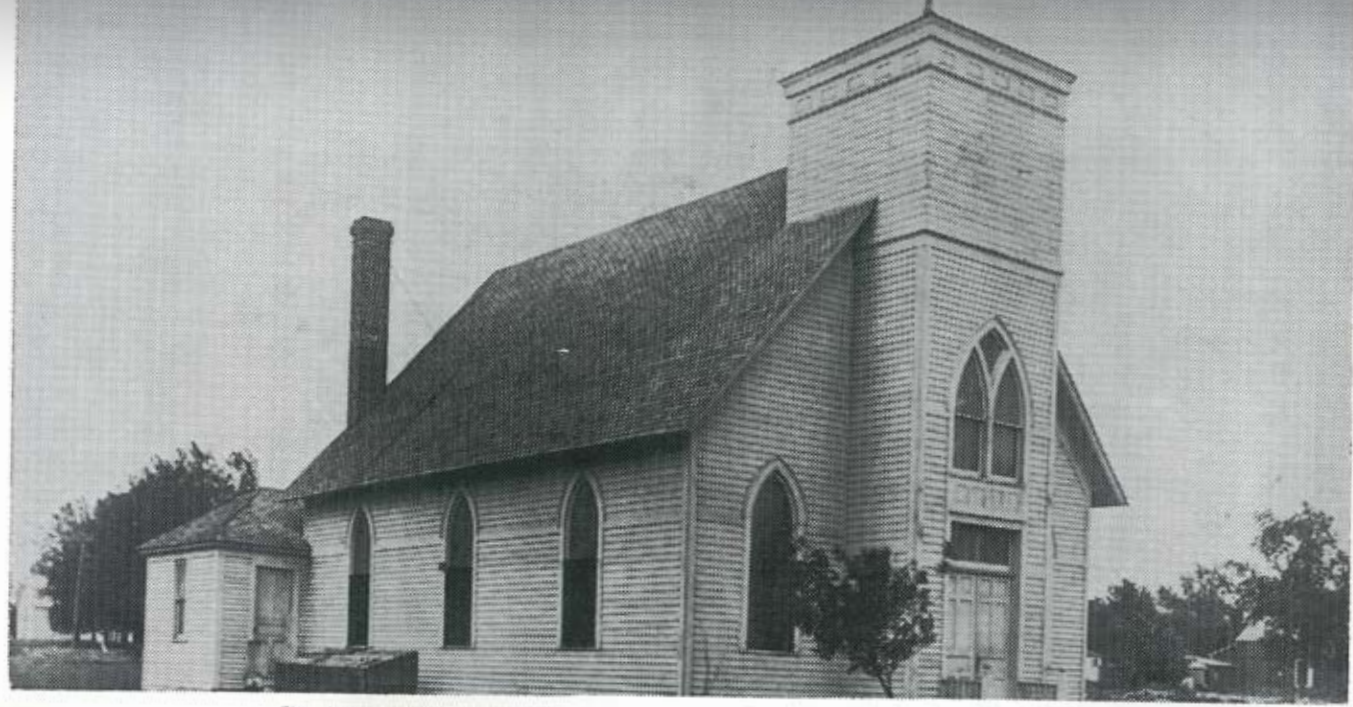


Clear Lake St. Mary

Clear Lake (Duel County) St. Mary's

Clear Lake, founded in 1884, was named for the crystal-clear lake nearby. Father George Sheehan offered the first holy Mass in a store building. Present were the Joe Harter, Wright, Daly and Paschley families. Five years later, with the help of an Extension Society donation of \$640, St. Mary's Church -- costing \$4,500 -- was built. Father Terence Slattery, pastor from 1907 to 1910, presided at the blessing of the church on July 22, 1909. He lived in rented quarters; only in 1914 was a rectory built at a cost of \$1,800. Father Slattery had missions in Gary and White. Clear Lake was fortunate to have a resident pastor after 1915. Although the parish numbered but 50 households, the people built a new church in 1959. Three years later, under the supervision of Father David L. Keating, a rectory-hall combination adjoining the church was added at a cost of \$27,500. In 1973 the number of families reached 115. (CD)



St. Mary's Catholic Church -- Dedicated July 22, 1907



Gary St. Peter

Gary (Duel County) St. Peter

The first railroad into Dakota Territory was the Winona and St. Peter division of the Chicago and Northwestern which reached Gary in 1872, and Lake Kampeska a year later. However, there was little reason for its operation so service was suspended until 1878 when the increase in settlers made it useful. Gary was a mission of Clear Lake, 15 miles distant.

In 1879 a small hotel was erected in Gary to accommodate land-seekers. Although Gary was chosen the county seat, it remained a small village. The small number of Catholics was attended from Kranzburg from 1889 to 1904. After a new courthouse was built in 1895, the county donated the former one to the state for a school for the blind. In 1906 there were 40 students in the school. In 1907 (obvious error) St. Peter's Church was built and it served until 1963. Then under the direction of Father David L. Keating, a fan-shaped edifice was constructed of masonry. It included the church proper and facilities for social gatherings. Thirty Catholic families worshipped in it. (CD)

St. Peter's Church on the south edge of Gary is a result of the hard labor and dedication of the pioneers.

The first resident pastor, Father Terence Slattery, was assigned to St. Mary's parish, Clear Lake with missions at Gary and White on October 7, 1906. The faithful gathered in the town hall, over the Blacksmith shop.

The original St. Peter's church of Gary was constructed in 1908. It was typical prairie church of frame construction. Services were alternated between Gary and Clear Lake except for the one Sunday a month when the priest went to White.

Old church records show that the first baptism of a Catholic child in Gary was Irene Barwarth in the Town Hall on November 10, 1907. Her sponsors were Pete Barwarth and Marie Branch. James McMahon was baptized the same time but Irene's name is first. The first child baptized in the church was Bernard Daniel Eckart in April, 1909.

The first marriage solemnized in St. Peter's was Margaret Maher and Martin Kaake, on November 15, 1911. In September of 1910 Father Gleason was sent to the Gary parish. In 1911, due to ill health, Father Burre was called in his place. In August of 1915 Father O'Meara was given charge of Clear Lake and Gary. His catechism class was always given candy and a pair of mittens or cap at Christmas, purchased from his small salary.

After Father O'Meara's death in 1946, Father Reddickheimer was in charge of the two parishes. He was a tireless worker. In 1951 Father Sikkes replaced him. In 1959, under the direction of Father David Keating, plans were formulated for the new church. The fan-shaped body of the church permits the congregation to be seated close to the altar. The new church was dedicated in 1963 by Bishop Hoch. At this time the old frame church was sold to Harvey Schalte and is presently the home of his Taxidermy Shop.

In June of 1965 Father Keating was transferred to Elk Point, South Dakota. There were 40-45 families in St. Peter's at this time. The first infant baptized in the new church was Gregory Hunt, son of Mr. and Mrs. Herb Hunt. The first marriage was Carol Handenmark and John DeBoer on September 28, 1963.

Father Grabowski assumed the administration of the two parishes in June 1965. Father Muller was assigned in August of 1966. He served in this position until July of 1969 when Father Roche Schirber arrived. He was replaced in March of 1977 by Monsignor Sullivan. Officers on the church board in 1977 were: Leo Klon, president, Gene Stoeck, Gene Popper, Erwin Oswald and Harry E. Schulte. Ladies Aid officers were President, Mrs. Merlin Heimholt; vice-president, Mrs. William Webber; Secretary, Mrs. Larry Kloss; Treasurer, Mrs. Jon Jensen.

What a debt we owe to those sturdy pioneers. Their first concern was a place to worship God and secondly, a school.



Castlewood St. John

St. John's Catholic Parish History ... 1885-1992

GOD IS LOVE

In the early 1880's, only a small number of Catholic families resided in the Castlewood area, yet their faith was strong and they desired a place to worship.

Mass was held in homes at first. Priests were not available for regular Sunday Masses. Priests from the surrounding towns would come whenever they could.

The first priest was Father Phillip Albrecht who came from Kranzburg when he could. A church building was talked about and land was purchased on July 28, 1885 from the Winona and

St. Peter Railroad Company. The deed was recorded on February 20, 1886. The location is the site of the present church. A small building was erected. Additions and improvements were made on the building and by 1915 what was known as the "old church" has been completed. In 1942, a tornado damaged the "old church" and a building fund was started to build a new church.

On January 6, 1948, Father Richard Giesen arrived and was pastor for 25 years. Sufficient money had been raised and in the spring of 1948 work began on the new church.

The church is of sawed, faced mankato stone with the interior of glazed tile. It seats about 240 people and has a full basement that is used for CCD and social functions. The new church was occupied in October, 1948; although it was not entirely finished. The formal dedication and consecration of the altar was celebrated on July 4, 1950 by Bishop William Brady.



Estelline St. Francis de Sales

Estelline (Hamlin County) St. Francis (de Sales)

The Catholic Church built in 1893 needed replacement. Father Charles Sass during his pastorate (1898-1900) directed construction of a larger, stronger facility. Estelline was served by the Chicago and Northwestern Railway. Before the railroad reached Estelline, the Catholics had erected a small frame church dedicated to St. Francis de Sales. The first services were held in it on Nov. 1, 1883. During the following year the railroad brought an influx of settlers, and the desire to have a resident pastor was expressed to the bishop. Up till that time priests from Ivanhoe, Minn., or Elkton had come occasionally to offer Mass. Finally in 1887 Father E. J. McCabe arrived to minister to them. He purchased a fine rectory with an acre of fenced land. By means of subscriptions and a fair during his brief one-year stay, he succeeded in raising one-third of the money needed for the rectory. Father John Flannigan succeeded Father McCabe, but after a short time Father James Durward was assigned to Estelline and Castlewood. He was succeeded in 1889 by Father J. J. O'Riordan. During his short pastorate the planks and logs in the church were replaced by pews. He also served the missions of Arlington, Bruce, Castlewood, Hazel and White. (OD)



Bryant St. Mary

St. Mary's Catholic Church

Before the church was built in Bryant, Father O'Brien, the priest from DeSmet came and held Mass in the parish members homes and in the schoolhouse which was located one block north and one-half block west of where the old church stood. Patrick Finley and Charles Quinn served these masses.

The foundation for the church was started in 1890, the church was finished ready for use in 1891. The labor was done by the parish members, some driving a distance of ten to 12 miles or more with horses and buggies to help with the building.

The first masses in the new church were said by non-resident priests. Father Flanagan from DeSmet served the first year. He was followed by Father Desmond, also from DeSmet, who served the parish for about six years. The first resident priest, Father Kelleher, came in 1899 and from that time until the present the parish has been served by 22 priests. In 1898 the parish purchased the house located two blocks south of Ward's Store, which was used until another was built in 1908 next to the church.



Over two hundred pilgrims from the Midwest (mostly South Dakota) went to Rome in early November to visit the city and "tourist", the travelers experienced pilgrimage "extras."



Pope Paul VI blessed a ciborium at St. Mary Parish. Bishop Lambert A. Hoch presented the Bryant vessel to the Holy Father for blessing during a private audience. The ciborium (used at Mass to contain consecrated hosts) was a special gift to Saint Mary Parish from John McCormick in honor of his late wife, Beverly.