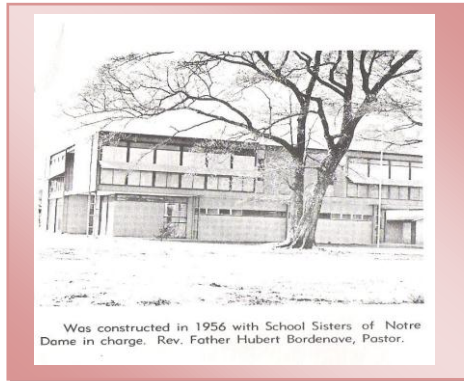


*A History of Annunciation Catholic Church
On the Occasion of the Hundredth Anniversary
1906 -- 2006*

Part I I 1956 - 1979

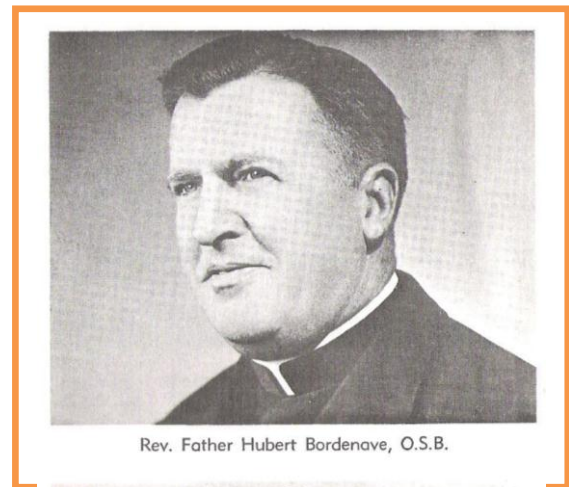


Bordenave Hall was erected in 1956, right next to the main school building. It contained a cafeteria, auditorium and two class rooms, thus rendering obsolete the usage of Dobyms Hall. The venerable old structure was finally torn down in the late 1980s.

As his long term of office as pastor progressed, Father Dobyms became a legend. Much loved by all, his evident holiness and priestly demeanor, endeared him to the community. He was especially known for his fishing expeditions.

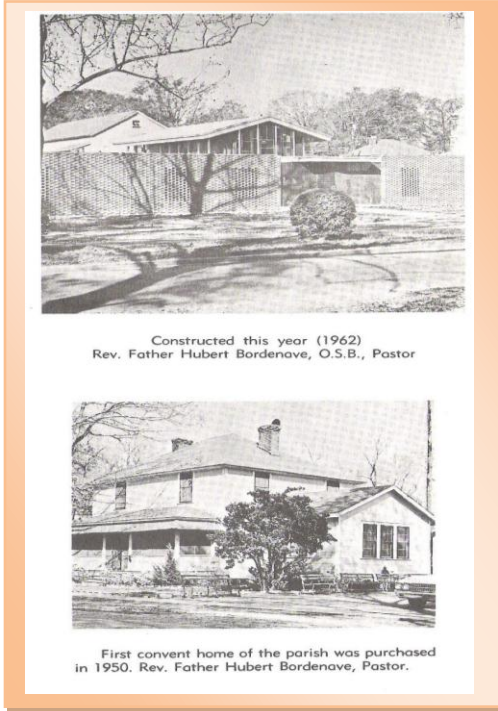
As old age and illness gradually overtook him, Father Dobyms eventually retired to St. Joseph's Abbey in 1949, where he died in 1951. During his long years as pastor, Bogalusa grew into a sizable city and Annunciation into a real Catholic community.

Father Hubert Bordenave, O.S.B. succeeded Father Dobyms in the pastorate of Annunciation. He was, of course, well known to the parishioners as our assistant pastor since his return from the Army. During World War II Father Bordenave was a Catholic chaplain stationed principally in Iceland. Little did he suspect then, on December 31, 1949, as he took over the pastorate, that his tenure would last longer than his revered predecessor. In fact, he was the longest serving minister of any religion to be the head of a church in our area.



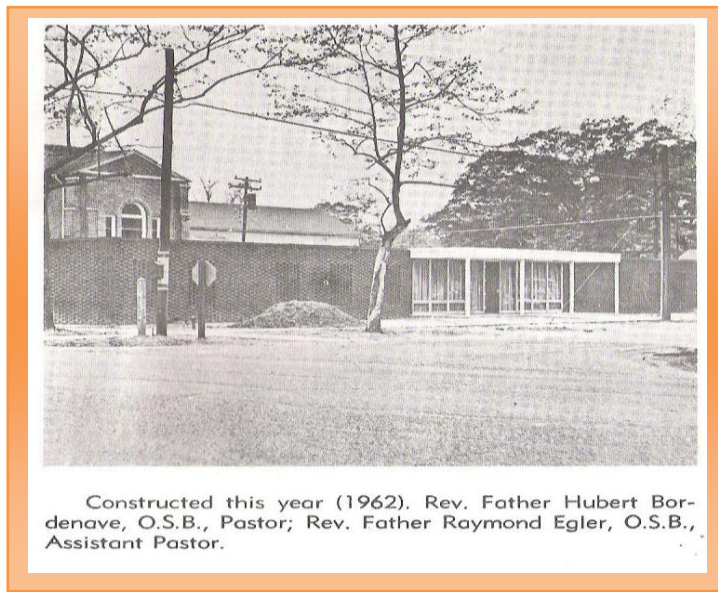
Young and in vigorous health, Father Bordenave set about his work with both zeal and competence. He continued to nurture the elementary school, founded by Father Dobyms and looked upon it as a father would help and encourage a child to grow. He was always open to bring about the plans God entrusted to him.. He also built a number of needed things and went about fixing everything in sight. Through the daily celebration of the Mass

and the ministering of the sacraments he insured the spiritual growth of the parishioners. During his thirty-three years as pastor, a new school, completed in 1956, the rectory and convent finished in 1962, and Bordenave Hall in 1980 remain as special material monuments to his prudent, yet vigorous leadership. But most of all, he left us a vibrant Catholic Community.



When Annunciation Catholic School, opened in 1939, the Benedictine Sisters of San Antonio, Florida began as our first teachers. They were Sisters Caroline Maertens, Mary Ann Casollo and Leona Monroe and were welcomed to the convent on Avenue C by a group of ladies of the parish, headed by Mrs. John (Nydia) Carr.

The School Sisters of Notre Dame came to Annunciation to teach in 1948, living in what was later referred to as the “old” convent on Avenue C. They especially appreciated the conveniences of the new convent which they occupied in 1962. Unfortunately, due to a great drop in vocations to their Order, they were forced to withdraw from our school in 1982.



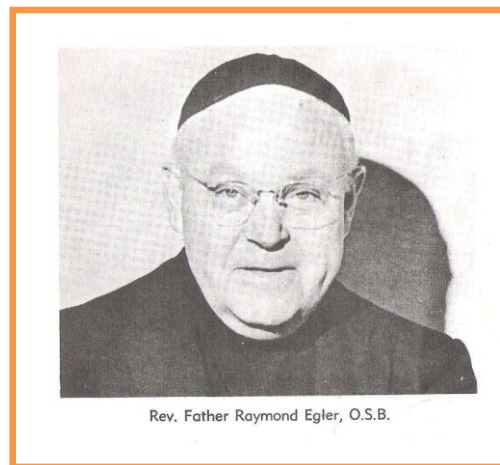
Rectory

Until 2002, Annunciation Catholic School was operated very capably by lay staff, administrators and teachers, led by Mrs. Mary Paduda as principal. The so called "old" convent was demolished and a neat cement brick building was built which served many years as the school library and at present the After-school Program.

Since the departure of the Sisters, the newer convent has been converted to various uses. At present it is serving as the parish center, named Dobyngs Center, in honor of beloved Father Placide Dobyngs. The former Sister's Chapel in the center of the building is now the Adoration Chapel.

A tragic fire in 1957 gutted and destroyed the Sacristy and heavily smoked the main body of the church. For several months the parishioners cautiously dodged tall scaffolding used to clean up the smoke and repaint walls, statues and Stations of the Cross. Finally, after nearly a year of repairs and refurbishing, the church was restored to its former beauty. During Father Bordenave's pastorate a number of priests came to Annunciation as associate pastors. Each of these men, in his unique and personal way, benefited the people in no small measure.

First among these was Father Raymond Egler, O.S.B., who arrived in 1962 from St. Joseph's Abbey. Used to monastic routine, Father Egler, nevertheless, gave of himself unstintingly during his short stay. Next to arrive was Father Bernard Gorman from 1965 to 1966. Then in 1966 Father Stephen Mueller came. Previously pastor of St. Peter's in Covington, he looked forward to serving under his friend and confrere of many years, Father Bordenave. Father Stephen was remembered by many for his fidelity in visiting the sick and comforting the bereaved. He is also revered for his great skill as a carpenter, using the old convent for a time as his workshop. There he constructed the aforementioned Altar of the Eucharist. Failing health forced retirement in 1974. He died at the Abbey in June of 1979.



Father Justin Faler, O.S.B. succeeded Father Mueller as associate. He was a very zealous man, especially interested in updating the liturgy and in his ministry to the divorced and remarried. A victim of rheumatic fever in his youth, Father Faler began to suffer from heart

trouble in his later years. A massive coronary nearly took his life a few years before coming to Bogalusa. Forced to retire in 1978, he later preceded Father Mueller in death at the Abbey in April 1979.