

## Chapter 2

### The Building Years Continue

Planning for a new church building involved organization, effort, and the sacrifice of the whole parish family. In the fall of 1895, Rev. P. Ulric Petri, O.F.M., Pastor, canvassed the entire parish to solicit subscriptions. He found the majority favoring the building of a new church and willing to contribute according to their means. It was found that within three years, the congregation would have on hand \$7,000.

In 1896, "St. Joseph's Parish Building Society" was organized with a membership of 28. The building committee included: Rev. P. Ulric Petri, O.F.M., Simon Hirner, B. Hermesmeyer, Clement Kroeger, and Dr. J. J. Nelson. The Society held a meeting the third Sunday of each month. It was decided that each member of the parish should pay twenty-five cents monthly. Fund raisers were undertaken in order to raise money to construct a new church. The church continued to grow. In an 1897 census the parish consisted of 77 families with 364 members in all. There were 66 males between the ages of 21-52 that owned their own houses. 56 members contributed to the support of the church, and 36 children were enrolled in the parochial school. In 1898 when Archbishop Kain came to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation, he congratulated the parish upon the progress made in raising funds and expressed his wish to soon see the new structure.

The Venerable Brothers Adrian Wewer and Leonard Darscheid, O.F.M. designed the plans for the new church in 1898. For 50 years Brother Adrian designed over 30 churches served by the Franciscans. On December 23, 1898, The Most Rev. Archbishop Kain approved those plans and granted permission to build the church. Andrew Gebhardt, Mr. Gansz, and Fred Juette of Palmyra contracted for the masonry work at \$723.00. Roehl and Seibert of Quincy were hired for the carpentry work and Sinclair and Manning of Quincy for the brick work. Carpentry, plastering, and tin work cost \$4847.15 with the total cost of the building, \$12,000 and an indebtedness of \$4,000.00. The ground was staked off in April 1899 and excavation for the foundation began the next day. The cornerstone for the new church was laid on May 22, 1899, after a solemn high Mass by the Very Rev. Hy. Muehlsiepen, V.G. The Rev. Michael Richardt, O.F.M. preached the sermon. An excursion train from Quincy, Illinois, brought over a large crowd of people to the celebration (St. Francis 187).

Work on the new church progressed very favorably with the exception of one great tragedy. During the construction, various fund raisers continued to be held to pay for the new structure. At the county fair, the ladies of St. Joseph Church served dinners throughout the week with the proceeds going to the building fund. Meal tickets were sold for twenty five cents each. But in the midst of all this happy progress, tragedy struck on July 26, 1899, shortly after six o'clock. John Neumann, a carpenter from Quincy, Illinois, was knocked from the new building when one of the heavy trusses to support the roof slipped and gave way. He died within an hour after the accident leaving a wife and child.

As the century came to a close on November 30, 1899, Thanksgiving Day, the new church was dedicated. Built of Gothic style, it is 101' long, 46' wide. The seating capacity is

240, exclusive of the choir loft. The walls are a height of 30 feet. The tall, cross-pinnacled spire steeple rising to a height of 125 feet can be viewed from many vantage points in town. It is more than a landmark high above the community; it is a symbol of the deep faith of many of the generations who developed from a church-less frontier to a congregation of over 205 families. Early benefactors to the church included Simon Hirner and Ignatz Jacobi, Mr. and Mrs. Clem Kroeger, and Mrs. Mary Weyand. The Kroegers and Mrs. Weyand donated the money for the side altars. The high altar itself was built by M.H. Schenk, Quincy, IL. Mrs. Mary Weyand also donated \$200.00 for electric lights (St. Francis 188).



**Church stands today even as it was in 1899.**

As the new century began, with a new church building, the parish flourished. May 1900 a mission was preached by Rev. O. Daniel Finkenhoefer, O.F.M., for the English speaking parishioners and by Rev. P. Arsenius Fahle, O.F.M. for the German speaking members. June 10, 1900, Rev. Henry C. Petri, O.F.M., the newly ordained brother of the pastor celebrated his first Mass in St. Joseph's Church, Palmyra. In 1901 there were 75 families registered in the parish with a school enrollment of 42 children. The parish debt was \$3,693.14.

The parish became part of the Diocese of St. Joseph in 1903. 1904 parish records indicate pew rents totaled \$496.00, house collections and donations \$696.30, Seminary Collections \$30.09, Orphans, \$8.75, Negro and Indian Missions \$5.00, contributions for Holy Land \$3.60, Collection for Holy Father \$5.00, and the Collection for Catholic University \$2.00. The year's coal bill was \$84.60. In 1905 the parish paid \$118.35 interest on the church debt and

paid off \$250.00 on notes leaving a debt on December 31 of \$2,900.00. From 1906-1908 the Rev. Ernestus Kaufhold, O.F.M., served as pastor. He introduced the Franciscan Sisters from Peoria, Illinois. Rev. Louis Doering, O.F.M., served as pastor from 1908-1909. In October 1909, Archbishop Glennon confirmed 27 parishioners. Rev. P. Timothy Mabniew, O.F.M. preached a mission for the parish. From 1909-1916 Rev. Ernest Kaufhold, O.F.M. served as pastor.

Times were hard and the parish had to be creative to support itself. One way to pay off debt was to rent pews to each family. As the Certificate of Membership indicates, payment of the pew rent entitled “the spiritual ministrations of the pastor.” The Young Ladies Society collected 16 pennies (one foot) as their fund raiser.

1917		PEW RENT RECEIPT CARD		1920	
Jan.		<b>St. Joseph's Church</b>		Jan.	
April		PALMYRA, MISSOURI		April	
July				July	
Oct.				Oct.	
1918		Received of .....		1921	
Jan.		Pew Rent for ..... Seat .....		Jan.	
April		in Pew No. .... to last date punched on margin.		April	
July		Pew Rent should be paid quarterly, if possible.		July	
Oct.		Please present this card when paying pew rent.		Oct.	
1919		RATES EFFECTIVE JAN. 1, 1918		1922	
Jan.			Yr.	Qr.	Jan.
April		Single Seats .....	\$8.00	\$2.00	April
July		Two or three seats, each .....	6.00	1.50	July
Oct.		Four Seats, each .....	8.00	1.25	Oct.

**CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP**  
IN  
**St. Joseph's Parish**  
PALMYRA, MISSOURI

This Certifies that .....

and wife ..... with .....

..... children, are members of this Parish, and by reason of the support credited on this card are entitled to the spiritual ministrations of its pastor.

Signed,  
REV. H. J. FARISCHON.

**THE Y. L. S.**  
OF  
**St. Joseph's Church**  
PALMYRA,  
MISSOURI.

Requests a Contribution  
OF  
**16 PENNIES**  
(ONE FOOT)  
Toward a Mile of  
PENNIES

Thanking You in Advance  
Young Ladies Society.

### Fund Raisers

In the midst of World War I, August 1, 1916, Rev. Herbert J. Farischon was appointed to be the first resident pastor by Bishop Maurice F. Burke, bishop of the St. Joseph Diocese. Father Farischon lived upstairs in the old school building. At that time there were 40 families in St.

Joseph's Church and 30 pupils in the parish school. From 1916-1921 Father Farischon was also in charge of the mission church in LaGrange, MO. Sometimes he went for services by train and at other times he went by Model-T. Albert Juette and other parishioners often accompanied him.



**Fr. Farischon**

The war touched poignantly home at St. Joseph's. On July 10, 1918, the Palmyra Spectator reported St. Joseph's paid a tribute to the soldiers of WW I. As the congregation sang the "Star Spangled Banner," a service flag containing seven stars was dedicated at the church at 11 o'clock Mass. The following members of the church were in the service and were represented on the flag: Sidney E. Weseman, Gerald Losson, Joe Honeycamp, Dr. Frank Jacobi, Urban Hirner, Francis Ellison, and Lewis Martin.

In 1918 as WWI ended, a new concrete block school building was built on the SW corner of Church and Lane across from the church to accommodate the educational needs of the parish children.



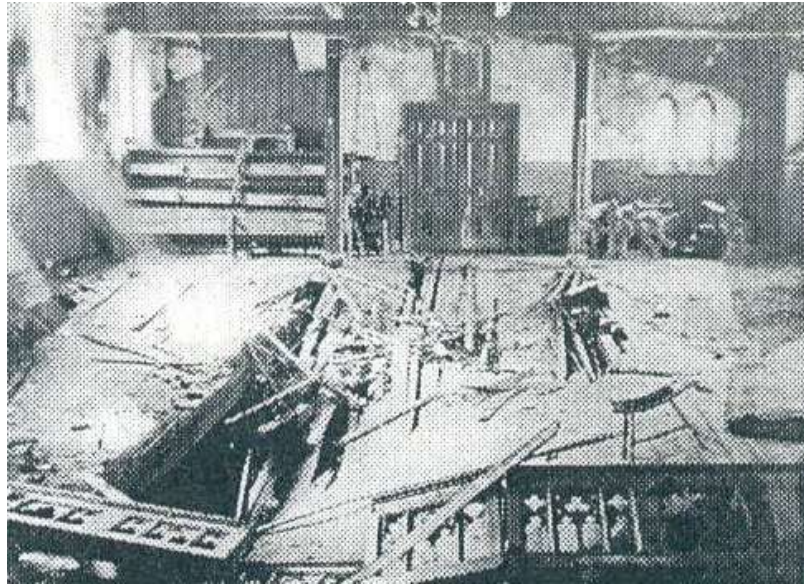


### **St. Joseph School 1918**

In 1919 On March 5, Ash Wednesday, a fire caused by an overheated furnace gutted the church making the church unusable until the fall of 1919. According to an article in the March 5, 1919, Palmyra Spectator, the church was almost completely gutted by fire. Only the walls and roof were saved after a four hour battle. The joist in the middle of the floor burned through and the main floor was down in the center of the building. The altar rail and interior decorations were ruined, but the damage was largely caused by water. Parishioners risked their lives by wrapping cloths around their heads and groping blindly through the smoke to save what they could of the altars and the fixtures. The fire started in the basement from the furnace and was first noticed by Sam Gupton about 7 AM. He gave the alarm but it was some time before central was reached By the time the fire department was finally notified, the smoke was so dense it was difficult for the men to know where to direct the hose.

The article stated that St. Joseph's was probably the most expensive church building in the city. It was built for about \$12,000 but the members of the congregation did a lot of the work and later paid for the furnishings. It was estimated the building was worth \$25,000 with insurance for only \$6000. It was a time of loss for the parishioners who had worked so hard to build that beautiful church building.

.The insurance company paid a claim of \$3,932 for damages sustained. The services were held in the old school building until July 18, while repairs were being made to the church. In addition, one Mass on Sundays was offered in the upstairs chapel of the new school across the street. On April 6, 1919, the Knights of Columbus Council 1937 was formed with 36 charter members. Following the fire of 1919 the Knights donated two stained glass windows in the church sanctuary. One has representations of St. Vincent DePaul and the Good Samaritan. The other depicts angels holding scrolls with names of parish veterans of World War I.



**Fire damage to church 1919.**



**St. Joseph Church Repaired Sept. 1919**

(Note side altars are still being repaired. Stations of the Cross are framed pictures.)

During the Depression Years, no major building or renovations occurred. The people of the parish were too impoverished. Times were hard all over the nation. The decade of 1930-1940 were the worst years of the “great depression.” These were the years before World War II. Families pulled together as did the faith community. They followed the depression mantra of “use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.”

One of the highlights for the parish in these trying times was its first ordination. On May 22, 1937, Rev. Robert Glenn Scobee was ordained by Bishop LaBlond. He celebrated his first Mass at St. Joseph’s Church. His mother and stepfather, Mr. and Mrs. (nee: Ethel Dooley) Tim Kelly, were members of the church at the time. Bud Rothweiler served as altar boy at that Mass.



**Rev. Robert Glenn Scobee (1911-1979)**

The 1940’s found the community trying to rally behind President Franklin Roosevelt to overcome the depression. The world, however, moved closer to war. The bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 brought the nation full force into the world conflict. Young men, sons and husbands of the congregation, were called to active duty. It was a time of great anxiety. Those who were left behind supported the war effort the best they could through rationing of basic supplies such as sugar, gasoline, automobiles, women working in factories, and, of course, praying. It was again a troubled time for the parish.

April 12, 1945, the day that President Franklin D. Roosevelt died, a tornado did minor damage to the roof of the church as well as the roof of the school. This storm completely destroyed the St. Peter’s Catholic Church in Quincy, Illinois. That same year, the Carroll Family donated new Stations of the Cross in memory of Harry Carroll (Florence Schaller’s brother). At the end of the summer, World War II was officially over with the bombing of Hiroshima. Prosperous days were ahead.

In 1951 the interior of the church was redecorated and rewired. The first pipe organ was also installed that year as well. Ross Carnahan in his column “Hit or Miss! in the Palmyra Spectator, Feb. 28, 1951, wrote of Father Farischon stopping by and suggesting that Carnahan

visit the newly decorated church. This Carnahan did after which he provided a vivid description of what he saw. He noted that prior to the fire of 1919 there was a mosaic scheme of decorations. The new decorations featured symbolic drawings on the walls and ceilings in oil colors of blue, rose, and gray.

The sanctuary had gold candle sticks, and alabaster white statues. On either side of the altar were inscribed the words, “adoration,” “thanksgiving,” reparation,” and “petition” along with the symbols of each. Further around the sides of the sanctuary toward the arch were the coats of arms of Pope Pius XII and Bishop LeBlond of St. Joseph.

In the arch were the symbols of the seven sacraments starting on the left and going up and over: Baptism, Penance, Holy Eucharist, Confirmation, Holy Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction. Overhead in the sanctuary were the panels of the biblical stars and gilded constellations representing the Star of Bethlehem, Pleiades, Hyades, Orion, Arcturus, and the Northern and Southern Crosses.

Along the sides of the church on the dado or wainscoting was the vision of St. Benedict where he sees the world paying homage to the king, shown by the sun in the center with the planets, moon, and zodiac facing it. The soffits around the windows referred to St. Joseph, the church’s patron saint. Monograms and carpenter tools were drawn there as well. Around the walls were the fourteen Stations of the Cross representing Jesus’ route to Calvary. These were made of the same white material as the statues on the altars.

At the bases of the arches which were across the ceiling were the symbols for the twelve apostles of the church with the symbol and name of each respective apostle. The floors and pews were all re-varnished and the linoleum was stained a light green. Most of the work was free hand painting with the designs and layouts composed by Father Farischon.

The church was lighted by four 750 watt bulbs in the main part with a 1000 watt bulb lighting the sanctuary. In addition, several spot lights illuminated the paintings. Each of the bulbs had a painted 64 point sunburst around it. The redecorating and rewiring was done by the T.B. Kemmer Company for approximately \$7000. Mr. Carnahan did not describe the stained windows in this article as there were no changes made to these beautiful works of art.





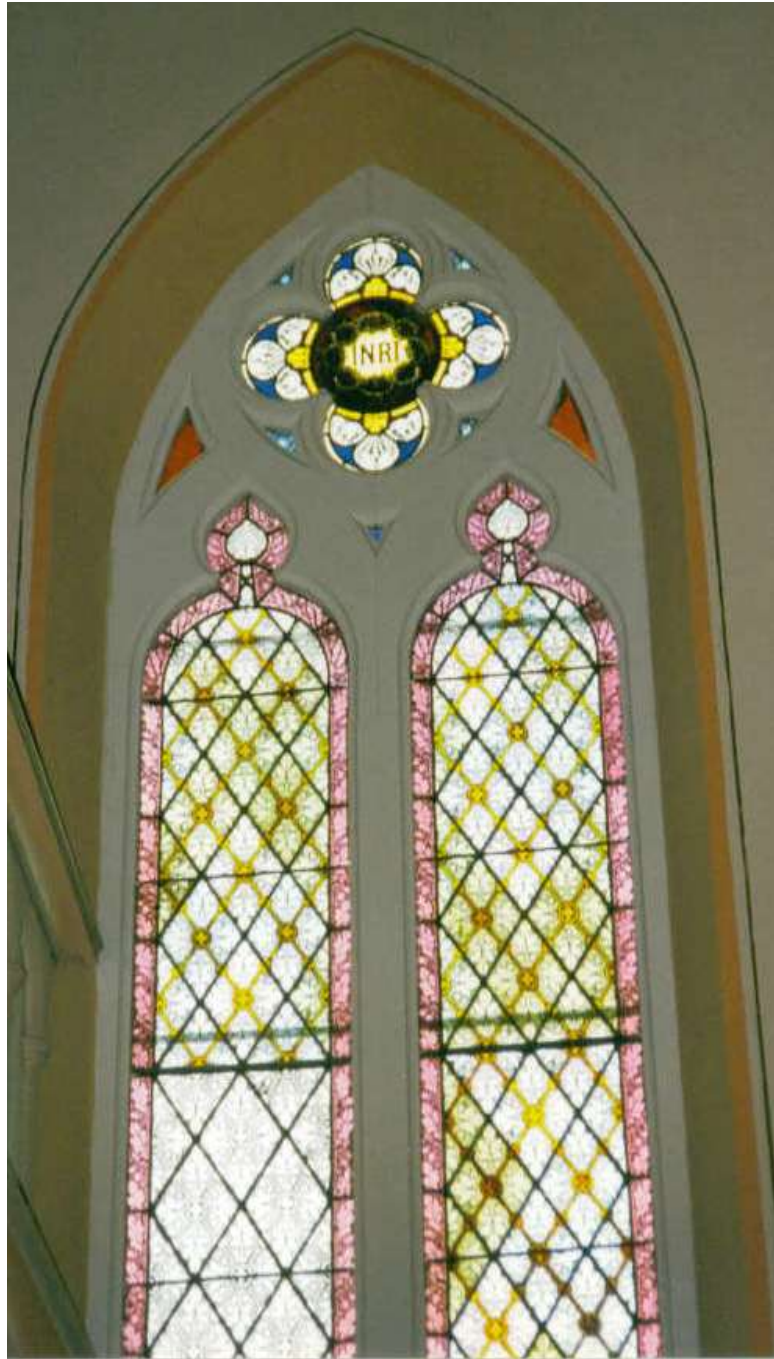
St. Vincent De Paul Good Samaritan WW I Parish Veterans  
Sanctuary Windows donated by Knights of Columbus



Papal Seal (Detail at top of window)



St. Joseph (Arch above front door)



**There are twelve stained windows each with a different symbolic design at the top.  
INRI--Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews encircled by a crown of thorns**

In 1956, the new diocese of Jefferson City was founded and dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary with Bishop Joseph M. Marling as the first bishop. He was consecrated as an auxillary bishop of Kansas City, Missouri, in 1947. In 1957, The Catholic Missourian, a weekly paper of the diocese, began publication. Also in that year, St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary in Hannibal received its first class

The decade concluded with a high honor being bestowed on St. Joseph's pastor. In 1959, Rev. Herbert J. Farischon was appointed Domestic Prelate by his Holiness, Pope John XXIII, with the title of Right Reverend Monsignor. He was invested by Bishop Marling, Bishop of the Jefferson City Diocese, in ceremonies at the church followed by a banquet at the public high school. A large number of church leaders, businessmen, and friends attended.

From the early 1820's-1960-s, It had been a time of great growth for the church which began with a small group of frontier men and women, a long line of itinerant priests, and a first permanent home in a humble wagon shop. A great church of Gothic proportions was built and then rebuilt from its ashes, a parochial school established, and later a new building constructed to meet the needs of a growing population. It had also been a time of great tragedy with cholera epidemics, suffering, and death. It had seen times of turbulence with three wars; one, the Civil War, fought on home soil, and two World Wars fought on foreign land with Palmyra's own sons shedding blood. The church had known times of dark economic depression and periods of joyful prosperity.

In all its days, the faith of its people provided the church community with the strength and determination to endure and overcome the bad times and be grateful for the good. And soon the winds of change in the Catholic Church would test and ultimately strengthen the faith of its followers with the advent of Vatican Council II requiring re-evaluation of long held beliefs and traditions. Indeed, the very appearance of the Catholic Church interiors would change as well, some of which would require eliminating or refurbishing beloved liturgical pieces. None of these changes surely could have been foreseen those many years ago when the first Catholics banded together to form a church home. And Catholics, here in this place and around the world, were soon to face, at this pivotal time in history, riveting change.