian and Catholic brand. The Catholic Boy Scout movement under distinctively Catholic auspices is deserving of the support of every Catholic mother and father. If and when your sons join the Boy Scouts, see to it that they affiliate with the Catholic Boy Scouts of America.







# SODALITY

1st row—Mary Bodnar, Helen Fox, Florence Mickley, Helen Harkle, Mary Salamon, Marion Hnitsky, Coletta McCavitt, Prefect, Father Kerkoska, Mary Mickley, Sec., Anna Holmes, Kathryn Stas-ko, Elizabeth Berley, Frances Chalupka, Mary Kerchersky.  
 2nd row—Virginia Ambrosio, Mary Burearo, Carmelita Bato, Virginia Treconi, Grace Shiley, Sarah Barcuto, Catherine Nemetz, Wilgus, Einyeart, Vice-Prefect, Anna Haulish, Lillian Pandolfino, Elizabeth Kurey, Ninza Cascar, Edith Black, Mary Galsior.  
 3rd row—Mary Pandolfino, Rose Kenek, Josephine Trogano, Jodean Cascar, Nancy Pandolfino, Mary DeAngelo.

### THE SODALITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



SINCE the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, who is the principal patroness of the Sodality, will surely cherish and defend it, and, since, as Mother of Mercy, she will love those who love her, and protect those who, in their piety, have recourse to her, it is proper that the Sodalists should not only venerate and honor her in a particular manner, but also imitate her most admirable virtues and excite one another to love her love.

The erection of a sodality is nothing more than the act of the Bishop forming the sodality. The affiliation gives the Sodality its character, and communicates the privileges and indulgences of the PRIMA PRIMARIA, head and mother of the Sodalities of the world. Only after the diploma has been received is the Sodality entitled to draw on the treasury of indulgences. This brings it into the grand union of the kindred societies.

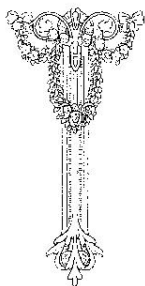
The Sodality in St. Catharine's Church admits to membership all young unmarried ladies of the parish, and was organized under the primary title of "The Assumption" and secondary title "St. Ann" on the twenty-first of July 1938, with the following as officers: Prefect Coletta McCavitt, Vice-prefect Wilgus Enycart, Secretary Mary Mickley and Treasurer Anna Chalupka. The Rev. Pastor is Spiritual Director. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Mondays of the month, with the second Sunday of the month as communion Sunday.

The application for affiliation was duly signed by His Excellency Bishop R. T. Guilfoyle D. D. and forwarded to the central office to the Very Rev. Father General of the Society of Jesus for aggregation to the Prima Primaria Sodality of the Roman College. The Diploma from Rome was received the seventh day of October 1938. However, in the meantime the central office in America gave the permission to conduct the reception of the Sodality before its arrival. The solemn reception was held Sunday evening August 21, 1938 when thirty-four young ladies were received into the sodality. The ceremony was conducted by the Rev. Director Father Kerkoska, as follows: the thirty-four candidates occupied the pews in the church before the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary; the hymn Veni Creator was sung to invoke the assistance of the Spirit of Light; then the Rev. Director addressed the candidates on the nature of the Sodality, the importance and signification of its work, the duties of a Sodalist and privileges of the Sodalist. The medals were blessed and each member was presented with a copy of Sodality rules. Then the approved candidates for admission signified their wish to be received by coming forward and standing at the altar rail, where they pledged themselves to endeavor to become good members and foster a great love and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Kneeling before the Blessed Virgin

all made the act of consecration and received from the Director the medal. In virtue of the powers which have been given the Rev. Director he received the candidates into the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to partake in all indulgences, the privileges and spiritual favors enjoyed by the members of the Prima Primaria of the Roman College to which this Sodality is duly affiliated. The Sodalists then received the diploma of membership and membership card as a witness that they have been numbered among the Sodalists and made in a special way children of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The ceremony closed with Benediction and singing of hymn, "Holy God we praise Thy Name."

On Sunday, December 11, 1938 a similar impressive ceremony was conducted when thirteen new members were received into the sodality, thus boosting the membership to forty-seven sodalists. The present officers of the sodality are: Prefect, Mary Gaisior; Vice-prefect, Elizabeth Pagano; Secretary, Mary Bodnar; Treasurer, Mary Salamon.

The Sodalists should love one another with true and sincere charity and endeavor to preserve among themselves peace and concord, and to advance daily in the true Christian virtue. That they may do this the more easily, they should be diligent in attending the meetings of the Sodality, and exact in the performance of their pious exercises; they should seek the company of those by whom they may be helped, and avoid familiarity with others whose ways are wicked, or who are quarrelsome and inclined to uncharitable discourses. They should not do anything that may be injurious to the good name of the Sodality; but, on the contrary, conduct themselves in all things in such a manner, that they may be worthy of the protection of the Blessed Virgin.



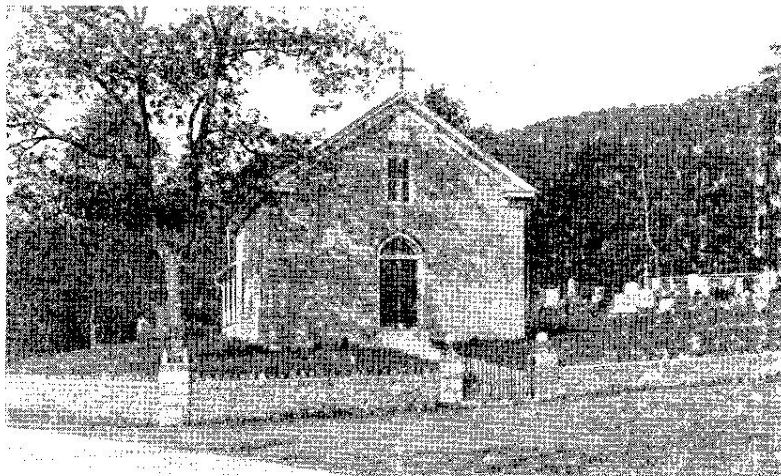
### THE JUNIOR SODALITY



THE Junior Sodality, under the title "Mary Immaculate" is a recent organization in the parish, and was organized during the Religious Vacation School, in the month of July, 1939, through the great efforts of the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart. It was organized to promote a better spirit of cooperation among the younger girls of the parish, and admits to membership all girls of the parish who have received First Holy Communion, to the age of fifteen years incl.; after that age they are promoted to the Senior Sodality.

The ceremony for reception was held Sunday evening July 31, 1939, in the St. Catharine's Church, and as follows: Forty-two little girls dressed in white and wearing veils, congregated in the basement of the church at 7:15 p. m. and at 7:30 p. m. marched in a procession to the church. The ceremonies opened with a hymn "Veni Creator" which was followed by an appropriate address delivered by the pastor and spiritual adviser, in which he outlined the aims, purpose and object of the society; the importance of which is to honor the Blessed Mother, especially by striving to imitate her virtues.

The present officers of the sodality are: Margaret Chalupka, prefect; Anna Salamon, vice-prefect; Anna Nagy, secretary; Grace Giacobello, treasurer. This recent organization of Junior Sodalites in the parish has an enrollment of forty-two members.



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Bodnar, Mrs. Mary .....	15.00
Finn, Mr. and Mrs. P. W. ....	15.00
McGarvey, Mrs. Jennie .....	15.00
McKendree, Mrs. J. C. ....	15.00
Rosary Society .....	15.00
St. Catharine's Guild .....	15.00
Young Ladies Sodality .....	15.00
Homolash, John .....	5.00
Hubitski, Wasyl .....	5.00

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Side Altars .....	St. Matthew's Church, Tyrone, Pa.
St. Joseph's Statue .....	Miss V. Dougherty and Relatives
Blessed Virgin Statue .....	Mrs. Chas. Brogan
Sacred Heart Statue .....	Slovak Society
Holy Trinity Statue .....	George Komir
Rosary Group Picture .....	Rosary Society
Votive Stand .....	Rosary Society
Organ .....	(partly paid by parishioners)
Sanctuary Lamp .....	Miss Anna Cullen
Chalice .....	Mrs. Jane F. Cullen Rooney
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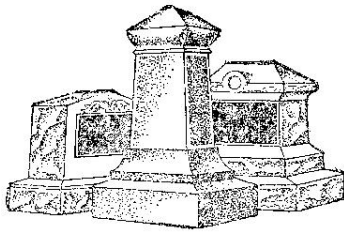
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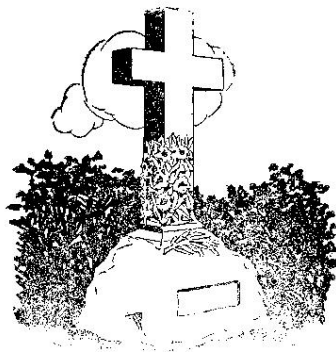
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