



## **St Patrick Church – Milford, NH 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 1895-2020**

*Christ with us, Christ before us, Christ behind us, Christ in us!*

### **A History of St. Patrick Church – Milford, NH Established August 1895**

**The present St. Patrick Church on 34 Amherst Street is the gathering place  
for Catholics and guests  
in the towns of Amherst, Brookline, Milford, Mont Vernon.**

The creation of the Souhegan Mill was one of the principal reasons for a Catholic settlement in Milford. Its history and heritage date back to 1848 when the first Catholic family, that of Patrick O'Connor, settled in the Souhegan Mill Pond area. The first known official visit of a priest was in November 1853 was by Rev. William McDonald to administer the Sacrament of the Sick to Mrs. James Finerty. In February 1855, the first Mass was celebrated in the home of Patrick O'Connor by a missionary priest, Fr. Donnelly, who later became the Bishop in Clogher, Ireland. 30 people were in attendance. In 1856, regular celebration of the Mass began by Rev. John O'Donnell who lived in Nashua.

The infant congregation set out to build the 1<sup>st</sup> St. Patrick Church on land on the lower end of Souhegan Street which was financed by the O'Connor and Finerty families. In 1864, the small church was enlarged to twice its capacity and dedicated in 1867. In 1868, Rev. Patrick Houlehan took charge of the St. Patrick mission church. In 1870, the Most Reverend David William Bacon (First Bishop of Portland Maine) administered the Sacrament of Confirmation for the 1<sup>st</sup> time. In 1876, Rev. E.E. Buckle became Pastor the mission church and services were held twice a month until 1890 serving the towns of Milford and Wilton.

On October 8, 1890, the site of the present property on 34 Amherst St. was acquired by Bishop Denis Mary Bradley (1<sup>st</sup> Bishop of Manchester). As the population grew, it became necessary to build a larger church. Rev. Buckle first administered the construction of the new church followed by Rev. P. L. McEvoy (1891); Rev. George Marshall (1894). The present church (basement only) was begun in 1890, at a cost of \$20,000. For many years (because of lack of funds) the basement of the church served as the place of worship. **In August, 1895, Bishop Denis Bradley established St. Patrick Church as a parish.**

**CONTINUED NEXT WEEK**