

THE DEDICATION OF ST. LOUIS BERTRAND CHURCH
REHOBOTH, PERRY COUNTY, OHIO

The church at Rehoboth, Perry County, was one of the earliest in that county. (1) And it took the place of an earlier one, St. Patrick's, Clover Hill. The following eye-witness account of the dedication of the Rehoboth church was published in the "Catholic Telegraph," Cincinnati, February 9, 1833. (2)

Visitors, editors: Having seen in the Western Post published in this place (3) an advertisement informing the public that a Catholic church recently erected in the town of Rehoboth, was to be blessed, and opened for divine service on the sixth of this month, curiosity induced me to become one of the spectators of that ceremony; and as it was novel to me, (being the first time I had witnessed it,) and as it proved to be a most interesting one, a short account of all that took place on that occasion, will, I presume, prove equally so to the readers of the Telegraph, who are friends to the religion it vindicates with so much ability.

The ceremony commenced about 11 o'clock. Crowds of people, (of every denomination,) collected at an early hour, anxiously expecting to see something new. With some, as with me, the gratification of their curiosity was the object; but others, if I might judge from appearances, came with purer motives and from a remoter distance attended by many inconveniences, excited by a love for Him to whose worship this house was to be so solemnly dedicated by the rites of a religion venerable for her antiquity and renowned for the sanctity of her children in all ages.

How consoling is the thought, to a proper and reflecting mind, to turn back in imagination the lapse of half a century and in thought view the council fire of the savage, or the altar blazing for the sacrifice of a human victim as a propitiatory offering for the manes of their warriors, to the great spirit, now succeeded by temples of worship to the Supreme Being and offered by another race of men, (or by the aborigines in many instances,) whose only weapon is the Cross of a crucified Redeemer.

A procession commenced from Mr. Walker's place, about the center of the village, the two officiating clergymen in their sacerdotal robes, accompanied by their acolytes who followed, bearing the standard of the Christian religion, the cross. They were followed by the Somerset band playing appropriate music and all thus in order proceeded to the door of the intended church. Here all was silence, until the officiating clergyman had offered up the first prayer of benediction, when he intoned the psalm, Miserere, the cross was solemnly raised and followed

by the clergymen in procession around the church, and those again followed by the immense crowd in most regular order. Psalms were chanted as the procession was moving round the church until it reached the door; here some other prayers were again offered up to the throne of Heaven by the clergymen; which concluded.

The door of the church was opened and the procession entered it in the same order as had been observed on the outside, except that the people were required to remain at the door till the ceremony of blessing the interior had been performed. Afterwards as many as could enter the church were admitted while others who could not obtain a place were collected round the door and windows, satisfied to look on though at a distance.

A solemn high Mass was celebrated accompanied by music which seemed by its melodious strains to "waft the soul to God." The rich shrill sound of the clarionette was mingled with the soft and soul thrilling notes of the flute and those joined with the more natural but not less melodious music of the female voices: all combining to sing the praises of the Lamb.

At the Gospel, the celebrant, the Rev. N.D. Young, ascended the platform (as the pulpit is not yet erected). He took a text from Revelations, chap. 23, v. 3. This he treated in his usual impressive and energetic language describing the extraordinary change that had taken place in this part of the country since he had first visited it. Thirteen years ago he said that he and his colleague, the deservedly lamented Bishop Fenwick, were the only priests in Ohio; that often they had passed by this place derided by its citizens at that period and considered dangerous men; whilst they were sacrificing every comfort for the salvation of those who thus treated them. Oh, how things are changed, he observed.

This day we behold a temple erected on this very ground where a few years ago it would have been dangerous for the minister of the Catholic religion to have stopped for refreshment. He passed the highest eulogium on the Bishop, and said that to him, next to God, they were indebted for all they possessed towards the promotion of religion in Ohio; for, continued he, there was not a church nor congregation in this state until he had labored for their erection and the promulgation of its doctrines.

The preacher next began to explain the tenets of his Church which were never before heard by many who were present, without being stamped by prejudice and blackened by bigotry. The whole discourse was well calculated for the occasion, and its effect was evidently seen in the countenances of the vast assembled crowd. Not a breath was heard in the church though thronged almost to suffocation. The ceremony was completed by singing a solemn Te Deum.

It is now thirteen years since the first Catholic church was erected in this state, which is that of St. Joseph's, three miles from Somerset, the theater of the apostolic labors of the ever lamented Dr. Fenwick. At present in this county there are three churches, respectable in magnitude and beauty, which even at present are found insufficient to contain their respective members.

This one in Rehoboth (I understand) is dedicated to St. Louis Bertrand who was an American missionary of the Order of St. Dominic,(3) a name that should ever be in veneration.

All concluded, the Rev. preacher published that Vespers would be chanted in the evening, and another sermon delivered, which caused the greater number of the spectators to remain in town, and when the time arrived they crowded to this beautiful church again.

The appointed hour arrived, the solemn Vesper service performed to the great satisfaction of all. The Rev. Mr. Bullock (4) ascended the platform and delivered a most argumentative discourse on the sacrifice of the Mass. He proved that there is a sacrifice in the New Law instituted by Jesus Christ from the Old and New Testaments, and refuted all the objections advanced by the advocates generally of dissenting religions. When he concluded the Rev. Mr. Young took his place again, and explained in a lucid manner the ceremonies which we had seen during the day.

Messrs. Editors, the insertion of the above I hope will prove as interesting to the readers of your journal as the sight of the ceremony was beautiful to,

Yours respectfully, etc., C.C.

Somerset, Jan. 25.

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- (1) See the "Bulletin", Catholic Record Society, Columbus, Ohio, May, 1980, for a history of the early missions in Clayton township of Perry County, including Rehoboth.
 - (2) Preserved in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.
 - (3) St. Louis Bertrand, Dominican missionary, who labored in Central America.
 - (4) Rev. James Vincent Bullock, O.P., (1804-1851).

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A GLIMPSE AT THE OHIO VALLEY

Letters(1) about the struggle and Revival of the Catholic Church in the Far West of the United States of America. Munich, 1836.

By Rev. John Martin Henni(2)

Translated from the German by Rev. Msgr. Joseph A. Hakel

Very Reverend and Learned Dean!(3)
Best Patron!

I still owe you an actual answer to your valued letter of January 20th which I received in Cincinnati, Ohio, a few months before my departure. "Write me very soon, etc., about the blossoming land," so runs your admonition to me. I could weary you now with so much more detail, partly because I am the reporter and partly because I have more leisure after completing my journey, to put in order my previously made notes.

Do you want interesting things about our distant Mission, and Church conditions? In my opinion the most interesting news would be about the Far West(4) if it is presented in the proper light and context. Our Missions here are basically a century and a half of continual struggle, made new only by new obstacles among new people and under new circumstances and regimes. What progress the Catholic Church has made in general in the United States of America in the last 40 years is known to you from many reports. You know that we already number twelve bishoprics in one Province where about 40 years ago hardly a Vicariate General could be found.

A. At the head stands Baltimore, rightly, as the oldest bishopric and up to now the only archbishopric.

The present archbishop is S. [Samuel] Eccleston, an American, with jurisdiction over the state of Maryland and the District of Columbia. He is also administrator of the vacant diocese of Richmond, which comprises the state of Virginia. This entire archdiocese is cared for by 68 priests.

B. The bishopric of New Orleans comprises the states of Louisiana and Mississippi. The bishop is A. [Anthony] Blanc, a Frenchman. Priests, 27.

C. The bishopric of Bardonia stretches over the states of Kentucky and Tennessee, and is headed by Bishop [Benedict] Flaget, together with his Coadjutor, [Guy Ignatius] Chabrat [S.S.], both Frenchmen, with 33 priests.

D. The bishopric of Philadelphia comprises the states of Pennsylvania and Delaware, together with the western part of New Jersey. The bishop is the Most Rev. H. [Henry] Conwell, [S.S.], with his Coadjutor Fr. G. [Francis P.] Kenrick, both natives of Ireland. Priests, 45.

E. The bishopric of New York encompasses the state of the same name as well as the eastern half of the state of New Jersey. The bishop is the Most Rev. Hr. Jno. [Henry John] Dubois [S.S.], a Frenchman, with 35 priests.

F. The bishopric of Boston, at whose head is an American, Benedict Fenwick, comprises the northernmost six small states, called the New England states. Priests, 25.

G. The bishopric of Charleston includes the states of North and South Carolina, together with Georgia. The bishop is Hr. Jno. England, with a Coadjutor or Auxiliary Bishop [William Clancy], both Irishmen. Priests, 17.

N.B. Without the latest official notice, I do not yet know whether this worthy Vicar was actually made bishop. This only is certain, that he consented to the unanimous wishes of the United States bishops and by them was earnestly requested of the Holy See to be the successor of the Most Rev. De Necker [Leo De Beckere, C.M.], who already wanted him to be his Coadjutor. The Very Rev. Jeanjean refused to take upon himself such a burdensome office, and Rome has also likely listened to his reasons.

H. The bishopric of Cincinnati comprises the state of Ohio. The bishop is Henry John Baptist Purcell, an Irishman, with 19 priests.

I. The bishopric of St. Louis covers the state of Missouri and the west half of the state of Illinois, together with the territories of Arkansas and the rest of those lying west of the Mississippi. The bishop is the Most Rev. Joseph Rosati, from Italy, with 39 priests.

K. (4) The bishopric of Mobile, of which the Most Rev. Michael Portier, a Frenchman, is bishop, stretches over the state of Alabama and the eastern and western territory of Florida. Priests, 11.

L. The bishopric of Detroit includes Michigan and the Northwest Territory. The bishop is the Most Rev. Friederich Rese, a German, with 18 priests.

M. The bishopric of Vincennes which includes the state of Indiana, together with the eastern half of the state of Illinois. The bishop is the Most Rev. Simon

Brute (Frenchman), with 4 priests.

From this brief survey of the dioceses, arranged according to their dates of establishment, it is clear how much was accomplished in a short time for the expansion of our holy Church. It will now grow stronger with more enduring roots in many vast areas through the labor of almost 340 priests with a total of nearly a million Catholics. (5) The total population of the United States at present is about 14 million people.

However, I intend to limit my remarks to only a part of the above regions, namely, to the Far West -- so-called because of its great distance from the former eastern colonies that are bounded on this side by the Allegheny mountains and on the other by the Atlantic seacoast.

This Far West was called the "Backwoods" by the colonists and often even the "Bloody Ground", because of the many bloody wars waged there in former times with wild aboriginal inhabitants.

The Far West now includes the entire Mississippi Valley, which has a number of tributary valleys formed by connecting streams. The western boundary of this huge valley is formed by the Oregon Mountains, i.e., the Rocky Mountains, from the foot of which plains on various levels descend toward the south and north up to the Mississippi. From the Father of Waters, in like formation, the Allegheny Mountain Range is on the east. From both mountain heights, many smaller streams arise and empty either into the Ohio or the Mississippi. Toward the north, this main valley stretches unbroken by any mountains to the beautiful lakes which give this vast wilderness variety and life. As America rivals only America in national grandeur, so can the Mississippi Valley be compared only to the Amazon River.

Of the tributary valleys, the most important are those that are formed by the Missouri and the Ohio rivers; and of these two, the latter, the Ohio Valley, is the most notable, because it is better known, most populous and outstanding for its location and productiveness. Its ground, like the west generally, is lush with extremely varied vegetation. It is rich in animal life, and in no way laid waste by suffocating ash or wide streams of lava from dead volcanoes like in South America. Bypassed by the glacier, the sparse evergreen trees are scattered among the proud oaks on the highest peaks of the Alleghenies in the splendor of the evening sun.

The greatest part of this land is generally devoted to agriculture; and though it does not seem to be rich in precious metals [silver] such as the southern area produces, yet it is perhaps inexhaustible in lead and iron, coal deposits and salt mines.

This Ohio Valley includes the states of Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, a part of Illinois, and the larger half of Tennessee, the western part of Pennsylvania and Virginia. To it daily emigrations from Europe, and even from the Atlantic Colonies, now stream in many directions. Here, as also in the Missouri Valley, is the show-place of the most productive activity and flourishing for our holy religion, since the Ohio, like a mighty guardian deity, at least hinders the Negro slave trade and slavery that foreshadows its own punishment in the south and east. (6)

Scarcely 40 years ago an unbroken ocean, as it were, of virgin forest still spread over this valley, even though earlier attempts at colonization had been made, especially by Canadian hunters. Not so long ago this was the home of ferocious

wild animals where today homesteads and towns arise. Here in the homeland of warring tribes of wild men three million people now enjoy in security the blessings of civilization.

I will present in short sketches with what effort our religion advanced from the earliest days in these forests of measureless wilderness, and planted its Cross here; how it struggled and even seemed to be overcome; how it finally, in our days, emerged gloriously from the solitude and now hurries to spread its light.(7)

- (1) Published here is the first of a series of letters which, combined, make up the text of a little book which the author, Father Henni, entitled A Glimpse of the Ohio Valley.
- (2) Father John Martin Henni (1805-1881) was born in Switzerland, ordained by Bishop Fenwick in Cincinnati in 1829, and served in that diocese until 1843 when he was named bishop of Milwaukee.
- (3) Father Henni's book of letters was dedicated to the Most Rev. Lothar Anselm von Gebattel, Archbishop of Munchen-Freysing. The letters were addressed to his old professor, the Rev. Dr. Johann P. Mirer, Dean and Pastor of Sargans in St. Gallen, Switzerland.
- (4) Father Henni follows the German alphabet in labelling his paragraphs.
- (5) Father Henni's footnote: "The total number of Catholics in the Province of the United States was estimated at 540,000 by the Provincial Council of Bishops that met in Baltimore in 1829."
- (6) A very prophetic remark!
- (7) The end of the first letter.

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ST. REMIGIUS CHURCH, COLUMBUS
SACRAMENTAL REGISTER, 1837 - 1846

(Continued)

By Donald M. Schlegel

1844 (Cont.)

306. 2 October: John, born 7 March 1844, son of James Cantwell and his wife Bridget. (Delaware County) Sponsors: Adam Müller and Kunigunda Müller.
[Adam "Miller" was living in the town of Delaware in 1840 (p. 235) and in 1850 (p. 184). He was born in Germany around 1784 and immigrated after 1827.]
307. Same Day: Heinrich Franz, born 9 May 1844, son of Heinrich Turner and his wife Anna born Nelke. (Delaware County) Sponsors: Johann Getreu and Katharina Getreu.
[Henry Turner was born in Germany around 1806. The 1843 directory lists him as a "farmer" residing at the southeast corner of Rich and Friend streets. By 1850 he had moved to Troy township, Delaware County. (p. 277)]
308. 2 October: Maria Anna, born 3 July 1844, daughter of Johann Getreu and his wife Katharina born Hag. Sponsors: George [sic!] Pfeifer and Katharina Pfeifer. (Delaware) W. Schonat
309. 6 October: Joseph William, born 6 May 1844, son of Joseph Wrae and his wife Margaret. Sponsors: John Killroy and Bridget McDollan.
[Joseph "Wroe" was a millwright residing on the east side of Front Street between Mound and South streets in 1843.]

1844 (Cont.)

310. Same Day: Heinrich, born 31 August 1844, son of Johann Heinrich Lotz and his wife Salome born Steinmetz. Sponsors: Heinrich Schlitt and Katharina Lotz.
["Henry Lutz" or "Luts" was a farmer in Montgomery township in 1840 (p. 195) and in 1850 (p. 824). He was born in Germany around 1800. Heinrich "Schlutt" was born in Ohio around 1825, son of Conrad and Katharina Margaretha (Lutz) Schlitt of Montgomery township. Conrad was born in Germany around 1792. (1850 p. 824; Franklin County Will Book D, page 123)]
311. Same Day: Margaretha, born 27 September 1844, daughter of Jacob Schlick and his wife Magdalena born Frölich. Sponsors: Franz Rieg and Margaretha Leipold. W. Schonat
[Jacob "slick" lived on the west side of Fourth Street between State and Town streets in 1843.]
312. 27 October: Michael Andreas, born 15 October 1844, son of Andreas Schlaeritt and his wife Theresa Schaeringer. W. Schonat
313. 3 November: Katharina, daughter of Wendolin Saile and his wife Friederika born Herrmann. Sponsors: Franz Xavier Mittelholz and Katharina Hanauer. W. Schonat
[Wendolin Saile was a weaver, born in Germany around 1810. By 1850 Friederika had died and he had married the widowed Mrs. Anna Brügeman. (1850 Ward 5, p. 447)]
- 314- 11 November: Jacob (age five months) and Karl (age three years), sons of
315. Karl Gibbard and his wife Henriette. (By Rev. Dom. Senes) W. Schonat
316. 16 November: Michael, age ten months, son of Johann Lobener (deceased) and his wife Katharina born Dierschel. Sponsors: Dominic Weiler and Margaretha Zimmer. W. Schonat
- 317- 17 November: Daniel (age two years) and Patrick, sons of Patrick Rodger
318. and his wife Emily born Miller. Sponsors: Edward MacLinge and Mary Anne MacLinge.
319. Same Day: Mary Anne, daughter of Edward MacLinge and his wife Mary Anne. Sponsors: Patrick and Emily Rodger. W. Schonat
- 320- 18 November: Twins, Wilhelm Joseph and Maria, children of Joseph Knedler
321. and his wife born Ackermann (born the same day). W. Schonat
322. 24 November: Paulina, born 22 November 1844, daughter of Joseph Rudolph and his wife Katharina born Schlitt. Sponsors: Benedict and Paulina Schlitt. [Joseph Rudolph was a plasterer, born in Germany around 1815. (1850, Montgomery township, p. 810)]
323. Same Day: Maria Laura, born 22 November 1844, daughter of Johann Joseph Müller and Sibilla, his wife, born Rott. Sponsors: Benedict and Clara Trott. W. Schonat
324. 30 November: Maria Laura, born 29 November 1844, daughter of Ignaz Trott and his wife Petronella born Güb. Sponsors: Matthias and Elenora Trott. W. Schonat
["Norris" Trott was born in Germany around 1814. (1850 Wd. 5, p. 461)]
325. 1 December: Johann Anton, born 28 November 1844, son of Johann Georg Ender and his wife Sophia born Biesig. Sponsors: Joseph Sattler and Maria Anna Biesig. W. Schonat
[Joseph "Sadler" was born in Germany around 1800. In 1850 he was living next to Georg Ender and Wendolin Saile; he was providing a home for the widow and daughter of Morritz Bissig. (1850 Wd. 5, p. 477) He died in February of 1860; he left money for a Mass at Holy Cross and for another at Ampiller, Tirol. (Franklin Co. Will Book D., page 221)]

Year 1844 (Cont.)

326. 10 December: Nora Louise Mary, born 19 July 1844, daughter of L. Joseph Moeller and his wife born Ditto. Sponsors: M. Ditto.

[In the hand of W. Schonat]

[Lewis Joseph Moeller was born in Pennsylvania around 1810. He lived in Lancaster, Ohio, in 1840 (p. 275) but had moved to Columbus by 1843. He was a physician and at one time was Superintendent of the Franklin County Infirmary. His wife was Eleanor, daughter of Jacob Dittoe, Jr., and granddaughter of the founder of St. Joseph's, Near Somerset, O.]

327. 15 December: Maria Anna, born 10 December 1844, daughter of Georg Ranft and his wife Barbara born Wohlleber. Sponsors: Andreas and Anna Maria Luntz.

[Andreas Luntz was born in Germany around 1790 (1850 Wd., p. 477). He was living in Ward 2 in 1840 (p. 216) and in 1843 was living on the east side of Fourth Street between State and Town streets.]

328. Same Day: Philip Marshal, born 6 October 1844, son of Ignatius Wheeler and his wife Maria Anna born Meedenbusch. Sponsors: Gallus Wölfel and Martha Clark.

W. Schonat

[Philip M. Wheeler died December 17, 1849, aged six years. (Tombstone in Franklinton cemetery) With him was buried Henry N. Wheeler, died January 8, 1850, aged 19 years. (Old Northwest Genealogical Quarterly, I. 69)]

Year of the Lord 1845

329. 1 January: Heinrich, born 27 September, son of Isidor Frey and his wife Francisca born Doll. Sponsors: Bernhard Bürk and Josepha Mutter. W. Schonat

330. 5 January: Johann, born 27 December, son of Joseph Rothenfels and his wife Barbara born Breitenbach. Sponsors: Ludwig and Anna M. Keller. W. Schonat

331. Same Day: Maria Margaretha, born 24 September, daughter of Joseph Hammer and his wife Elisabetha born Hoffmann. Sponsors: Franz and Am. Buss.

332. Same Day: John, born 24 November 1844, son of Edward Leeds and his wife Elizabeth born Hatthaway. Sponsors: John and Elizabeth Duphy.

333. Same Day: William Edward, born 9 November 1844, son of James Hatthaway and his wife Lydia. Sponsors: P Granham and Elizabeth Leeds. W. Schonat

334. 6 January: Michael, born] January, 1845, son of Caspar Betzold and his wife Margaretha born Riemer. Sponsors: Michael and Katharina Rambusch.

W. Schonat

335. 12 January: Maria, born 7 December, daughter of Matthias Seifert and Margaretha Neinrod[?] his wife. Sponsors: Heinrich Fry and Maria Anna Fry.

J.M. Young

336. 14 January: Nicolaus Jacob, born 3 January 1844 [sic!], son of Karl Glett and his wife Margaretha. Sponsors: Nicolaus Götzelmann and Maria Anna Büchner.

W. Schonat

337. 19 January: Maria Alphonsus, born 3 December 1844, daughter of Theodore Leonard and his wife Catherine born Malbeuf. Sponsors: Louis and Pauline Leonard.

W. Schonat

[The Leonard family migrated to Columbus from Canada in the late 1830's: Louis, a farmer, born in Canada around 1784, Pauline, born ca. 1788, Theodore, born ca. 1820, Francis, born ca. 1823, Mary, born ca. 1826, and Louis, born ca. 1836 in Canada. (1850 Wd. 1, p. 773) Theodore was the well-known Columbus brick maker who donated the land for St. Mary of the Springs and for whom Leonard Avenue was named.]

(To be continued)