SAINT ALOYSIUS, LEWIS CENTER
DELWARE COUNTY, OHIO
1864 - ca. 1920

The history of the Catholic mission in the small town of Lewis Center, Orange township, Delaware county, Ohio, is one of existence for many years, but of little activity or growth, and of final demise. It fact, there seems to be little to record of it except its name, St. Aloysius.

Lewis Center acquired the status of a village upon the completion of the railroad through that point in Delaware county in 1850. Irish Catholics must have come to the area as they did in neighboring county, to work on the railroad. The historian of the county wrote (1): "A Catholic church was organized in 1864, and a frame building for worship was put up. They are in a languishing condition, and have services each alternate Tuesday afternoon." The building was 36 x 22, according to a plat drawing in the diocesan archives.

On February 15, 1864, Archbishop John B. Purcell of Cincinnati purchased a parcel of land on the north side of Churst street, Lewis Center, from A.D. Breed and his wife (2). This same property was transferred to Bishop Rosecrans, the first bishop of Columbus, April 9, 1869.

Before the establishment of the diocese of Columbus in 1868, the pastor of St. Mary's, Delaware, Father Henry Fehlings (3), had under his care the three counties of Delaware, Morrow and Union. He supervised the buying of the Lewis Center property. A few years later he bought property for a mission church in Cardington, in Morrow County. (4)

After the small frame church was erected in Lewis Center, Father Fehlings began the work of caring for the mission congregation. The parish continued under the direction of the Delaware pastor. The annual Catholic Directory listed St. Aloysius as attended from Delaware from 1871 to 1901. The little mission continued to be listed in the Directory until 1945. Lewis Center is eight miles south of Delaware.

Columbus Diocesan Archives give meager information about the Lewis Center mission parish. On Sept. 1, 1881, Father N. E. Pilger (5) who was then pastor at St. Mary's, Delaware, reported to Bishop Watterson that he had two missions, St. Joseph's, Cardington, and St. Aloysius, Lewis Center. There were only eight families at the latter mission, where the property was insured for $500. Father Pilger celebrated Mass weekly, on a week day, at each of his missions. In 1882 he made no mention of his missions in his report. He was pastor at Delaware from Christmas, 1874, to February, 1878, and again from May, 1878, to July, 1884.

Father Philip Steyle came to Delaware in 1884 and remained until his death in 1915. In 1885 he reported to the Bishop that he celebrated Mass at St. Aloysius on the second Sunday of the month. In 1891 and 1892 he reported that there were only six families at Lewis Center. The number was down to four in 1894. One year later
he reported ten families as the total for both his missions, Cardington and Lewis Center. In 1897 he wrote that the had 130 families in Delaware and Lewis Center, and ten at Cardington. In 1905 he did no list his two missions, and the following year he gave only St. Joseph's, Cardington.

In his history of the diocese of Columbus written in 1918 (6), Bishop Hartley states that "St. Aloysius Church, Lewis Center, has only a few Catholics." At that time Father William C. O'Brien (7) was pastor at Delaware.

What few sacramental records there are of St. Aloysius mission are among those of St. Mary's, Delaware. Unfortunately, they are not designated as being from Lewis Center, so that there is little record of the Catholics who made up the little parish.

There is little more to record about St. Aloysius. The church was sold in the early 1920's and moved across the railroad where it was used by the Farmers' Exchange. It has long since been torn down. Further, the property on which it stood was sold in the 1940's.

(1) History of Delaware County, O.L. Baskin and Co, Chicago, 1880, p. 479.
(2) Delaware County Deed Books, Vol. 50, p. 212.
(3) Father Henry Fehlings (1823-1888) was pastor at St. Mary's, Delaware, from September, '863, to April, 1869.
(5) Father Pilger (1842-1905) died at Lancaster, Dec. 1, 1905.
(6) Diocese of Columbus, the History of Fifty Years, 1868-1918, by Bishop James J. Hartley, Columbus, 1918, p. 142.
(7) Monsignor O'Brien was pastor at St. Mary's 36 years.

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ST. MARY'S SEMINARY, SOMERSET, OHIO
AN 1834 NEWS STORY

(The "Catholic Telegraph" of Cincinnati, Ohio, published the following story in its issue of August 15, 1834.)

Somerset, August 1st, 1834. The public examination of the pupils of this Seminary commenced on the 30th and closed on the 31st of July. The exercises were conducted with great satisfaction to the visitors, among whom we observed several gentlemen and ladies from Lancaster and Zanesville. All were delighted with the proficiency of the young ladies, some of whom delivered in the conclusion of the second day their addresses on various subjects of original composition.

Below is a list of those who distinguished themselves in the different branches, with the prizes awarded for their industry and deportment in this Seminary:

First English Grammar Class. — Miss Catharine Reber of Lancaster; accesit Miss Martha Downey of Cincinnati, each a medal; premium for proficiency Miss Mary Workman, Brownsville, Pa.; accesit Mary Mead of Somerset, Ohio.

Second English Grammar Class. — Premium Miss Mary Gallighar, Wooster, Ohio, Mary Cormyn of Middletown, Ohio; accesit premium Miss Matilda Pine of Cincinnati, E. Delong, Somerset, E. Shehan, Ohio.

First French Grammar Class. — Premium Miss Sophia Corbin of Green-Bay.

First Geography Class. — Premium Misses Mary S. Workman, Catharine Rezon, Ellen McCourtney of Wheeling, Va., Sarah Higgins of Perry county.

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Second Geography Class. — Premium Misses C. Dittoe and Mary Fink of Somerset, Ohio; accessit Miss M. Alton of Cincinnati; Ellen Ewing of Lancaster, Ohio; Class in the Globes, premium Miss Mary Mud.

First Arithmetic Class. — Premium Misses Ellen McCourtney, Mary Mud and Mary Workman.

Second Arithmetic Class. — Premium Miss Matilda Pine, Mary McDonnel.

Cronology. Premium Miss Mary Miser of Putnam; accessit Mary Workman, Mary Cornyan.

History. — Premium Ellen McCourtney; accessit M. Galligher of Wooster, Mary Alton.

Writing Class. — Premium Miss Sophia Corbin, M. Galligher, Ellen McCourtney.

First Writing Class. — Premium Miss Sophia Grignon, Catharine Reber.

Second Writing Class. — Premium Miss Elizabeth Moeler, Miss Galligher, Sarah Dungan.

Third Writing Class. — Premium Miss Angela Downey of Cincinnati, M. McDonnel, Elisabeth Bradley of Perry county.

Fourth Writing Class. — Premium Miss Sarah McPudden.

Second French Class. — Premium Miss Martha Downey, Sophia Grignon of Green-Bay, Ellen Ewing.

First Music Class. — Premium Piano Miss Martha Downey.

Second Music Class. — Premium Piano, Miss Sarah Dungan, Matilda Pine, Mary Slaven.

Drawing and Painting Class. — Premium Miss Sophia Grignon; accessit Luca Work, Mary Galligher. Embroidery, Miss Sophia Corbin, premium: Tapestry, Miss Angela Downey, premium. Fancy Work, premium, Miss Mary Galligher. Bead Work, First Premium, Miss Catharine Reber, second, Miss Delong, Misses Sophia Corbin, Sophia Grignon, Martha Downey, Ellen McCourtney, Mary Galligher, were distinguished for correct deportment and run for the gold medal, and a premium awarded for the same to Misses Elisabeth Moeler, Elisabeth Dittoe, Sarah Higgins, Mary Cornyan, Cecilia Dittoe, Mary Fink, Rosella McKinneu, Mary Miser.

For exact observance of the discipline of the Seminary, Miss Mary Jane Workman of the senior circle of Ladies was crowned with a wreath of Flowers, and Miss Matilda Pine of the junior circle received the same mark of approbation for her general good conduct in obedience fo the rule of the Seminary.

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TWO EARLY PRIESTS OF COLUMBUS

By Rev. Msgr. William E. Kappes


To Father Martin belongs the honor of celebrating the first recorded Mass in Columbus. It is thought that priests visited Columbus before Father Martin, and probably celebrated Mass in what was then Franklinton. This was early in the 19th century.

It was only in 1834, however, that there is accurate record that a priest offered Mass in Columbus, when a Dominican priest did so in the home of John McCarty (McCourtney) who lived on Friend street (now Main) between High and Third streets while he was engaged as an engineer building the Ohio Canal and Columbus feeder.

The letters of Very Rev. Nicholas Dominic Young, O.P., Provincial of the
Dominican House at Somerset, Ohio, written to Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati establish that the priest who celebrated the first recorded Mass in Columbus was Father Thomas Martin, O.P. (2) "Father Thomas Martin was born in the parish of Lisdowney, County Kilkenny, Ireland, about 1774. Unfortunately, the names of his parents were not found. He had made a good part of his studies at home before coming to Saint Rose's, Washington County, Kentucky, where he taught for a time in the College of Saint Thomas of Aquin. There he made his religious profession on December 12, 1821, and was ordained in that church on March 2, 1822, by Bishop E. D. Fenwick. He was called to Ohio a little later for the preparation of a college there. Afterwards he was left in the north that he might be in the Province of Saint Louis Bertrand....(Ohio). When Father Wilson returned from Ohio to Kentucky, Bishop Fenwick or Father Hill stationed him at Saint Joseph's, Perry County. Thence he labored on the missions with a zeal equal to that of either Fenwick or Young, traversing and retraversing the state as often, until 1837, with the exception of his priorship of about two years at St. Rose's...." (3) "From 1833, when Young was appointed provincial, Father Thomas Martin seems certainly to have been superior at Saint Joseph's, although the Catholic Almanac places him at Lancaster." (4) From about 1840 until his death May 10, 1859, Father Martin spent his life in the diocese of New York, where he was sent from one parish to another to settle financial difficulties and various disputes that had arisen. (5) He died May 10, 1859, in St. James' Rectory, New York City, and was buried at St. Joseph's, Somerset, Perry county, Ohio. (6) Rev. William Schonat (1813-1879), First Resident Priest of Columbus. Rev. William Schonat was born January 6, 1813, at Strehlen, Prussian Silesia. He was ordained in that diocese of Breslau, Germany, March 31, 1838. He labored for four years in his native diocese as assistant priest. In 1842 he was transferred to Würben near Schweidnitz, and in 1846 he emigrated to America, arriving in Cincinnati in January of February, 1843. (7) On February 25, 1843, he was sent to Columbus to assist Father Young (8) during Lent and Eastertide. After Easter when Father Schonat announced to the congregation that he was to depart, the people addressed a petition to Bishop Purcell to allow him to remain as their pastor. (9) As early as August 6, 1841, Father Young had written to the Bishop: "These poor good people at Columbus would be much gratified by an episcopal visit but -- more by a regular German clergyman. Perhaps if the Bishop could spend a week there, and make the Catholic religion known to the people, a proper church could be erected." (10) On February 3, 1843, he had written to the Bishop: "This Rev. Mr. Schonat should be sent hither as pastor of this congregation, first, because it is humbly conceived that no other German congregation in your diocese presents such urgent claims to your favorable attention as this....Thirdly, it seems to me that this, besides being central for the purpose of attending other German missions, Tiffin for instance, is the only place where one could hope a competent support, as we have a house already provided, and the congregation have been insisting for the past two years,
that they would generously support a pastor provided they could have one of their own, which I am by no means inclined to doubt." (11)

Between this time and January 16 or 17, 1849, he was pastor of the parish in Columbus. He founded the first school. He built the present Holy Cross church.

In the work of the erection of the church he experienced difficulty in raising sufficient funds, and frequently begged the Most Rev. Bishop to help in either from the diocesan funds or from aid given by the Leopoldine Foundation of Vienna. Perhaps that explains why the Bishop intended to remove him in 1846 when Father Young wrote from Lancaster: "March 29, 1845, Right Rev. Father:... I had indeed written to you just after my return from Cincinnati, but neglecting from some cause to mail my letter, delay only assured me that there would probably be no necessity of sending it. It was chiefly to remonstrate with you on the removal of Rev. Mr. Schonat from the zealous people of Columbus. Thank God, you have postponed that measure until now, and I trust entirely relinquished the idea...." (12)

After the church had been completed Bishop Purcell transferred him to Holy Trinity Church in Cincinnati. The baptismal record of this church shows that Father Schonat baptised an infant there on January 16, 1848, but most authorities state that he was not stationed in Cincinnati until January 1849.

On April 16, 1850, he left for a visit to his home in Germany, but he was back in Cincinnati that fall. "On August 29, 1852, Holy Trinity Church and Parish house burnt down to the ground. On April 21, 1853, the cornerstone was laid for the new Holy Trinity Church in Cincinnati; but this disaster shatterd the health of Father Schonat, and so he decided to return to Germany. On May 12, 1853, he left Cincinnati for New York, where he boarded the steamer Herman on May 21st." (13)

"For a year and a half Father Schonat was recuperating in his home diocese, and it was only on January 31, 1855, that he received his first appointment at Oels in Silesia. He was appointed pastor at Fuerstenau in Silesia in 1871, and he died there on January 4, 1879, at the age of 66 years, less two days." (14)

(1) Diocese of Columbus, the History of Fifty Years, 1868-1918, by James J. Hartley, Columbus, 1918, p. 160.
(4) O'Daniel, op. cit., p. 89.
(5) O'Daniel, op. cit., p. 89.
(6) O'Daniel, op. cit., p. 89.
(8) Father Young was pastor at Lancaster at the time.
(9) Father Lenhard received his information from the Archivist of the diocese of Breslau (Vratislavena), Feb. 16, 1939.
(10) University of Notre Dame Archives.
(11) University of Notre Dame Archives.
(12) University of Notre Dame Archives.
ST. GENEVIEVE'S, CALMOUTIER
HOLMES COUNTY, OHIO

Register of Baptisms (Continued) 1836-1872.

1852
Jan. 4: Claude Victor, b. --- P: Jean Claude Martin and Victoria Roussel.
Feb. 1: Mary Eugenie, b. --- P: Francis Xavier Poncot and Frances Cheralin.
April 1: Joseph F., b. --- P: Alexander Leguillon and Celestine Meunier.
May 15: Mary Christina, b. --- P: Claude F. Deté and Christine Helstein.
May 19: Martha L. Pinot, b. --- .
June 13: Augustine, b. --- P: Francis T. Lomont and Mary J. Lab.
June 13: Margaret E., b. --- P: Peter Drouhard and Anna L. Cholley.
June 20: Joseph Francis, 11 months. P: Peter Pagniard and Catharine Mougey.

1853
April 7: Mary Euphrasia, b. 15 March. P: Sebastian Cholley and Melania Cagnet.
Oct. 9: Joseph, b. --- P: George Philipp and Adelaide Cholley.
Oct. 9: Mary Pauline, b. --- P: Charles F. Rouhier and Euphrasia Marthe.
Oct. 9: Mary Elvira, b. --- P: Francis Henry and Johanna Cagnet.

1854
March 5: Magdalen N., b. --- P: Joseph Merillat and Catharine Cotenot.
March 26: Hypolitus, b. 18 Feb. P: Peter Drouhard and Anna L. Cholley.
April 24: Mary Augustina, b. 25 Dec. 1853. P: Nicholas Echemann and Rosina Simon.
Aug. 15: Mary Augustina, b. 10 August. P: Peter Marthe and Joanna Genet.
Aug. 15: Peter E., b. 24 July. P: Louis Valot and Mary Cholley.
Aug. 15: Claude Joseph Boigelegrain.

1855
--- --- --- P: John B. Bardin and Mary Marthe.
April 1: Joseph P., b. 22 March. P: Charles Roulier and Euphrasia Marthe.
--- --- --- --- P: Peter J. Joliat and Susanna Menegray.
--- --- --- --- P: Eugene, b. 17 April. P: Francis Boigelegrain and Joanna Frances.
Sept. 9: Charles J., b. 31 Aug. P: John C. Martin and Euphrasia Meunier.

1856
Feb. 15: Louis P., b. --- P: Hubert Chesney and Appolonia Jeanvoine.
April 1: Mary Julia, b. 18 Oct. P: John Simon and Cecilia Wabelet.

1857
March 22: Mary J. b. --- P: George A. Stutz and Eulalia Roussel.
April 16: Marie Josepshiene, b. --- P: Pierre E. Marthe and Jeanne Genet.
Aug. 9: Marie Hortense. P: Hubert Chesney and Appolonia Jeanvoine.

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Register of Baptisms (Continued)

1857 (cont.)
Dec. 29: Marie Florentine. P: August Martin and Augustina Tisserand.

1858
March 17: Francis Cholley.
March 25: Marie Frances Augustina. P: Joseph Redoute and Margaret Pierson.
April 29: Adelaide Clementine. P: Joseph Walter and Mary Appollonia Stouff.
June 16: Elisabeth. P: Francis Haag and Barbara Siedler.
Aug. 15: (1855?) Marie Piquard.

1859
June 1: Marie Josephine. P: Pierre Petit and Jeanne Claudia Felicie Rouhier.
June 12: Marie Augustine. P: Alexander Migmeron and Annette Gennelest(?).
June 12: Marie Frances. P: Charles Rouhier and Euphrasia Marthey.
Nov. 22: Cecilia, b. 21 June. P: Hubert and Appollonia Chenevey.
Nov. 22: Delenda Clementina, b. 15 Nov. P: Joseph and Margaret Redoutey.

1860
March 4: Mary Adelaide Cecilia, b. 23 Jan. P: Claude Martin and Victoria Roussel.

1856 -- Lucien Francis Joseph, b. 21 March 1856. P: Joseph Marthev and Euphrasia Jeanmougin

April 1: John Philip, b. 10 Jan. P: John Kuntz and Anna Mary Bopp.
May 27: Sebastian Eugene, b. 22 May. P: Louis Valot and Mary Cholley.
May 27: Cecilia Basilida, b. 6 May. P: Sebastian Monnin and Celestina Larget.
June 29: Mary Caroline Josephine, b. 5 June. P: Eugene Marthey and Margaret Genet.
July 15: Mary Appollonia Elisabeth, b. 8 July. P: John Claude Bardin and Mary Pigard.
Register of Baptisms (Continued)

1860 (cont.)
Sept. 2: Louis Augustus, b. 27 Aug. P: August Pailliotet and Margaret Bardin.
Dec. 9: Peter Joseph b. 27 Nov. P: John Baptiste Cabut and Mary Pierson.

1861
Sept. 1: Mary Josephine, b. 30 Aug. 1860. P: Joseph Beucler and Mary Girard.
Sept. 29: Mary Augusta Lucy, b. 18 Sept. P: Edward Peter Rouhier and Mary Roussel.
Nov. 24: Mary Frances Augusta Girard, b. 15 Nov.
Dec. 22: Frances Hubert, b. 9 Nov. P: Hubert Marchand and Josephine Nommay.

1862
April 13: Virginia Appolonia, b. 10 April. P: Joseph Beucler and Mary Girard.
May 11: Mary Stephanie, b. 17 April. P: Peter Petit and Felicie Rouhier.
May 12: Peter Joseph, b. 11 May. P: Joseph Clement and Mary Eugenie Roussel.
Sept. 21: Augustine, b. 7 July. P: Charles Cagnet and Basilia Girard.
Nov. 2: Mary Appolonia, b. 2 June. P: Paul Girard and Hyacinth Rebuts.
Nov. 21: Peter Charles Joseph, b. 12 Nov. P: Joseph Walter and Mary Stouff.
Nov. 30: Joseph Louis, b. 15 Nov. P: Joseph Stutz and Melanie Cholley.

(To be continued)