

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea for this little book came in October 1998 from a Centennial Committee consisting of Ruth Hastings, chairman, with Jean Harrison, Leola Wellman, Mary Jane Rothweiler, and Mary E. Kempf, and Rev. Dan Lueckenotte. As part of a year-long celebration of the centennial of St. Joseph Church 1899-1999, these women envisioned a history book chronicling the life of this parish. This is the result some four years after inception of the idea of a particular time, place, and faith. It is the cooperative effort of so many who offered pictures, stories, and insights which lifted the veil of history. For all named and unnamed who helped in this project, I am most grateful.

Father Dan vigorously supported this project, doing much of the preliminary research, offering church records and photos, and taking pictures, many of which are used in this book. Mary Jane Rothweiler along with Father began the time-consuming task of compiling materials. “Ask Mary Jane.” That is what everyone said when I had one of many questions. Mary Jane is the acknowledged historian of the parish, a record keeper whose love for the church shines through in everything she does. It is she who had the vision to salvage dumpsters of documents from the rectory when it was undergoing renovation in 1968 and who took pictures of the soon to be demolished parish school. It is she who lovingly compiled dozens of scrapbooks relating to the life and times of St. Joseph’s. Mary Jane’s compilations have been invaluable. Her knowledge of the parish and church is encyclopedic. If I had an ecclesiastical question relating to terminology or spelling, she usually knew immediately—or had a Catholic dictionary at the ready to provide the etymology. She has generously shared her resources with me, and thus, all of you in this book. What a treasure she is! And Sister Marlene fielded endless questions, some late at night. For her patience and guidance, I am indeed grateful.

Along the way, Father Dan recruited Matthew Meade, home from the seminary, to help with graphic design of the fledging book. And then in the final stages, I recruited my daughter, Laura, who worked many hours as well on the graphics, something her mother finds very difficult to do. She bailed me out of many computer snafus. For both these young people who donated their time and talent, I am most appreciative. And my patient husband, Tony, who went alone on walks with Sadie many nights when I was too engrossed in research, I have to say, “You are a saint.”

Much credit is extended to all authors who have preceded me in writing about the historic events which are chronicled. What would we do without the Palmyra Spectator which through the decades has been the journal keeper, the chronicler, the pulse taker of the life and times of this community! Many articles were gleaned from clippings taken from our local paper, some of which are undated and unpagged. From special events such as a Golden Jubilee of a pastor to the 25 cent chicken dinners hosted by the Catholic ladies to raise money for the new church, our paper was there. It was an invaluable source. Ruth Hastings, in addition to being Centennial Chair, authored articles for the Spectator and is responsible for many pictures as well as vivid recollections of her life lived in the parish. She is another St. Joseph Parish treasure. Other sources including the Catholic Missourian, works edited by Lee Keck, the History of Marion County 1884 as well as research completed relating to the Catholic Church in Northeast

Missouri, have been so helpful. The work of all authors cited has been of unlimited assistance, and I have tried to give proper credit to them.

Special thanks to all the former St. Joseph School students who met one Sunday afternoon to record their recollections: Mary A. Kroeger Hirner (1923-1931), Leo Rothweiler (1931-1935), Martha Scheveling Hudson (1942-1950), Rita Russell Reed (1947-1950), Ruth Lake Hastings (1940-41 and 1943-1944), John Buckman (1950-1958), David Hastings (1960-1968), Mary Mangin Sternke (1943-), Pauline Schwartz Jones (1967-1970), and Mary Jane Rothweiler, long-time parishioner. As individual as each of your experiences were, there was a collective experience revealed as well—that of being a Catholic school kid. Those of us who are products of other parochial educations can identify along with you, and I hope our children, who never had that life, can learn and laugh at the memories you have generously shared.

So many of you who have lived your whole lives in Palmyra related accounts of the inimitable Fr. Farischon whose life was so entwined in yours and the life of the parish during more than half of the last century. L.A. Wellman, Bud and Mary Jane Rothweiler, Marie Nill and others offered vivid stories which make those of us who knew him less well or not at all—wish we had.

Thanks to those who provided editorial advice including Sr. Marlene Buese, Martha Scheveling Hudson, Mary Jane Rothweiler, and Fr. Pat Piercall, who while he is not mentioned in this account of a time before his tenure, is certainly to be included in any future book. Special thanks to Cheryl Hirner for her assistance with the final copy. Her patience and expertise were invaluable.

The story of this church is the story of its people. For all the people who graciously shared their memories, it is your accounts which make history come alive. If you identified people in a faded picture, told an anecdote, or patiently fielded a question, I thank you. To all the unnamed people who helped me along the way, I am most grateful.

This book is an attempt to sort out a rich history of a particular time, place, and faith. As we are now in the second century in our beautiful Gothic church, built so long ago, another part of our history is being written. It is my hope that others will continue to preserve and examine the rich heritage of St. Joseph Church.

Mary Beth Lenzini  
June 2002

