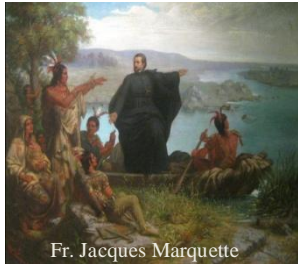


History of Sacred Heart Church—Roots to the Past

Fr. Jacques Marquette landed along the banks of the Mississippi River near what is now Montrose, Iowa, in Lee County in 1673. It is with that peaceful and memorable meeting with the natives that our Iowa history begins and the practicing of our faith as well.



Fr. Jacques Marquette

One hundred fifty-three years later (1803), France sold the United States the Louisiana Territory (titled the Louisiana Diocese by the French). The Archdiocese of Baltimore established the St Louis Diocese in 1826 and missionaries were sent up the Mississippi River (1830) to determine how to best integrate the church into this new territory.

Bishop Mathias Loras – First Bishop

Seven years after Bishop Mathias Loras was appointed the territory's first Catholic bishop, the Dubuque Diocese was created to oversee the land bordered from Missouri to Canada, and the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.

Bishop Loras discovered upon his arrival three churches, one mission and one priest in what would become Iowa. Fr. Samuel Mazzuchilli, O.P. an Italian Dominican Missionary was a very talented and energetic man, but there were too many Catholics for one man to serve. The territory was populated by nearly 3000 Catholics who were predominantly German. The churches already built on the eastern side of Iowa were: St. Raphael's Church in Dubuque; St. Anthony's Church in Davenport, and St. James Church in Lee County. The Jesuit Order ran the mission serving the Pottawattomie Indians at Council Bluffs.



Father Samuel Charles Mazzuchelli, O.P.

As many of our own ancestors hail from Germany, France and Ireland, those were the countries from which priests and religious were recruited as missionaries to this early settlement. A majority of these first missionaries came here from Ireland.

Ireland's Catholics had been emancipated several years earlier and to do their part, young men filled the seminaries. The Dubuque Diocese benefited from this influx of seminarians as Bishop Loras recruited them to come to America.

In the early 1840s, the western two-thirds of Iowa was closed to settlement and reserved for the Sac and Fox Indians. On March 23, 1843, the Indians relinquished their claims to western Iowa. In May of that same year, the treaty stipulated that land would be opened to white settlers. The move to settle the land west of the Mississippi River took off.

Historically, Loras is ranked high among the pioneer missionaries and church builders of this country. He reached out to Catholics from New York, Boston and Philadelphia by running newspaper ads encouraging Irish and German families to come to this new territory.

Three years later, Iowa became a state (1846). Shortly thereafter, the Vatican re-defined the Dubuque diocese territory by the borders of the state of Iowa (1849).

Bishop Mathias Loras



Rev. Timothy Mullen—One of the First Missionary Priests in Territory

A missionary named Rev. Timothy Mullen became an important figure in our history in 1850. He was assigned to organize the congregation at St. Patrick's Irish Settlement and secure lots for future parish development in Council Bluffs. Mullen was made Missionary Extraordinary between Fort Des Moines and Council Bluffs, making his parish territory about the same size as what is now the Diocese of Des Moines.

When Fr. Mullen arrived in Fort Des Moines in 1850, the Catholics waiting at the train station were overjoyed as he stepped off the train. One witness wrote he had almost been mobbed at Fort Des Moines and had to leave quickly for the Irish Settlement southwest of Des Moines.

Shortly after he and the 15 Irish families he brought with him arrived at Irish Settlement, a log cabin church was built near Cumming. St. Patrick's Parish was formed in 1847, but there was considerable disagreement between those parishioners living north and south of the river as to where their church should be located. Due to cunning acts on the part of the north of the river parishioners, the property was chosen in Lee Township. The property of St. Patrick's was donated by a parishioner and registered with the Madison County officials in the name of Bishop Mathias Loras on April 30, 1855. The current St. Patrick's Church was built at its present location in 1868.



The Civil War slowed progress within Iowa for everyone, even the Church. After the Civil War, settlers resumed their move west to Iowa and parishes were established, churches built and priests appointed throughout the Diocese.

About 3 decades after the new Dubuque Diocese was defined, the Diocese recommended to the Vatican it divide its church oversight of Iowa into two dioceses--Dubuque in the north and Des Moines to the south. Instead, the Vatican chose Davenport as the See city for the southern diocese (1881). See city means that is the official seat or home of the bishop.

Beginnings in Valley Junction

In 1893, a little town rose up along the railroad tracks--Valley Junction. Valley Junction had too few Catholics to support a parish and its own priest. The Rev. W. J. O'Rourke, pastor at St. John's Church in Cumming (a former out-mission of St. Patrick's Church) traveled here once monthly for 2 years to celebrate Mass in Dyke's Hall. Dyke's Hall was located on the second floor of a building on the NW corner of 5th and Maple.

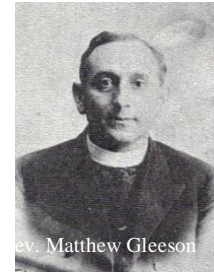


By 1892, Sacred Heart had grown and officially became a parish. Its first church building was a simple wooden structure at 4th and Elm Streets facing 4th. It was heated by a wood stove in the winter, but with slatted walls, it offered very little comfort for its parishioners. Rev. James H. Renihan was named the first resident pastor (1894) and then St. John's Church in Cumming began being served as the out-mission parish.

Rev. John F. Kempker took over as pastor in 1896 for only a short time. Rev. Kempker is known to be one of the early historians of the Catholic Church in Iowa and his works were referenced for this summary.

In 1897, Rev. W. B. McDonough became pastor and built the first parsonage. Fr. McDonough died in 1899.

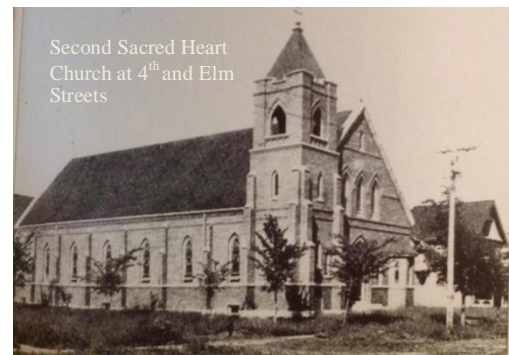
It was Rev. Matthew Gleeson, assigned as pastor in 1899, who set about building a bigger church to hold Sacred Heart's growing population. Fr. Gleeson shepherded a poor parish. When it was time to build, he was reluctant to ask his parishioners for the money to support the costs of construction. They were surprisingly generous and the construction went ahead.



In 1905, the brick church and church hall were built at the northeast corner of 4th and Elm Streets. These buildings still stand in that location and the church is still used as a church today. A second rectory was also built during Fr. Gleeson's time with Sacred Heart.

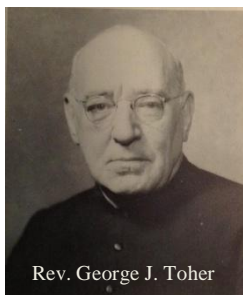
In 1911, during Fr. Gleeson's Sacred Heart service, Pope Pius X split the Diocese of Davenport in half to create the Diocese of Des Moines.

Fr. Gleeson was a strong and very devout individual. One parishioner tells that after saying Mass in Valley Junction on Sundays, Fr. Gleeson and his altar servers would ride ten miles in his horse and buggy to Cumming to say Mass. Only after saying Mass in Cumming would he break his fast. He and the altar servers would then ride back to Valley Junction later that afternoon.



There was also competition for Fr. Gleeson's favor. The Cumming parishioners offered to build him a home if he would stay there. Fr. Gleeson chose to remain with his devoted, poorer people in Valley Junction where there he served as pastor for 37 years until his death in 1936.

In the early 1920s, another big impact on our church originated in Mexico. Life became very difficult for the people of Mexico with religious persecution. They left their homeland and *walked* to the United States to find work on the railroads. Many migrated to Valley Junction because it was an important division point on the Rock Island Railroad. Many Mexican families became Sacred Heart members. They brought with them their great reverence for the Blessed Mother.



In 1935, Rev. George J. Toher became Sacred Heart's pastor. He served the parish during WWII and by war's end, served 180 families. Today, we claim 2200 families in our parish.

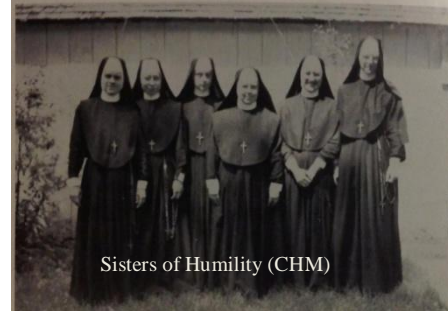
In 1947, Fr. Toher became infirm with arthritis and Rev. Lawrence Burns, newly ordained, was assigned to assist in overseeing the parish.

Sacred Heart at 1627 Grand Avenue

Fr. Toher's foresight enabled our parish to expand by purchasing eight acres of ground out in the country in 1950 at what is now 16th and Grand Avenue only then it was known as the "Mountain farm."

In 1954, the Sacred Heart School was completed and staffed by seven Sisters of Humility (CHM). Sr. Margaret Miriam Warin was appointed the first principal. A house was purchased on 16th and Mountain Streets directly east of the school as the residence for the nuns.

Many families moved closer to be near the school and the neighborhood around our church became referred to as "Catholic Acres." This shifting of the center of the parish and a growing population created a need for a larger church that could not be accommodated by the Valley Junction property.



After 20 years of service, Fr. Toher died in 1956. Father Burns was named administrator of the parish at that time. He served in that role for four months until Rev. Edwin Donahue was appointed pastor.



Rev. Donahue served our parish for about 9 years until his retirement. During his time at Sacred Heart, he was elevated to rank of Monsignor. Illness forced his retirement in 1965.

Following Msgr. Donahue's retirement, Rev. John Lorenz became administrator for a short time until a new pastor was appointed.

In 1966, Rev. Hilary W. Gaul was appointed pastor. He created the first parochial school board in Iowa during his first year of service; oversaw the expansion of the school in 1967, mentored 8 associate pastors and 2 deacons during his 13 years as pastor, and directed the building of the church at 1627 Grand Avenue which was finished in 1969. Sacred Heart was the largest parish in the Des Moines Diocese for many years.

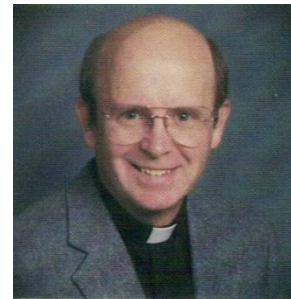




Sacred Heart Church
1627 Grand Avenue
West Des Moines, IA

Upon Fr. Gaulø retirement in 1979, Monsignor Edw. B. Pfeffer was appointed pastor. During his time of service, he mentored 3 associate pastors and 1 deacon; served at the Mass of Pope John Paul II's papal visit to Living History Farms in Des Moines, and initiated renovation of our church dictated by changes under Vatican II.

Msgr. Pfeffer is remembered for opening the doors to change resulting from Vatican II. There were a number of liturgical changes that needed to be made and they were controversial at the time. Under the new changes, the second Ambo was removed from the nave and the baptismal font was moved from the room in the vestibule to the interior of the church.



Pfeffer, Msgr. Edward B.

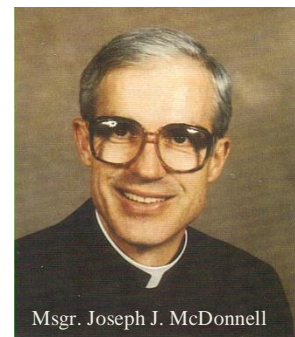


Sr. Maggie O'Toole

Controversy also arose over the necessity of using the Missalette during Mass. Under the new rules from Vatican II, the congregation was to enter into full, conscious and active participation in the Mass. The goal was to get the people to actively engage in listening instead of reading along during Mass.

Msgr. Pfeffer appointed Sr. Mary "Maggie" Margaret O'Toole as the parish's first female Pastoral Associate in 1988. Prior to this promotion, Sr. Maggie assisted with liturgy and religious education for seven years. As Pastoral Associate, she became responsible for Adult Faith Formation; developed and directed our RCIA program (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults); started the parish's first bible study classes, and initiated and directed the CAST (Catholic Adult Singles Together) program which quickly became a Diocesan-wide program.

The Rev. Joseph J. McDonnell was appointed to Sacred Heart in 1989. During his service to our church, he mentored 3 associate pastors; was elevated to the rank of Monsignor in 1990; directed our church's



Msgr. Joseph J. McDonnell



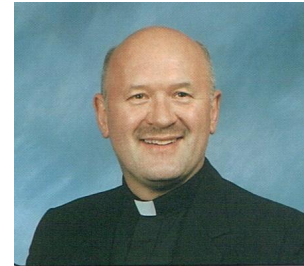
Sacred Heart Parish Center
1990

Centennial Celebration (1992), and oversaw the renovation of our church and the building of our Parish Center (1990).

In 1997, Rev. Phillip Kruse was appointed pastor and mentored 3 associate pastors; brought the Christ Renews His Parish program to Sacred Heart; implemented the Little Rock Bible Study program; led our parish's participation in the Church's Jubilee 2000 celebration, and oversaw renovation and expansion to our school

and preschool buildings. A full-time liturgical director was also hired by Fr. Kruse to oversee all aspects of liturgy at our church.

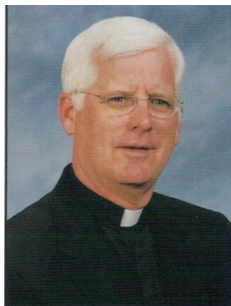
Fr. Kruse also hired a full-time professional nurse to head up the Parish Nurse Program. The director of the Parish Nurse Program includes a volunteer group that not only visits the homebound, but also advises and helps with resources available to assist the elderly.



Fr. Phillip Kruse

As our church grew, so did our youth and religious education programs. Under Fr. Kruse, a Director of Religious Education with professional credentials was hired to oversee religious education and youth formation for Sacred Heart.

Prior to Fr. Kruse, our priests held residence in what are now the parish offices. A priest's residence was purchased just north of the school (on Mountain Street) in 1997; this is now the youth ministry house. A second residence was purchased on the southwest corner of 16th and Mountain Street as a nun's residence and the nuns working at Sacred Heart School moved to this new location. After the retirement of Sr. John Agnes Smith and Sr. Margaret Fines, the house became the residence of our Associate Pastors.



Fr. Mike Hess
Pastor

Monsignor Michael Hess was appointed pastor of Sacred Heart in 2000. He mentored 6 associate pastors and 2 deacons, and oversaw another expansion project to Sacred Heart School.

As the Hispanic community grew, a need arose for the programs at Sacred Heart to include opportunities. A bilingual Mass was added to our Sunday schedule. Rev. Tom Pfeffer presided at some of these Masses. Under Msgr. Hess, a part-time coordinator of the Hispanic Community was hired. In the fall of 2015, the coordinator position became full time and the next year, Sacred Heart hired a Director of Hispanic Ministries.

While Msgr. Hess served our parish, we also enjoyed a mascot of sorts in Rudy, the first dog to be assigned to Sacred Heart Parish. Rudy's successor, Charlie, was not able to keep office hours.

In July of 2015, Father Chris Hartshorn came to Sacred Heart as Pastor. For long-time members, it was like having Father Chris come home again as he had served as an associate pastor from 1994-1997.



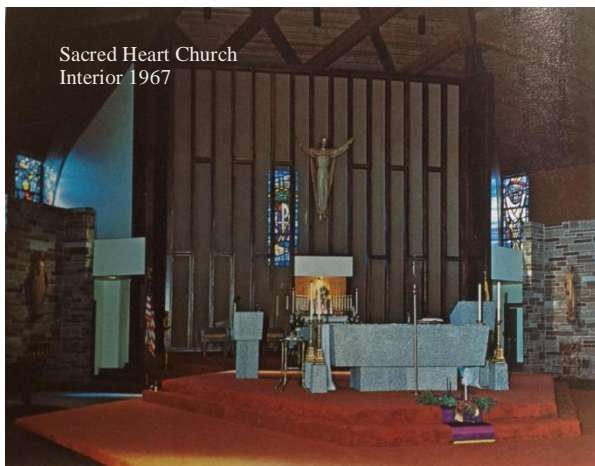
Our Church Environment

In 1962, the Opening of Second Vatican Ecumenical Council (October 11) greatly influenced the architectural design of newly- built Catholic churches in the United States. Ours, like many, were built in the round to place the altar in the center of the church nave. The intent of this design was to bring the parish community closer to the altar and give them the opportunity to participate fully in the celebration of the liturgy.

The stained glass windows were designed by Heinz Reuter of Milwaukee, Wisconsin and crafted by Reinarts Glass Studio in Winona, Minnesota. For a full explanation of the symbolism represented in the windows, see the "Stain Glass Windows Description" on our website.

The Stations of the Cross positioned around the rim of the church interior were moved from the church at 4th and Elm. The stations were made in Bavaria and had been purchased for the church at 4th and Elm from the old St. Mary's Church of Des Moines.

Our church interior has undergone remodeling and updates over the years, the last of which were completed in 1998.



During the first renovation project, there were changes made throughout the church. Msgr. Ed Pfeffer implemented changes brought about by Vatican II. The baptismal font was moved to the left of the altar so that our congregation could participate in the rite of baptism and welcome the newly-baptized into the church. The font was originally located in what is now our confessional in the center of the vestibule.

Prior to Vatican II, when the priest had his back to the people, the Epistle was read at the Ambo to his left and the Gospel was read at the Ambo to his right. Since Vatican II, both the Epistle and Gospel are read

from the Ambo to the right of the altar. The second Ambo was removed from the nave.

There initially were confessionals along the north and south side of the walls to each side of the altar. These have been either removed or renovated to storage space. Our current confessional is located in the center of the vestibule.

When Msgr. Joe McDonnell became pastor, he assumed responsibility for continuing the church's interior renovations. The orange carpet that once covered the altar area was replaced with tile; the pews were reupholstered, and the sound system was updated. A new parish center was added to the building complex to the east of the church vestibule.

Fr. Phillip Kruse was appointed pastor in 1997 and quickly became very popular with his energy, enthusiasm and take-charge manner. Attendance at our Masses became increasingly crowded. We weren't ready for a larger church, so Fr. Kruse set out to find more room in the church for the growing crowds.

Fr. Kruse was unafraid of a challenge. He has a gift for getting volunteers to step up. He appointed the Knights of Columbus to undertake demolition.

Prior to this second remodeling, a large screen came down from the ceiling dividing the main church nave from a small chapel behind the screen. There were openings and steps on each side of the screen to allow people to come and go from the chapel or church. A The Blessed Sacrament altar sat in the middle of the screen behind the altar and could be accessed from either side. This was where the consecrated hosts were kept before the reservation chapel was constructed.

Under Fr. Kruse's leadership, the screen, reservation altar and parts of the floor around the pre-existing wall were removed. The reservation chapel was built to the right of the altar. The steps were removed and a hand railing was added for safety around the choir area.

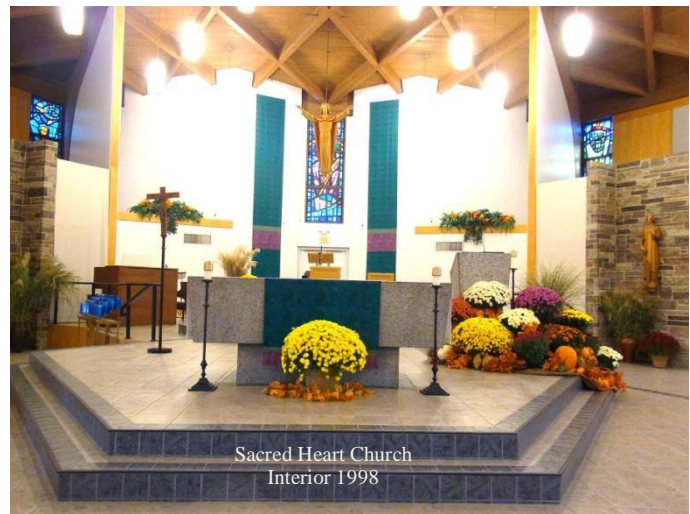
Prior to this renovation, the contemporary and traditional music groups stood on the floor to the left of the altar. Several pews had been removed to accommodate the organ, piano and musicians.

After the 1998 remodel, the choirs were moved behind the priest's chairs along with the organ, piano and other music equipment. This allowed for pews to be brought back into the church to increase the church's seating capacity.

Previously, the resurrected Jesus was above the reservation altar in front of the screen. It was moved to drape in mid-air over the choir area.

Under Fr. Kruse, the parish rectory was converted to office space; a conference room replaced what was the priest's garage, and an out building was added to the property on the west side of the parking lot.

A building was also added to the church grounds just west of the school in 2000. This facility was created for the Sacred Heart Preschool.



Sacred Heart Parish Clergy

Pastors

Time of Service	Names
1892-1894	Rev. H. J. O'Rourke
1894-1896	Rev. James H. Renihan
1896-1897	Rev. John F. Kempker
1897-1899	Rev. Wm. B. McDonough
1899 (6/2)-1936 (1/25)	Rev. Matthew Gleeson
1936 (1/25)-1956 (6/19)	Rev. George J. Toher
1956 (9/7)-1965 (9/2)	Msgr. Edwin A. Donahue
1965 (9/3)-1966 (9/13)	Rev. John Lorenz, Administrator
1966 (6/13)-1979 (2/28)	Rev. Hilary W. Gaul
1979 (3/1)-1989 (6/20)	Msgr. Edw. B. Pfeffer
1989(6/21)-1997 (7/9)	Msgr. Joseph J. McDonnell
1997 (7/10)-2000 (7/10)	Rev. Phillip Kruse
2000 (7/10)-2015	Msgr. Mike Hess
2013 (7/10)-2013	Fr. Dan Siepker
2015-Present	Fr. Chris Hartshorn

Deacons

Time of Service	Names
1972-1979	Rev. Mr. Don Joslin
1972-1979	Rev. Mr. David Malena
1986 (10/4)-1996	Rev. Mr. Chris Rohwer
2001(8/10)-present	Rev. Mr. Ron Myers
2009-present	Rev. Mr. Randy Horn

Associate Pastors

Time of Service	Names
1947 (1/4)-1956 (11/7)	Rev. Lawrence F. Burns
1959 (6/13)-1959 (9/1)	Rev. Gerald Stessman
1960 (3)-1963 (6/3)	Rev. John Lapcheske
1963 (6/3)-1965 (6/30)	Rev. Jas. F. Kleffman
1965 (6/30)-1967 (1/30)	Rev. Samuel I. Palmer
1967 (2/9)-1967 (5)	Rev. Thos. Chumbley
1967 (6/16)-1968 (8/19)	Rev. Duane Weiland
1968 (8/18)-1968 (11/25)	Rev. Dennis Mullen
1968 (11/25)-1971 (6/28)	Rev. Vincent Waltz
1970 (9/2)-1974 (1/31)	Rev. James Holden
1974 (3/17)-1975 (5/19)	Rev. Fred Reece
1975 (3/11)-1977 (8/1)	Rev. John Fleck
1977 (8/1)-1980 (7/10)	Rev. John O. Bertogli
1980 (2/18)-1984 (1/27)	Rev. Gregory Leach
1984 (1/9)-1986 (7/8)	Rev. Martin Chevalier
1986 (7/8)-1989 (6/20)	Rev. Charles Kottas
1989 (6/21)-1992 (7/10)	Rev. Robert A. Hoefler
1992 (7/10)-1994 (7/10)	Rev. Michael Amadeo
1994 (7/10)-1997 (7/9)	Rev. Chris Hartshorn
1997 (7/10)-2000 (10/20)	Rev. Garry Culver
1997 (7/1)-1998 (7/8)	Rev. Emeka Akabueze
1999 (3/25)-2001 (7/11)	Rev. Jack McClure, C.P.P.S.
2001 (7/12)-2002 (7/10)	Rev. Vince Resonke
2002 (7/11)-2009 (7/8)	Rev. Remi Okere, C.S.Sp.
2009 (7/09)-2011 (7/13)	Rev. Lazarus Kirigia
2011 (7/14)-2013 (7/10)	Rev. Paul Nguyen
2013 (7/11)-2015	Rev. Fabian Moncado
2015 -present	Rev. Luis Mejia Mejia