

## Green Island-Sacred Heart

I was asked to tape the history of Sacred Heart Church, Green Iowa. My maiden name was Mary Belk, my address is Route 1, Box 36, Green, Iowa, I am 58 years old. A little more about me. The only parish I have ever been a member of is Sacred Heart, as well as my parent's Earl and Irene Belk, and my maternal grandparents, George and Catherine Slage. Herman and Anna Pokaman, my maternal great-grandparent's joined Sacred Heart when they moved to this area. The town of Green Island was formerly called Clarkstown, as Mr. and Mrs. James Clarke were the first settlers and landowners. The land [that allowed for] the erection of the church at the corner of Ann Street was donated by James Clark. His was the first funeral held in the church on February 9, 1876. The church was built in 1875 under the supervision of Fr. Schiffmacher, the parish priest at Bellevue. Frank Schleck, my great-great uncle was the head carpenter. There were 40 families at that time. They were attending mass in the homes of members before the church was built. It was a great day when a priest from Lyons, or Bellevue would come to offer mass. After the mass dinner was always served to the faithful people attending, because they had come great distances. They were attending Mass in the homes of James Clark, George Hoy and the log house of Frank Diddo. Mass was offered at stated periods by visiting priests until 1880 when the parish became a mission served by priests from Sabula. The first baptismal record in the register is Mary Alberta Cavanaugh, May 1st 1882. Pastors since 1880 have been Rev. E. A. Kenny, 1880-1881, Rev. James F. Corbett, 1882-1887, Rev. John F. Bowen, 1888-1890, Rev. John Sheehy, 1891-1892, Rev. J.P. Leddy, 1893-1900, Rev. John F. O'Doherty, 1901-1902, Rev. M.F. Eardley, 1903-1912. A little story about Fr. Erdley, he must have really enjoyed the children in his parishes. My mother-in-law was born in the town of Green Island and she often told of Fr. Erdley coming to Green Island in his three seated car and giving the children all a ride in his car. I don't recall exactly, what they were but he would give them presents at Christmas time. I still have a postcard that Fr. Erdley sent to my mother, and she was 11 years old when he was moved from our parish. Now to continue the list of priests. Rev. T.N. Tibeau, 1912-1918, Rev. E.J. McDonald, 1918-1921, Rev. P.J. Friedman, 1921-1926, Rev. Alvin Landolt, 1926-1929, Rev. R.J. Duffey, 1929-1931, Rev. Bernard Denvir, 1931-1932. I remember him coming to our house for Sunday dinner many times. Rev. Albert J. Forester, 1932-1933, Rev. Stephen Tushak, 1933-1937, Rev. Dennis O'Leary, 1937-1939, Rev. Herman J. Dietz, 1939-1944, Rev. Patrick F. Quilligan, 1944-1956, Fr. Quilligan organized a choir of all the young people of the parish. Charlene Pauley was the organist. The other priests of our parish, were Rev. Alvin Berry, 1946-1949, Rev. Al Reicks from the Bellevue parish came to Sacred Heart to say Mass from November 1949 to July 1950 when Rev. Ivan Boyd was assigned to our parish. He left August 4, 1963, Rev. William P. Greener first Sunday with us was August 11, 1963, he was pastor of Sacred Heart longer than any priest that has been appointed to our parish. He died February 3rd, 1981. His funeral Mass was held in Sabula and he is buried in St. Peter's Cemetery in Sabula. Father Cletus Hawes came from Bellevue for Mass until a Rev. Robert J. Rice was appointed in July of 1981, then our present pastor, Rev. Duane Raftis, came in July of 1985. Since the establishment of the parish the members have been of either German or Irish descent. One young man, Ambrose McMahan was ordained to the priesthood June 6, 1916, and offered his first Mass in Sacred Heart church, June 16, 1916. After the Mass a parish dinner and reception on the church lawn was given by Fr. McMahan's parents, Emma and Mike McMahan. One young woman the parish, Genevieve Calahan, entered into the religious order of Sisters of Mercy. When the church was built the two front windows were donated by the Hoy Family. The middle-east window by James and Ann Clark, the back-

east window by Frank and Margaret Brown. The middle west window by the Dido's. The back-west window by Peter and Margaret Calahan, who were the great-great grandparents of John Calahan, who is now a member of Sacred Heart parish. The dome-shaped window over the front door was donated by the Verges family. Wood shingles were put on the church in about 1930 and asphalt shingles about 1950. Two anniversaries were observed in June 1937, and a field Mass held on the north porch of the home of John and Joanne Calahan. Rev. Dennis O'Leary was our pastor at the time. The event honored the Calahan's 50th wedding anniversary and the centennial of the Archdiocese of Dubuque. After the Mass dinner was served on the Calahan lawn on the hill and during the social time of the afternoon, games and a bazaar were enjoyed by all. In 1942 Fr. Dietz helped men of the parish build the entryway on the front of the church and erected a bell tower. During the time that Fr. Quilligan was here, the bell was mounted on the church in 1945. Fr. Bierie supervised the remodeling of the sacristy and sanctuary in December 1946. Later wallboard was put on the interior walls of the church and the choir loft was completed in 1949. The women of the parish held card parties in their homes to make money for the expenses of the repair work. In 1952 parishioners pledged a thousand dollars to erect a parish hall. The Easter collection amounted to 500 dollars, which was the first payment. The remaining 500 dollars was paid after a site was obtained. Early in August of the same year, Simon and Lina Cassidy donated the lot west of their home to Sacred Heart church for the purpose of erecting the parish hall, as soon as material could be obtained. The following week, men removed buildings and fences from the lot. On August 23rd, 1952 a crew of 24 men and Fr. Boyd poured the foundation for a 50x20 hall. A potluck dinner was served to the workers in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Simon Cassidy. Julius E. Johnson, of Sabula hauled sand and gravel for the work. Cement and some lumber was obtained at the Richie Lumber Company of Sabula. Bettner Lumber Company of Bellevue provided 156 dollars worth of material during the building of the hall. The cement blocks, windows and screens were bought from the Cedar Rapids Block Company. Work progressed throughout the Fall under the supervision of Fr. Boyd. Runyan Ottoway, a mason from Clinton was in charge of all phases of the building of the hall. All of the labor was done by men of the parish and often assisted by non-Catholic friends. Bountiful meals were served to the workers by the women of the parish. In November of 1952 the Altar and Rosary Societies sponsored a card party and luncheon in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Kile to honor Fr. Boyd in appreciation of the time he gave to supervise the building of the hall. During favorable weather throughout the winter work continued. The first social affair held in the hall was a parish breakfast on February 8th, 1953. For many years monthly card parties were held in the hall, except during the winter months to raise money which paid many of the parish bills. After the Mississippi River spring flood of 1965 the church floor, which had been covered with 2 feet of water, during the flood, collapsed one Sunday while Fr. Greener was offering Mass. During the summer Mass was offered in the parish hall. That fall a cement floor was poured in the church. Soon after, the sanctuary and aisle were carpeted and tile blocks laid under the pews by Ray Gallagher and paid for by Robert Chamberlain. In June 1966 the ceiling and walls were given a coat of paint. September 23rd, 1969 Fr. Greener, Ralph Chamberlain, Marcy and Allen Eggenhouse, Clarence and Stanly Worst, Earl and Irene Belk and Dorothy Kilbourg, started to paint the interior of the church. The sanctuary was paneled on September 25th and 26th. It was paid for by Margaret Calahan. Fr. Greener and Earl Belk, built the modern altar, December 23rd and 24th, 1969. It was used the first time on December 25th. The church was given a new look in November 1970 when Cupas Siding Company put aluminum siding on the exterior at a cost of 1500 dollars. A Dubuque firm put new storm windows on the church in 1973 paid for from the building fund that was on hand. On May

25th, 1975 two anniversaries were celebrated at Sacred Heart church. The Rev. William P. Greener, celebrated Mass at 9 a.m. and a parish family dinner followed in the parish hall, honoring Fr. Greener's 25th year in the priesthood and the 100th anniversary of the building of the church. The bicentennial of our country was celebrated with Mass and a potluck dinner in our hall on July 5th, 1976. Thanksgiving Eve, 1976 a fire, which appeared to have started near the furnace, destroyed the sanctuary of the church. After the fire, mass was held in our parish hall, until August 21st, 1977. With the help of Fr. Greener working with the insurance company, and much labor by the people of the parish, the inside of the church was completely remodeled. The altar made by Earl Belk and Fr. Greener was ruined in the fire. Donald Biem of Sabula made and donated a very nice altar to our church. He also made a lighted cross for in back of the altar, with the help of Fr. Hawes we purchased a corpus figurine for the lighted cross. Our parish has had two annual pancake and sausage breakfasts held at the parish hall in Sabula. They both were well attended and our people were pleased with the results. In October 1986 with the combined efforts of both the Sabula and Green Island parishes a public auction was held in the parking lot of the Sabula church. Items sold were donated by members of the parishes. Again, the results were well worth the efforts. The stations of the cross were made and donated by the Dave Cristoff family. The corpus figurine that was put on the lighted cross, was bought in memory of Fr. Greener. The statue of the Sacred Heart was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Kilbourg. An organ was donated to Sacred Heart church in memory of Marciele Pauley. The candleholders and matching crucifix on the altar were given in memory of Sharon Ackerman. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Atkinson gave a crucifix for our hall while mass was being offered there. Religion classes for the children were held after Mass on Sunday for many years. Then for one or two weeks in early June, summer school classes were conducted by usually two nuns. Finally, nuns were not available for classes, then the children from Green Island were taken to Sabula after school one day a week for Mass and religion classes taught by members of the parishes. Bernadette Cristhoff and Becky Wise are religion class teachers at this time. High School classes were held one night a week. The number of families at Sacred Heart have averaged about 17 for many years.

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My name is David Cristhoff. I am the parish council chairman of Sacred Heart church in Green Island. I'm also our deanery representative to the APC, that's the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council. Our parish council and constitution has been established by one of our past priests, Fr. Robert Rice, two years ago. We have been pursuing the parish council and the other committees that make up the parish council. I'm happy to say that there's a lot of participation by the members of the parish in the parish activities and also in the parish council. We are a small parish. At the present time we have 17 families and we are trying to grow. We are a mission parish to Sabula. We try to coordinate our parish councils together with Sabula and ourselves to come up with some combined activities and to help with the load of the various committees, that is the liturgy committee, the finance committees, and the committees on worship and family planning and the rest. There's good cooperation between the people in our parish. There's a good spirit here. So, God must be smiling on us for keeping it up so good. At the present time we are celebrating the sesquicentennial of our archdiocese. We plan on in the near future having a combined get together breakfast with the parish that's down the street from us, the Congregational church. In the near future we hope to do better by getting acquainted with more of our Protestant friends since they are Christians also. Both in Green Island and also the

Lutheran and Methodist church in Sabula. We would like to invite all the parishioners from our deanery and even from the archdiocese anytime they are in our area to please stop in for Sunday Mass at 9:00 in Green Island. It is the only Catholic church in the town. It won't be too hard to find. You can always tell be the friendly people. I am both happy and proud to be a member of this parish. It's very easy to belong, to be a member here since everyone is so friendly and outgoing. I'm going to let some other ladies of the parish make some comments at the present time.

I, Dorothy Kilbourg, have been a member of Sacred Heart church for over 30 years and I'm the treasurer of the Sacred Heart Altar and Rosary Society at this time. My five children were all baptized at Sacred Heart church. I feel very comfortable, or should I say, I feel very much at home at Sacred Heart church in Green Island.

My name is Dawn Horst, my husband Stanley and I have been members of Sacred Heart church for 9 years. Currently my husband and I both hold places of office in this church. Stanley is on the financial committee and I am on the parish council and head of the board of education and on the parish committee on life. Our church is small enough that we are able to send each member of our church a birthday or anniversary card. Our daughter Erin is 5 years old, she was baptized in this church by Fr. Robert Rice, in 1981. Erin also helps in the church by taking up the gifts each Sunday. Our family is proud to be members of Sacred Heart church in Green Island.

My name is Mary Lou Drury, and I married Milton Drury a convert, July 5th, 1958 at Bellevue and then we moved to farm in the Green Island area and have been members since. My husband is presently on the finance committee, also an extraordinary minister. We have four children. Our son Marty is a lector. My sons Marty and Mitchell were altar servers in their younger days. Our daughter Michelle lives in Massachusetts now, our youngest daughter Marsha has carried offertory gifts for the past several years. And I've held president of the Altar and Rosary Society for five years am now on the Social Committee.

My name is Bernadette Cristhoff, I'm married to David Christhoff, we have 3 children Stephen 16, Lee 15, and Audrey 11. Audrey was baptized by Fr. Greener at Sacred Heart parish. Stephen and Lee are currently altar boys and Audrey helps take up the gifts to the altar. We joined the Green Island parish in 1974. We have always loved Sacred Heart Green Island parish. The people are always so friendly and enjoyable to be with.

As was stated earlier, on Thanksgiving Eve, of 1976 our parish had a fire. I can remember the day my [inaudible] we pulled up for Mass with our family on Thanksgiving Day and saw our little church gutted by fire. It was a very heart wrenching moment for all of us. We were in despair and our hearts were heavy and we didn't know what to do. But we thank God and the Holy Spirit for our beloved pastor, Fr. Bill Greener. He relieved all of the parishioners, he built up our hopes for building the church. We now have a remodeled, beautiful little parish. Both the building itself was rebuilt and I think the spirit of the parishioners together is rebuilt and it is getting stronger every day. It is a nice little church to come and visit and nice people to meet. In conclusion again, everyone is welcome to come and see our little parish and to celebrate with us.

Thank you.

I would like to thank all the parishioners who gave their comments for this and also the other had work of Mary Horst for putting in so much time and effort in getting our history compiled and recording this. [applause]