



SAINT KILIAN
1856-1981

FROM THE PASTOR IN 1981

The date was June 2, 1856, five years before Abraham Lincoln became president of the United States, at which time the parish of St. Kilian was organized under the direction of its first pastor, the Reverend Carl Schraud-enbach. On June 12th, ten days later, a meeting was held and the first officers of the parish were elected

Now, one hundred and twenty-five years later, we come together to celebrate those beginnings and the span of years that has brought us to this grand celebration.

The story in this booklet speaks for itself, and what a story it is. From the days of Abe Lincoln, from horseback and horse-drawn vehicles, through the invention of electric lights, motorized transportation, air travel, space travel, a man on the moon, the civil war and two world wars and how many more events in between.

But most important of all has been the presence of God in our midst, of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, a vine-yard to carry on His command to "...teach all nations".

For all of this we give thanks at this very special celebration. Thanks for the faith communities, the priests and people who, for a century and a quarter, have brought us to this day. May their faith, spirit and courage be for us all a beacon to follow, a light of Christ that has illuminated the darkness since 1856.

Fr. William F. Knoernschild Pastor



Several of the founding members, along with a few of the priests present at the 1906 Golden Jubilee.



St. Kilian at the 1906 Golden Jubilee Celebration

Southeastern Wisconsin is known for its beauty with its many lakes, streams and rolling countryside. It is in this area four miles east of Lake Geneva and a little better than four miles south of the village of Lyons that St. Kilian's Church is located.

It was between 1840 and 1850 that several families from the southern part of Bavaria immigrated to and settled in the southern part of Walworth County, some in the Township of Hudson (now known as the Township of Lyons) and some in Bloomfield Township.

St. Mary's, Burlington, was the nearest German-speaking parish. A few years later St. Alphonsus, New Munster, was established but both of these parishes meant travelling quite some distance to assist at Mass. It was a three-hour drive and we are told that many times people of this area walked to church. During those early years there were few luxuries like buggies. People were forced to travel by horseback or in wagons to fulfill their duties to God.

In 1847 a Catholic Church was built in Lake Geneva. This was an English-speaking parish and the pastor had several missions. As a result, Mass was not offered every Sunday at St. Francis de Sales Parish. It did not solve the religious problem of the Catholics in Lyons and Bloomfield Townships.

In the year 1856 the Catholics of this area, after several meetings, decided that they would like their own church where their language was spoken and one that would be centrally located for them.

The following signed a petition for a church:

Franz Michael Mayer	Sabastian Feser	Peter Schmitt	Martin Vagal
Joseph Mayer	Eva Helgert	Michael Schneider	Joseph Kriegt
Anton Holzheimer	F. Goss	Joseph Held	Andrew Helgert
Franz G. Grass	Anna Goss	Anna Urspring	F. Neltner
Bartholomew Homann	Adolp Holcamp	Joseph Meyerhofer	Mary Scheuermann
Sabastian Scheuermann	L. Nauheisel	George Williams	Jacob Bienemann
William Scheuermann	Nicholas Meyerhofer	Moriz Neuhaepel	
Joseph Helgert	Mr. Feser	Andrew Lauser	

After raising sufficient money they petitioned the Rt. Reverend John Martin Henni, D.O. Bishop of Milwaukee. He in turn designated the Reverend Carl Schraudenbach of New Munster to organize in and about the town of Hudson a German parish to be known as St. Kilian.

The parish was organized June 2, 1856. The land where the church was to be built was donated to the new congregation by Bartholomew and Otilia Homann (two acres) and George, Barbara and William Scheuermann (one acre).

On June 12, 1856 a meeting was held at the home of Sabastian Scheuermann and the following officers were elected:

President - Rev. Carl Schraudenbach

Vice-President - Sabastian Scheuermann

Treasurer - William Schuermann

Secretary - Anton Holzheimer

Trustees - L. Nauheisel, Joseph Meyerhofer, Franz Mayer

Half the money necessary to build the church was donated immediately; the other half was donated November 1, 1856.

St. Kilian's remained a Mission to New Munster for several years. For a time St. Kilian's was cared for from Lake Geneva. *No separate records of Baptisms, Weddings and the like were kept but were simply entered with the regular records of St. Alphonsus or St. Francis de Sales parishes.*

In 1870 a Catholic parish was organized at the village of Lyons but it was not until fourteen years later that St. Kilian's became attached permanently to St. Joseph's Parish as a Mission.

Since being attached to St. Joseph's, Lyons, the following priests have served the faithful at St. Kilian's:

1884 - 1888	Rev. August Gardhause
1888 - 1890	Rev. Carl Drees
1890 - 1892	Rev. William Latte of the Archdiocese of St. Paul, MN
1892 - 1894	Rev. Cyril Kufner, O.F.M. Cap.
1894 - 1897	Rev. John Diebold
1897 - 1902	Rev. J. Korfage
1902 - 1903	Rev. Cassianus, O.F.M. Cap.
1903 - 1913	Rev. F.J. Hillenbrand
1913 - 1935	Rev. A.C. Biwer
1935 - 1939	Rev. Oswald Krusing
1939 - 1945	Rev. Henry A. Maurer
1945 -	Rev. Francis Tenpenny

Today the bodies of many of the pioneers of St. Kilian's parish rest in the beautiful cemetery adjoining the Church. As we happily recall their faith and sacrifices one hundred years later, our sincere prayer is that they have been found worthy of the promises of Christ and are enjoying, with our Patron Saint Kilian, the eternal vision of God in heaven.

Some interesting notes of the past one hundred years:

1. The lumber and materials for the Church were purchased at Racine, Wisconsin, by Sabastian Scheuermann and Anton Holzheimer and were shipped by freight to Lyons. Each family of the parish helped to bring the building materials from Lyons to the parish grounds.
2. The first financial report is most interesting. The treasurer tells us the "hol" amount collected was \$235.00 and the "hol" amount in the treasurer's hands at the end of the period was five cents. Three hundred dollars had been borrowed and a neat 10% was charged as interest.
3. On April 25, 1859 the deeds for St. Kilian's parish grounds were recorded. They read as follows:
Bartholomew and Ottilia Homann to the Catholic Bishop of Milwaukee for the sum of \$40.00 land on the Northwest corner of his farm 20 rods from North to South, 16 rods from East to West. Witnesses: Joseph Meyerhofer and Joseph Helgert.

William Scheuermann and his wife to the Catholic Bishop of Milwaukee for the sum of \$20.00 land on the Northeast corner of his farm 20 rods from North to South and 8 rods from East to West. Witnesses: Joseph Meyerhofer and Joseph Helgert.

Both the Homann and Scheuermann families donated the money for this land to the Parish.
4. Several articles for the church were donated by Father Carl Schraudenbach under whose supervision the parish was organized.

5. In 1891 the statue of St. Joseph was purchased in Italy for \$42.00 The freight from New York to Chicago was \$2.38 and from Chicago to Lake Geneva \$0.77. The permit of import cost \$0.25.
6. In the year 1899 the Parish was incorporated under the law of the State of Wisconsin.
7. The large painting of St. Kilian was imported from Bavaria at a cost of \$500.00 and was donated by the Meyerhofer family.
8. The church linens were donated by and cared for over a period of many years by Miss Dora Meyerhofer, Mrs. Laurence Helgert, and her daughter, Anna Helgert.
9. In 1904 the little school now used as a parish hall was built. Sisters never taught the school but Catholic lay teachers did. Years later the children who could not attend St. Joseph's school were given religious instruction during the summer months.
10. The Feser family donated the lumber for a barn which was built at Lyons for the pastor's horse and buggy. Later the barn was torn down and a garage built which sometime later burned down.
11. In 1905 the Feser children, Mrs. Anna Meyerhofer, Jacob and Anna Feser gave \$400.00 to build the entry and steeple at St. Kilian's.
12. The High Altar, which was recently replaced, was donated by St. Francis de Sales Parish, Lake Geneva, in 1905.
13. Signs of the times: in 1860 the pastor's salary was \$100.15; in 1913 the pastor's salary was \$300.00; and in 1956 it is \$500.00
14. George Scheuermann played the organ and directed the choir for many years.
In recent years Mrs. George Horn and Judith Baumeister have generously given of their talents.
15. In 1928 lightning rods were put on the church.
16. Only one son of the parish has become a priest during the first one hundred years, Father Herman J. Mayer, son of Joseph and Caroline Mayer. Father Mayer made his classical studies at St. Lawrence College, Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin, and studied philosophy and theology at St. Francis Seminary. He was ordained a priest on April 10, 1917. Father Mayer is at present the pastor of St. Lawrence church at St. Elizabeth, Missouri.
17. Sister Maxima O.S.F., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Anton Erhart, is the only one of the parish to enter religious life. She is a religious of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi and is presently stationed at St. Francis Major Seminary.
18. There are four daughters and sons of the founders of St. Kilian's who are present members of the parish: Anna Helgert, Mrs. Mary Roesser, Nicholas Meyerhofer and Thomas Helgert.
19. Mrs. Mary Meyerhofer served as president of the Sodality for many years. In 1936 Father Krusing reorganized the Sodality under the patronage of St. Rita. The first officers elected were Josephine Sherman as prefect and Katherine Mangold as secretary and treasurer. Since 1936 most members have served in one capacity or another. At present the officers are Prefect Katherine Mangold; Marion Adams, Vice Prefect; Mildred Mangold, Secretary; and Eugenia Meyerhofer, Treasurer. The officers for the coming year will be Marion Adams, Mary Adams, Loretta Vogt and Loretta Baumeister.
20. The Holy Name Society of St. Kilian's is joined to the Society of St. Joseph's. Herbert Ehlen served as president this year and Donald Adams has been elected vice-president for the new year.
21. Three veterans of World War One have come to rest in St. Kilian's Cemetery:
Charles J. Rice, Oscar Heitkemper, and Joseph Vogt.

22. Nine men of St. Kilian's answered the call of their Country in World War Two:
 Ambrose Roesser, Bernard Roesser, Edward Hegeman, Edward Helgert, Thomas Reich, Clement
 Germann, Marvin Roanhouse, James Meyerhofer, and Jerome Vogt.
 Since World War Two these men have served their Country: John Leahy, Charles Ingram,
 William Holzheimer, Robert Meyerhofer, Edward Raduenz, Earl Rittman, Lloyd Wilger, and James Ehlen.
23. In recent years many sacrifices have been made to improve and repair St. Kilian's. The exterior of the church was painted by the members in one day with about thirty men and women taking part. New windows have been installed, the steeple has been repaired, new altars have been purchased and a tile floor has been laid. Very recently a new heating system, which replaced the old furnace that at times grudgingly served its purpose for fifty years, was installed and finally our "little cathedral of the country" has been fittingly decorated for the hundred anniversary.

May your pastor express his sincere thanks to Mrs. Louis Roesser for the work she did in gathering the information contained in this little story of St. Kilian's. May he add it has been a privilege to serve as your pastor during the last eleven years. May you always remain the simple, God-loving friendly, kindly people you are.

We have no record to indicate that the members of St. Kilian's celebrated the Silver Jubilee of the parish in 1881. The records do show new names on the parish list which was as follows:

Members of the parish at the 25th year were:

Lorenz Helgert	John Voelkering	Anton Holzheimer
Michael Feser	John Wagner	John Brever
William Scheuermann	Joseph Meyerhofer	John Hake
Jacob Germann	Joseph Mayer	Anton Gerken
George Bienemann	Nicholas Helgert	Joseph Sobbe

Several members of St. Kilian's still happily recall the Golden Jubilee the parish held in 1906.

The following priests were present to help members the parish to say thank you to God for His many blessings:

Father F.J. Hillenbrand, Pastor
 Rev. Alberts - Waterford
 Rev. Euegne Reilly - Lake Geneva
 Rev. Edward Schiefen - Kansasville
 Rev. Joseph Lamotte - Marquette, Michigan



The interior of the church in 1906

Following the Mass of Jubilee a family picnic was held in Erhart's woods. The parish roster in 1906 read as follows:

Henry Bracker	Andrew Keller	John Scheuermann
Joseph Bruckner	George Keller	J. Streff
Fredalin Darn	Matthew Kiefer	Mrs. William Schulz
Anton Erhart	Joseph Mayer	Simon Schulz
Laurence Helgert	Joseph Meyerhofer	Joseph Vogt
Nicholas Helgert	Dorothea Meyerhofer	Richard Vogt
Bartholomew Homann	J. Maurer	Mrs. Elizabeth Urspring
August Germann	J. Mangold	William Roanhouse
John Holzheimer	George Reuss	Mrs. Katherine Holzheimer
J. Kaudi	George Scheuermann	

On June 2, 1931 St. Kilian's parish celebrated its Diamond Jubilee with a Solemn High Mass in thanksgiving. Present on this happy day were:

His Excellency	The Most Reverend Samuel A. Stritch, assisting in Cappa Magna
Celebrant	Reverend Herman J. Mayer of St. Elizabeth, Missouri
Deacon	Reverend Edward Schiefen, Kansasville, Wisconsin
Sub-Deacon	Reverend Henry Maurer, Burlington Wisconsin
Master of Ceremonies	Reverend Harland Kuehn, Burlington Wisconsin
Sermon	Reverend F.J. Hillenbrand, Burlington Wisconsin

The following priests were present:

The Very Reverend Joseph Van Treek, Burlington, Wisconsin
Reverend J. Perrion, Waterford, Wisconsin
Reverend Joseph Wurm, New Munster, Wisconsin
Reverend Joseph Smith, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin
Reverend John Stehling, Elkhorn, Wisconsin
Reverend H. Schmitt, Delavan, Wisconsin
Reverend Joseph Keller, Brighton, Wisconsin
Reverend Charles Lehwald, Paris, Wisconsin
Reverend Joseph Ritger, East Troy, Wisconsin
Reverend A.C. Biwer, Pastor of St. Kilian's

The parish had again undergone some changes as is evident from the parish roster of 1931:

George Amborn	Mary Grady	Joseph Mangold
Andrew Brever	Oscar Heitkemper	Julia Martin
H. Brever	Anna Helgert	Val Reich
Frank Breyer	Mrs. Mary Helgert	Richard Rice
Leo Breyer	Thomas Helgert	Joseph Rice
Charles Curran	Mrs. William Kaddatz	Rittmann Brothers
Anton Erhart, Jr.	Dorothy Kaddatz	Louis Roesser
Alvin Forbes	George Howe	Fred Schara
Doric Forbes	Leo Holzheimer	Fred Schuermann
August Germann	Mrs. Felix Meyerhofer	Schulz Family
Peter Germann	Andrew Meyerhofer	Frank Vogt
Reinhard Germann	Nicholas Meyerhofer	Charles Vogt
Clement Germann	Urban Meyerhofer	Peter Wilger
James Grady	Joseph Mayer	John Erhart

The preceding pages were reprinted from **St. Kilian, 1856-1956**

On a beautiful summer day, Sunday, July 8, 1956, St. Kilian's parish celebrated its centennial with a Solemn High Mass at 10 o'clock in the morning. The Mass was attended by Archbishop Albert G. Meyer. The Mass was celebrated by Father Oswald Krusing, deacon, and Father Henry Maurer. Father James Manley, pastor of St. Francis de Sales, Lake Geneva, was sub-deacon.

Following the Mass, a noon dinner was served at St. Joseph's Hall in Lyons. An Open House was held at St. Kilian's Hall from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Father F.J. Tenpenny was pastor at St. Kilian's for this celebration.

The "little cathedral of the country," St. Kilian's, is celebrating its 125th anniversary on June 28, 1981. St. Kilian's stands waiting for Mass every Sunday as the mission church of St. Joseph's. Father William Knoernschild now serves as pastor. Some of the present members of the parish are descendants of the original families who petitioned the Bishop of Milwaukee to establish the church in 1856. The parish and friends will celebrate the 125th anniversary with Archbishop Rembert Weakland, who will be assisted by former priests of the parish.

There will be a reception following the Mass at St. Kilian's and at 4 o'clock a dinner at St. Joseph's Hall at Lyons.

The following priests have served this parish since 1956:

Fr. Francis Tenpenny	Fr. George Huber	Fr. Rock Niemier
Fr. William Zelly	Fr. Franklyn Becker	Fr. Finian Zaucha
Fr. Richard Walsh	<i>Assistant Priests:</i>	Fr. Warren Rector
Fr. William Knoernschild	Fr. Arnold Rzadkiewicz	
Fr. Harold Peight	Fr. Cajetan Bogdans	

The present (1956) members of the parish are:

Mrs. Marion Adams	* Miss Kathy Kautz
Mr. Donald Adams	* Miss Nancy Kautz
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Baumeister	* Mr. & Mrs. William Kautz
Mr. & Mrs. Laverne Baumeister	Mrs. Edmund Keefe
Mrs. Kurt Bayer	Mrs. Lulu Leahy
Mr. Kurt Bayer. Jr.	* Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Mangold
Mrs. Arlene Braden	* Mrs. Kathryn Mangold
Mrs. Helen Breyer	* Miss Ann Meyerhofer
Mrs. Margie Doll	* Mr. & Mrs. Harold Meyerhofer
Mr. & Mrs. Carl Drews	* Miss Lorraine Meyerhofer
Mr. & Mrs. David Ehlen	* Mr. Roger Meyerhofer
My'. & Mrs. Herbert Ehlen	* Mr. William Meyerhofer
Mr. & Mrs. John Ehlen	Mrs. Elmira Pious
Miss Kathy Ehlen	Mr. Carl Podstapka
Mr. Leonard Ehlen	Mr. & Mrs. Chet Price Mr. Steve Price
* Mr. & Mrs. Shawn Gleason	* Mrs. Arthur Raduenz
* Mrs. Barbara Holder	Mr. & Mrs. Greg Redmer
* Miss Cheryl Holzheimer	Mrs. Viola Scott
* Mr. Jerry Holzheimer	Mrs. Ted Wallace
* Mr. Kenneth Holzheimer	* Sr. Maxima Erhart O.S.F.
* Miss Mary Holzheimer	* Miss Rose Erhart
* Miss Lynn Holzheimer	* Mrs. Mary Mayer Roesser
* Mr. & Mrs. William Holzheimer	* Mrs. Irene Helgert Uhlenhake
* Mr. Charles Kautz	

**** Descendants of the original families***

Many monetary contributions have been graciously given by families and friends to St. Kilian's.

Donations to our parish have been made during the past twenty-five years. The following donations were made:

Chalice of Father Herman Mayer was given by his sister, Mary Roesser.

Ruby glass cruets for wine and water by Father G. Huber.

Holy Water cup and sprinkler by Harold Krueger in memory of Mary, his wife.

Hymnal page board by Helen Rittmann.

A vestment by the Riech family.

Mass book stand for the altar by Mrs. Louise Glass in memory of her husband.

Vestments were made by members of the Sodality and materials were donated by Marion Adams, Joan Holzheimer, and Delores Baumeister.

Vestment and pall by the Meyerhofer family in memory of Nellie Meyerhofer.

Chairs at the altar in memory of the Felix Meyerhofer family by George and Agnes Curran.

Table for the cruets and holy water fountains by Kathryn Mangold.

Iron arch for St. Kilian's by Marion Adams in memory of her husband, Burness.

Bird house for the yard by Joseph Schranz.

Land to the cemetery and east of the buildings by John Sturgis and family.

Many more monetary contributions and gifts have been donated this year for our 125th celebration.

Many hours of work have been done by former members of the parish and present. Present members who have kept the church in repair are Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Mangold, Mrs. and Mrs. William Kautz, Mrs. Ellen Raduenz, Mr. and Mrs. William Holzheimer, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Ehlen, Mr. Earl Rittmann and the late Mr. Raymond Wilger.

The happenings at St. Kilian's since 1956 have been of great interest and benefit for the people and the parish.

The present church officers are Joseph Mangold and Herbert Ehlen.

The Sodality officers are: Prefect Joan Holzheimer, Vice Prefect Amy Bayer, Secretary Jean Meyerhofer, and Treasurer Dorothy Kautz

There have been many improvements made to the church such as paneling, a new ceiling, and carpeting. The confessional was added and a new organ.

The outside of the church and the hall have been painted several times. Friends of the parish made contributions to pay for the painting.

Judy Baumeister and Ann Meyerhofer have been organists for the masses. Mass servers have been Edward and David Ehlen; Gerald and Robert Bayer; John, William, Lester, and Timothy Baumeister; Jerry Holzheimer; and William Meyerhofer.

Members of the parish and guests have assisted Father at Mass as Readers CCD classes for the grade school children were held after Sunday Mass during the school year.

Recently an Outdoor Mass was celebrated every other Memorial Day by the pastor for the memory of our War Veterans of St. Kilian's and St. Joseph's parishes.

The hall has been redecorated several times and electric heaters have been installed the last twenty-five years. The priests, parishioners, and friends have had many pleasant memories of activities held there.

Kenneth, William, and John Baumeister; Edward and David Ehlen; William Kautz; Roger Meyerhofer; and Richard Raduenz served their country during this time.

St. Kilian's has many memories of the past 125 years and may our prayers and efforts continue with the "little cathedral of the country" for Love and Peace.

Compiled by:

M.L. Meyerhofer