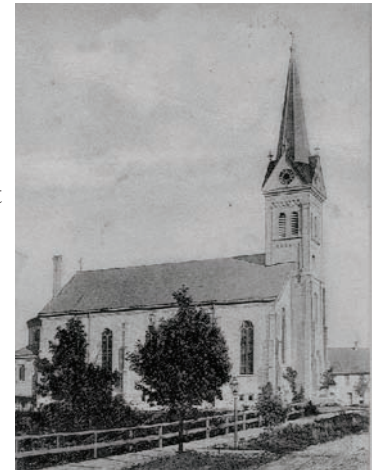


The beautiful, rolling green hills and fields of the Kettle Moraine attracted many settlers from Germany to this area in the mid 1800's, especially since the similarity of the terrain to their native land made them feel at home. Establishing farms and businesses near the developing commercial hub of Schleisingerville, these early people of faith welcomed missionary priests who occasionally passed that way on horseback into their homes to celebrate Mass and other Sacraments. Anecdotal history mentions that a log cabin chapel on the rise south of Hwy 60 above the juncture of Sherman and Scenic Roads may have served as such a meeting place from about 1850 – 1853. Fr. Casper Rehrl was one of those great “circuit-rider” missionaries who helped establish St. Peter's along with 29 other parishes in Washington and surrounding counties, most of which are still in existence. Since Catholic schools were a vital component of parish life in our young country, religious sisters were needed to teach the children. Fr. Rehrl is credited with establishing the Sisters of St. Agnes in Barton in 1858. Remnants of the original convent are still preserved on Water Tower Hill in Barton. The Agnesian motherhouse was moved to Fond du Lac in 1870. In 1856, a small log church was erected on the present site (land which had been the Engelhardt farm) and the congregation was served as a mission from St. Lawrence and Barton. This method of visitation continued until 1870. Upon searching the records of Immaculate Conception (St. Mary's) in Barton, there are no entries of sacramental ministry at the mission of St. Peter, Schleisingerville, in their registers from 1856-1870. While priests from that parish may have assisted here, a more regular relationship existed with the St. Lawrence parish as entries for the mission at St. Peter's appear in baptismal and death registers beginning in 1866. The records of earlier years are very faint and entry format at that time made no mention of cities. In the years 1866 – 1869, there were 9 baptisms, 7 funerals – no entries for weddings – at the mission of St. Peter's. 1870 saw 20 baptisms, a wedding (9 in

1871), 4 funerals (13 in 1871), all attesting to steady growth in the village and need for a resident pastor. Fr. Peter Mutz built the first rectory and thus became the first resident pastor in 1870.

Why the name St. Peter's for the then very new parish? Like Rome, City of Seven Hills (Quirinal, Viminal, Capitoline, Esquiline, Palatine, Caelian and Aventine – Vatican Hill was first “annexed” to the original plat of Rome by Augustus Caesar), resting place of our first Pope, St. Peter, after martyrdom in c.64AD, atop whose remains a magnificent church in witness to his rock-solid faith was built, our Village of Slinger (name shortened in 1921) was and is a village of seven hills, primarily named after



farm families who first settled the area. Their names/locations are best approximated as follows: Bautzerberg Hill (above Held's Meat Market near Hwys 144 & 41), Yankee Hill (site of water tower directly across Hwy 175 from church), Schwendimann Hill (just off Hwy 60 on the way to Hartford, east of Powder Hill Road and its' new subdivision), Nehm's Hill (aka: Big Hill, now Schlesinger Village subdivision), Rosenheimer Hill (now Ski View Court), and Pencil Peak (former Beine farm, now Weyer subdivision). The rock-solid faith of the early, pioneering Catholics to our area wanted it known that their church and our faith were here to stay!

A 2-story brick school was built near the church in 1881/1882, heated with pot bellied stoves. The School Sisters of St. Francis came to teach, continuing their services here until 1991. The core of the present church was begun in 1892. The 113 X 49 foot cream-city brick structure was built at a cost of \$19,300 and dedicated/blessed on May 1,



## HISTORY OF ST. PETER PARISH

1893 by Archbishop Katzer (he administered the sacrament of confirmation to 78 parishioners that same day).

The church was described in The Catholic Church in Wisconsin (1895-1898 Milwaukee, WI) as follows: "The pews are handsome as well as comfortable, and the interior of the church is adorned throughout with fresco work. In the basement of the church is a nice chapel, used occasionally for services. The congregation is now composed of 154 families, and the school connected with it has an attendance of 120 scholars. A Married Ladies Society, established in 1892, St. Mary's Society, organized in 1894, and St. Peter's Benevolent Society, are the only Catholic organizations connected with St. Peter's. The Rev. Charles Grobschmidt, present pastor, was born in Luxemburg, Germany on December 16, 1854, came to the United States in 1868, and studied for the priesthood at St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee, ordained by Bishop John M. Henni on June 4, 1877."



Long recognized as a local landmark, the 4-sided steeple clock and bell tower rises 138 ft. above the village. Three melodious bells sound from the tower. The large & middle bells were cast in 1886 by Henry Stuckstede Bell Foundry located in St. Louis, Missouri, installed in 1892; the small bell was added in 1915. Illuminated since 1992, our steeple clock and bell tower is a classic beauty.

Designed to inspire awe and a sense of spiritual uplift, three majestic altars grace our sanctuary, surrounding as focal point the altar of Sacrifice. Hand-carved of cherry and walnut woods, decorated in a style reminiscent of the lovely churches our European ancestors remembered, they

remain both treasured works of art and lovely inspirations for faith. Gracing them are the original plaster statues which came from Munich, Germany in 1892. The Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Apostles Ss.



Peter and Paul, and 2 adoring angels flanking them on pedestals, adorn the back altar. A side altar highlights Mary, Mother of God (statue donated in June, 1993, having been purchased in Rome), flanked by Ss. Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-1231), patron of the poor, and Barbara (4th century), an early martyr. The other side altar presents St. Joseph (1st century), patron of the Universal Church, workers, and of a happy death, flanked by Ss. Boniface (672-754), apostle to Germany, and Aloysius Gonzaga (1568-1591), patron of youth and purity. In 1950, Fr. George Jentges acquired the beautiful statue of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (carved in Fatima, Portugal by Jose Thedim, creator of the famed Pilgrim Virgin statue then touring America), often called Our Lady of Fatima and now located in our alcove shrine. 14 original oil paintings of European origin form our Stations of the Cross, framed in motifs matching the craftsmanship of our altars. These frames, previously removed, were saved by parish members (notably Tom Thoma and Ted Kern), and restored/illuminated during 1992's redecoration and renovation project. Eight of our ten original stained glass windows remain, the Annunciation to the Blessed Mother (near left side altar) and the Ascension of Our Lord (near right side alter were added in 1992), fashioned by the Oakbrook-Esser Studios of Oconomowoc, WI. Music has always been a vital part of worship for us. Since the summer of 1919, we have enjoyed the wonderful sounds of a romantic pipe organ that was made

and installed for us by the then B. Schaefer & Sons Organ Co. of Schleisingsville, WI, for the sum of \$2,900, minus a \$400 allowance for the old/original organ, and a \$500 donation from Schaefer Organ Co. The first wedding in the new church in the fall of 1892 was for Mary Merten and Frank Schaefer of that family! For 50 years (1941-1991) it was ably played by Sr. Romilda Simon – teacher, conductor, and liturgist. In 1993 the organ was restored/rejuvenated and given 3 additional sets of pipes as well as a more classic sound, an effort far more costly than its' original price tag! In honor of the 100th Anniversary of the building of the present church, beginning in fall of 1992 and completed in summer of 1993, then pastor Fr. Robert Bales saw to many repairs, renovations and significant additions to our church – a 30 X 40 foot 2-story



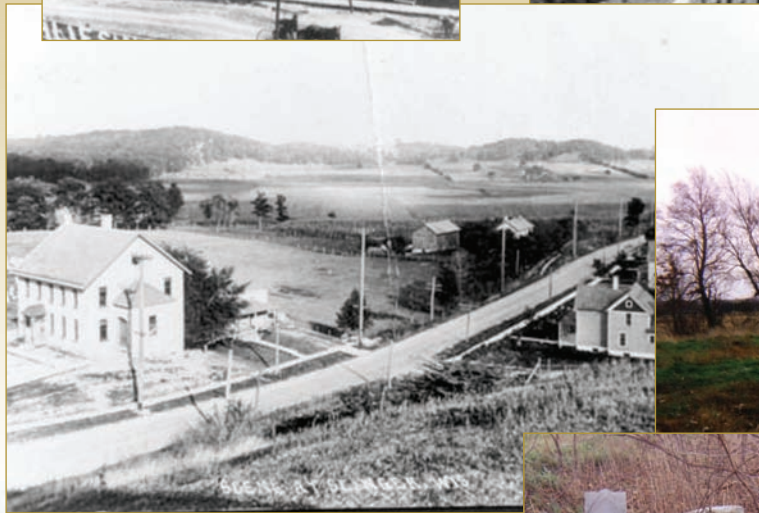
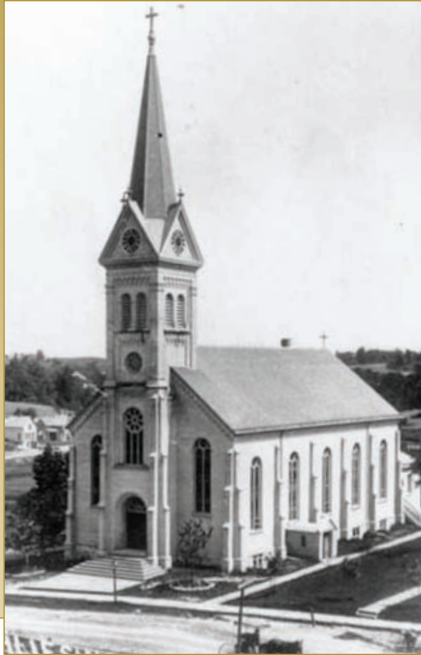
addition with covered entrance, elevator, new sacristy, offices, reconciliation chapel, shrine alcove, a new northeast stairway exit, new doors and sound system, new lighting, carpeting, sanctuary furniture and pulpit, repainting, restoration of altars and statuary, attention to choir loft and main seating accommodations, exterior brick repairs and cleaning, major structural improvements, etc. Due to efforts made then, so many guests and visitors compliment the holiness and beauty of our worship space. Since then St. Peter's and this part of Washington County has become the fastest growing area in Wisconsin, seeing population increase by well over 100% since 1980, and projecting continuing population increase for many a year to come, all this as the Milwaukee Archdiocese is being affected by a continuing decline in the number of active, available priests to serve our parishes. In the interest of future planning for both the ministries and facilities that may be needed to serve the increasing Catholic population of our

village and area, Fr. Rick Stoffel, our present pastor, helped initiate a process for future planning in collaboration with our neighbor parishes in Allenton (Resurrection), and St. Lawrence. It is our fond prayer and deepest desire that these efforts, begun in 2003, be guided by the same wisdom and prudence, imagination coupled with fidelity, as characterized our ancestors. They have given us a firm foundation, but unless the Lord builds the house, in vain do we labor. Continue, Lord, to build us up in faith, hope and love as we, like those before, strive to bring your Gospel and Eucharist to future generations. You, O Lord, have led us well for 150 years; do, dear Lord, the same now and always.

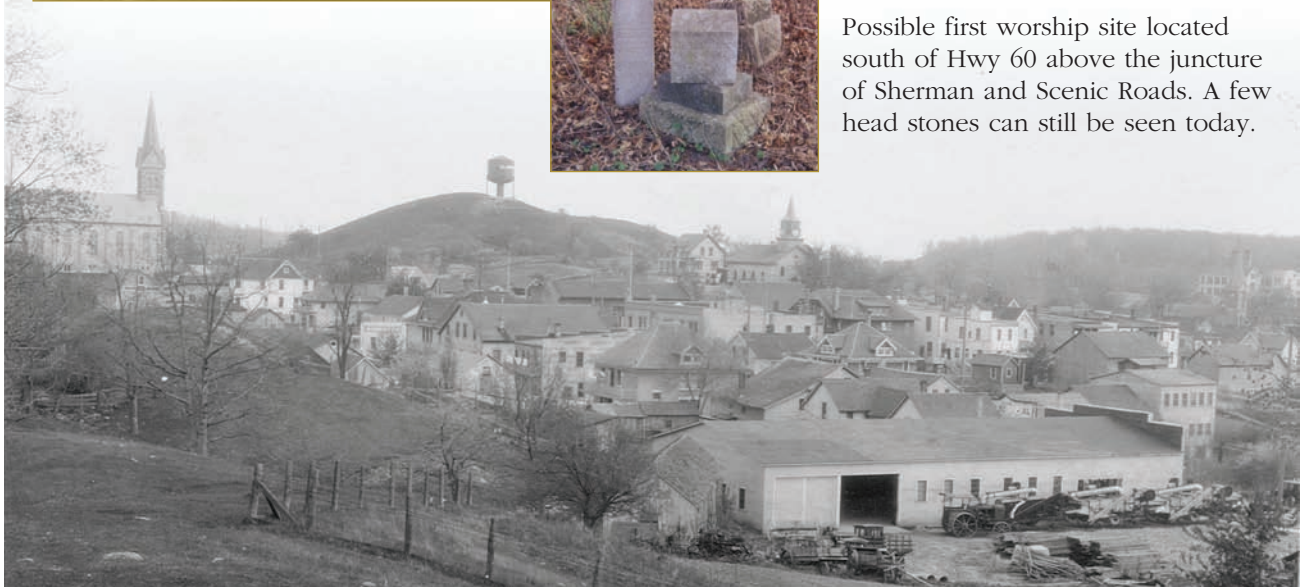
The following is a list of known parishioners who took vows or received holy orders within the last 150 years..... please pray for them all, living and deceased and continue to pray for vocations.

Sr. Catherine Helen Beine  
 Fr. Fabian Fehring  
 Fr. Tony Gundrum  
 Sr. Janet Heder  
 Sr. Paulanne Held  
 Sr. Margaret Held  
 Fr. Patrick Heppe  
 Brother Ralph Heppe  
 Sr. Jomarie Kachelmeier  
 Sr. Limana Kachelmeier  
 Sr. Anne Kachelmeier  
 Sr. Laetita Merten  
 Sr. Angeline Schaefer  
 Sr. Cherubim Schaefer  
 Fr. Philip Smith  
 Monsignor Alex Zuern





Possible first worship site located south of Hwy 60 above the juncture of Sherman and Scenic Roads. A few head stones can still be seen today.



The following lists the tenure & some accomplishments, when known, of many devoted, dedicated men who have served as our spiritual leaders from our beginning in 1856 until the present. (This chronology updates in some respects efforts made in 1999, additions/corrections made based on information found in The Catholic Church in Wisconsin, published 1895-1898 in Milwaukee, WI as well as a number of suggestions/contributions from the Archives of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.)

Fr. John B. Weikmann Pastor at St. Lawrence, serving St. Peter's	1856 – 1857	Fr. Anthony Rossbach Served only seven months at St. Peter's but saw to the establishment of both the Christian Mother's (1911) and the Catholic Order of Foresters (1912)	1911 – 1912
Fr. Joseph Reindl Pastor at St. Lawrence, serving St. Peter's	1857 – 1861	Fr. William Bruecker Bought new pipe organ, built addition to convent, and built present brick rectory	1912 – 1926
Fr. Michael Deisenrieder Pastor at St. Lawrence, serving St. Peter's	1861 – 1865	Fr. J. H. Kessler Only pastor to serve our parish twice	1926 – 1932
Fr. Martin Weiss Pastor at St. Lawrence, serving St. Peter's	1865 – 1870	Fr. William Bruecker Served 25 years as pastor, built present school in 1949, present convent and 2nd story to school in 1959, added kitchen to north side of church; also turned altar to face the nave, removed old pulpit and old communion rail, redecorated church, changed entry steps and added parking lot	1932 – 1943
Fr. John Friedel Assistant to Fr. Weiss, serving St. Peter's	1869 -	Fr. George Jentges Sunday Mass assistant for over 27 years	1943 – 1968
Fr. N. Hens Served St. Peter's only 4 months	1870 – 1870	Fr. Gerald B. Hauser Moved confessional, acquired land for new cemetery (Hwy 175 north of church) redecorated and re-roofed the church	1956 – 1984
Fr. Peter Mutz Enlarged original log church and built the first parsonage (hence, first truly resident pastor) which later became the convent. Also served: St. Matthias, Nabob, WI	1870 – 1873	Fr. Robert Wolf Dedicated new cemetery – died as pastor	1968 – 1981
Fr. Meinrad Burgeler Also served St. Matthias, Nabob, WI	1873 – 1875	Fr. Edward E. Murphy Temporary administrator for 2 months	1981 – 1984
Fr. P. Cajetan, OFM Cap Also served St. Matthias, Nabob, WI	1875 – 1878	Fr. William J. Whelan Arranged lease of convent as Mapledale Manor, directed 1992/1993's church addition/renovation/redecoration, convent returned to parish use as St. Clare Hall for classes and meetings in 1998	1984 - 1984
Fr. Anton Leitner Also served St. Matthias, Nabob, WI	1878 – 1881	Fr. Robert J. Bales Fr. Cletus H. Kaiser Sunday Mass Assistant	1984 - 2001 1984 - 1998
Fr. Paul Geyer Erected two story brick school house.	1881 – 1882	Fr. Frank C. Sutschek Weekday Mass Assistant for 2 months	1988 – 1988
Fr. Frantz Spath Born in Austria, celebrated his 25th anniversary of ordination in log church, died September 17, 1890, and buried in Old St. Peter's Cemetery	1882 – 1890	Fr. Donald F. Zerkel Sunday Mass Assistant	1998 - 2001
Fr. Charles Grobschmidt Built present brick church in 1892/1893	1890 – 1898	Deacon Bernard Wendt St. Peter's first/present permanent deacon	1994 - Present
Fr. P. H. Welbes	1898 – 1900	Fr. James M. Flynt Temporary administrator for six months	2002 – 2002
Fr. A. S. Leitner	1900 – 1911	Fr. Richard J. Stoffel Present pastor, also serving Resurrection Church in Allenton, WI since 2005	2002 - Present



## CHRONOLOGY OF ST. PETER PARISH