

Arlington St. John the Evangelist

Canova Epiphany



Arlington (Kingsbury County) St. John the Evangelist

In 1881 Father Thomas Cahill came from Watertown to offer his services to Catholic settlers along the Chicago and North Western Railway line which entered Dakota from Tracy, Minn. He offered the first Mass in Arlington at the train station. After that the priest at Watertown came occasionally to administer to the people. Until 1902 the number of Catholics was too small for them to build a church... Arlington was once called Nordland because of the many Scandinavian settlers; Catholics were in the minority. In 1892 there were only ten English-speaking families who were served out of Watertown. After the Great Northern connected Arlington with Watertown, the priest exchanged the long horse and buggy rides for train transportation. The Holy Sacrifice was offered in the Arlington G.A.R. Hall, the skating rink or the Murphy, Burdette or Snyder schoolhouse.

After 1896 it was more convenient for the priests of DeSmet to minister to Arlington Catholics. At length Father John P. Hogan considered 1901 an appropriate time to launch a drive for the erection of a church. Each of the 15 families was assessed \$100 each. Peter Ackerman was entrusted with the construction of the simple frame building which cost \$1,500. The foundation was laid in August 1901, and the edifice was occupied the following year. St. John the Evangelist Church was the second in Arlington, the first being the Methodist in 1887. In 1907 St. John the Evangelist Parish was served by the priests from Oldham or Lake Preston. For 50 years St. John's Parish maintained a census of approximately 25 Catholic families. The first church erected in 1902, served the people for 65 years. A new house of worship was built in 1967 under the direction of Father Kenneth Kucin of Ramona. The practical six-sided structure cost \$125,000. Since 1970 the pastor of St. Thomas More Church of Brookings ministers to the 40 households of St. John's Parish.



Parish Mission Statement Church of Epiphany Canova, So. Dak.

The Church of Epiphany had the roots of a parish beginning in 1881 when a group of settlers arrived from Germany to settle in Dakota Territory. Services were held in the Keratan home before a church was completed. The Epiphany Catholic parish was organized in the summer of 1883. A church building was completed by September of that year. There were approximately 32 families as members of the first parish. The parish didn't have a resident priest until January of 1889.

Remarkable changes took place in the little town of Epiphany with the arrival of Fr. William Kroeger in 1893. The original church was destroyed by a cyclone in 1896. Under Fr. Kroeger's direction a new church was built and is still used today, a landmark of the entire community. Fr. Kroeger, (also a doctor), established a medical laboratory where he treated as many as 1,200 patients a week. A boom town was established during this period. Fr. Kroeger's death in 1901 marked the end of the medical laboratory.

St. Mary's school was completed in 1911. It was a large three story brick building which included living quarters for the Benedictine Sisters, a dormitory for boarding students and an auditorium. Grades 1 thru 8 were taught with the numbers of students averaging 90 per year. For a few years 9th grade was also taught. Due to the un-availability of sisters the school closed in 1968. The Church of Epiphany parish has had 22 of its members choose religious vocations.

St. Mary's Parish Hall was built in 1975. CCD is taught in the weekly for the various parish activities. Important events held in the hall include an annual sausage supper in March, a parish picnic in July and a chicken supper and bazaar in October.

The parish presently has approximately 340 members representing about 130 households. As with most rural parishes the membership has declined in recent years; however, the last couple of years the parish has remained at a fairly constant number.

The Epiphany parish is a very active parish. It would be safe to say 95% of the members attend weekly Mass and also actively participate in special religious events, such as Living Rosary; May Crowning and Thanksgiving services. Our members serve as CCD teachers, Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors and choir members. The Rosary is said before every week-end Mass. The Church of Epiphany is an integral part of every family of the parish.

The goals of the Church of Epiphany are to continue to be a self-sufficient parish. The members of the parish are very generous with their talents as well as finances. We have an excellent volunteer staff for all liturgical and musical needs. The parish has active Eucharistic Ministers who regularly visit the retirement home and the homes of shut-ins. We annually up-grade the CCD program by using new visual aids books and teaching methods. The children and young adults regularly take part in deanery youth activities.

The Church of Epiphany parish has maintained many traditions and practices through the years. Included in these are our annual sausage supper; 1st Sunday breakfasts; parish card parties; summer parish picnic; Living Rosary and May Crowning; chicken supper and bazaar; Sacramental services; 1st Friday Mass; 1st Communion services. The Eucharists are very active, always ready to help in time of need organizing work bees, sponsoring a Mother's Day breakfast, etc. All of these activities, plus the large participation by the parish family at confirmation, weddings and funerals, makes a very active and healthy parish.

DeSmet St. Thomas

Elkton Our Lady of Good Council



DeSmet (Kingsbury) St. Thomas

Father Thomas O'Reilly came from Iowa to serve Catholic settlers in Kingsbury County. When he offered the first Mass in 1880, DeSmet was known as Cream City. The Chicago and North Western passed through the area and was responsible for naming the town after Father Jean DeSmet. The town became the county seat.

Bishop Marty appointed Father Alfred Vigeant first resident priest and he procured property for a church site and began taking subscriptions to build. Before he could build, he was assigned to the Black Hills and succeeded by Father Simon Baddock who directed building of the small church and rectory in 1884. When a tornado destroyed the incomplete church in 1883, a more substantial structure was erected.

The DeSmet settlement was preceded by an Irish colony in Matthews Township about 12 miles south of DeSmet. Services were held in the two public schools -- no problem because everyone was Catholic. Five people were buried in the small cemetery near the Matthews school before the parish merged with St. Thomas in DeSmet. Father Anthony O'Hara was a vocation from the Matthews settlement.

In 1918 Catholics of the DeSmet area were severely tried when a fire destroyed their church built in 1884. To forestall a recurrence, Father Wenceslaus Lebecka (pastor 1910-26) and his people built a brick church. As a consequence, a debt of \$30,000 plagued the parish for many years and the interior of the church remained unfinished. During the depression years, Father George Tatten (pastor 1926-42) could not even meet the interest payments. As a result, Father Gerald J. Finnan (1942-50) sought the help of the diocesan refinancing committee in 1946. The interior of the church was completed, a new floor laid, pews and an electric organ installed. A marble altar, formerly used in the cathedral in Sioux Falls, became part of St. Thomas's fixtures. Father Donald A. Dillon came in 1949 and added finishing touches. In 1965 Father Carlton F. Hermann arranged for a CCD instruction area in the church basement. Father Joseph E. Murphy began his ministry to the 140 Catholic households in 1972. (CD)



ELKTON

The first Mass was celebrated in the district was at the Forsyth homestead, five miles west of the present city of Elkton, on May 11, 1879, by Father Kobrsel of Avoca, Minn. Mass was celebrated here periodically during the next two years. In the year 1881, Father Keenan took charge of Elkton, and under his direction the first church was erected, the sacristy being his residence. In the spring of 1883, the Rev. Gerald Stack succeeded him, he too lived in the sacristy. In the year 1885, the Rev. Thomas Cahill was appointed to Elkton. He was instrumental in building the first parsonage. During his pastorate the following stations were attended from Elkton, viz. Aurora, Brookings, Bruce, Estelline, Castlewood, and Lake Benton, Minn. Father Cahill remained in charge until Jan. 1887. Father Edward Coleman succeeded him but only remained for a few months. Father Quinlan was the next pastor, coming here in the early summer of 1887 and was in charge until Apr. 1891, when Rev. James McNally was sent here. During his stay a new school was completed in 1892. Mother Gertrude McDermott, CSR arrived here in 1893 and founded the first school. The site of it was two blocks south and two blocks east of the present church. Several years later this building was totally destroyed by fire and was never rebuilt.

In February 1897 Father McNally was transferred to Seward, the Rev. George Sheehan immediately succeeding him. In the winter of 1899 ground was broken for a new school, and was completed in the summer of 1900 and was opened for classes the following September under the direction of the Presentation Sisters.

In 1908 Father Sheehan completed the present commodious parsonage; this same year Rome honored him with the title of Rt. Rev. Monsignor. In Oct. 1915, Mgr. Sheehan was transferred and Father William T. Sheehan was moved from Brookings as administrator and was appointed pastor in 1918 of Elkton. Under his supervision the new St. Mary's school was erected. *in Oct. 1918*

Signed Rev. Wm. T. Sheehan 1938

N.B. In 1893 a school was conducted by Mother Gertrude McDermott.

Farmer St. Peter

FARMER CHURCH TO BE BLESSED



New St. Peter's Of Modern Design

Slated to be finished by early spring, the new St. Peter's Church in Farmer will be blessed by Bishop Hoch on Lenten Sunday, March 8.

Built to replace the seventy-year old frame structure that has served the small farming congregation since its foundation, the new church will accommodate 200 persons.

The Howard Parezo architectural firm of Sioux Falls designed the modernistic structure, and the Burns Construction Company of Sioux Falls was awarded the general contract for its construction.

The Rev. Leonard Fox, Administrator of the Farmer parish, supervised the building program.

13th Feb 1944

Farmer (Hanson County) St. Peter

St. Peter's Church was built under the direction of Father Charles Auer and blessed by Bishop Marty in 1892. A cemetery was donated by Peter Fleming. Farmer was a mission of Epiphany until 1916 when Father Charles Auer took up residence in a rectory provided for him. It was he who proposed a school. A frame building was erected at a cost of \$10,000 and Franciscans of St. Francis, Wisc., agreed to staff it in 1906. Father Peter N. Scheier came to Farmer in 1915 and directed the parish for 20 years (he was a native of Salem, SD, some 14 miles to the east, one of seven of a family of eleven who followed a religious vocation). Father Scheier not only paid the debt but made renovations in the church. In 1950 the Sisters withdrew. When Father Ladislaus Dusik came to Farmer, he renovated the school building in preparation for its reopening. In 1952 the Yankton Benedictines agreed to staff it. However, because of pressing needs in larger schools and the small enrollment of St. Peter's, the Sisters withdrew in 1959. The parish then decided to raze the building. Father Leonard Fox, a native of Watertown and pastor in the 1960s, replaced the frame structure with a contemporary style brick building costing \$100,000. Vocations from the parish include Father Raymond Mowry, and eleven Sisters. Because of the shortage of priests, St. Peter's lost its resident pastor in 1977 but is being cared for from Mitchell. (CD)



ELKTON, Brookings County Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, 1884

| | | |
|------------------------|--|--|
| 1881-1883 | Rev. J.P. Keenan | Station: Aurora |
| 1883-1884 | No record | |
| 1884-1885 | Rev. Gerald M. Stack | Stations: Aurora, Castlewood, Brookings |
| 1885-1887 | Rev. Thomas Cahill | " " |
| 1887-1891 | Rev. Michael Quinlan | Station: Brookings |
| 1891-1897 | Rev. James McNally | Missions: Aurora, Bushnell, Brookings School: Sisters, O.S.B., 1896 |
| 1897-1916 | Rev. George Sheehan, Mgr. | Missions: Aurora Stations: Brookings, Bushnell, White (1902- School: Presentation Nuns |
| | Assistants: Rev. P.O. Sullivan, 1901-1902 Rev. P.W. Coyne, 1902-1903 Mission, Clear Lake Rev. R.J. Higgins, 1904 Rev. McCarthy, 1904 Rev. Terence Slattery, 1907-1908 Missions: White, Clear Lake, Gary | |
| 1916-Rev. W.T. Sheehan | Assistants: Rev. Louis Millard, 1916 Rev. P.J. Cafferky, 1917-1919 Rev. P.L. Durkin, 1919-1940 Rev. Marianhill Fathers pro tem Rev. Wilfrid Schiltz, 1940 Rev. Wm. Issenbut, 1940 Rev. Walter Kearney, 1940-1942 Rev. John Mulvaney, 1942 | |

1947 Acquired a new home for Sisters who will reopen the school in fall.

1947¹⁹⁵³ Asst. pastor Rev. Francis Siah

1950, Sept. parochial school reopened. Dominican Sisters. *closed 1969*

1959, June 16 Rev. Louis J. Miller

1961, July 26 Dedication of the new church. *1971 school 4 of*
1944 school: 3 OR. 1 day, 76 pupils

Rev. Thomas W. Connolly, 1953-1955
Rev. Thomas Mechtenberg, 1954-1959

1965-1974 Rev. Leonard D. Fox

1974, Sept. 12-
Aug., 1981 Rev. Terence Stanton, OSB (Marmion Abbey)

1981, Aug. 5. Rev. Thomas McPhillips

