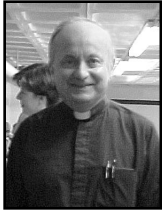


Connections

The Newsletter of Immaculate Conception Parish

May 2001



Dear Parishioners:

As you will remember, the theme for this, our sesquicentennial year, has been "community building". It is particularly significant that so many of you have mentioned the "new life" and energy which you are seeing in the Parish. Others are mentioning the number of "young families" that are worshipping with us now. Many of you participated in the Lenten "Soup Suppers" hosted by various Parish groups, the Friday evening Stations of the Cross coordinated by Richard Dumler, the excellent Seder Meal and ceremony which filled the lower Church, and the wonderful experience of the presentation *Jesus the Healer* by students from Saint Thomas Aquinas High School Franciscan Mystery Players which filled the Church almost to capacity, as evidence of the growth of community and new life in our Parish.

I am pleased that so many of you worshiped with us during Holy Week as we celebrated the very foundations of our Church at the Mass of the Institution of the Eucharist on Holy Thursday, the Passion and the death of the Lord on Good Friday, the "Rebirth" of the Church at the Easter Vigil and, of course, the Lord's Resurrection on that first glorious Easter Day.

During the next few months we will continue to have a number of events to celebrate this milestone in the ministry of the Church here in Portsmouth.

I am grateful for your kind support of the Parish and again, as always, invite you to share any comments and/or suggestions that you have with us at your convenience. Please be assured of my prayers and best wishes for you and your loved ones.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Rev. Edward J. Kelley

Contact Information

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Pastoral Minister Gayl Callis Ext. 9
Temporary Secretary Janice Ferguson . Ext. 6



Photo by Parishioner Joyce Miller

Immaculate Conception Altar on Easter. The beautiful decorations were done by Holly Lashar and Helen Steele.

If it was a Friday in Lent, it almost certainly snowed! Despite the hostile weather, well over fifty parishioners regularly gathered to pray the Stations of the Cross. While spiritual sustenance was certainly the main attraction, there is no doubt that the delicious soups and hardy breads provided before the service were also a big draw. Parish Life, the Women's Club, Parish Nurses, Outreach, and Disciples in Mission served a wide variety of homemade recipes that stimulated the conversation and fellowship of all who gathered together.

A special moment was the Living Stations presented on March 30 by the older parish children in CCD, with music by Tim Lena and Roxanne Wilton, and witnessed by many of their parents and friends. Despite being short-handed due to snow (what else!), the youthful actors and readers brought enthusiasm and dedication to their

Lenten Events

By Richard Dumler, Parishioner

presentation of Christ's sorrowful journey.

On April 1st, The Franciscan Mystery Players from St Thomas Aquinas took us on another journey with Christ by exploring His mission as healer of our physical, emotional and spiritual illnesses. The portrayal of Christ on the Cross was especially realistic and emotionally stimulating, as the audience was asked to consider the meaning of Christ's sacrifice to heal our breach with God. While no soup was served before, the Church was completely filled for this presentation.

Ninety parishioners of all ages, double the number initially planned, showed up for the Parish Life Committee's first annual Passover seder, to learn, to sing in Hebrew and English (about dogs and cats among other things), to eat, pray, and drink the four glasses of wine prescribed, though most cheated and had less. The lamb dinner was great, and as to the "Hillel" sandwich, you had to taste it. The seder is a traditional Jewish meal and celebration to commemorate God's help in freeing the Jews from bondage in Egypt, and it was the base from which Christ instituted the Eucharist. The outstanding participation at this and the other Lenten "events" was open testimony to our beliefs and fellowship against the public humiliation and affronts Christ suffered in His Passion and often today.

Seder Meal on Palm Sunday April 8, 2001



Photos by Kate and Glen Gordon, Parishioners

Immaculate Conception Organizations

Outreach to the Edgewood Centre



For several years, members of the Immaculate Conception Parish, in support of our Pastor, have ministered to the residents of The Edgewood Centre as Eucharistic Ministers, helpers, and friends! Since Father Kelley's arrival, there has been a monthly Mass said for the Edgewood Centre residents. Volunteers bring residents to the Mass and return them to their rooms. They provide music ministry, act as Readers of The Word, and help make it a pleasant and spiritual experience for all. For those residents unable to attend the Mass, Eucharistic Ministers bring

the Eucharist to them in their rooms. These same volunteers have served every week as Eucharistic Ministers and helpers to provide either Communion Services, the Rosary and Communion, or other appropriate activities for the residents.

Since this ministry was restarted, I have seen the numbers of people assisting and attending services, continually increase. We are ministering to over 45 residents and staff. And, as you would expect, in dealing with aging and very ill people, there are constant changes in those needing our care and spiritual ministry. It takes devoted and dedicated people to accomplish this service.

I would, especially, like to thank Father Kelley for his support and active participation in our Parish's commitment to The Edgewood Centre. He has been a spiritual inspiration to us all. I would, also, be remiss in not recognizing the many volunteers from our own parish community, as well as those from surrounding parishes, who have made it a success. They are: Jim Bohan, Jim Brighenti, Eugenia Cheney, Donald Mudge, Florence Capalare, Mike Denney, Gayl Callis, Marge Scully, Louise Bowden, Suzanne Foley, Leonard Bruce, and Yvette Arno. On occasion, some family members of the above, plus friends, have joined us and made the celebration of whatever event was planned much more joyous and meaningful.

I feel these efforts have made a considerable difference in the quality of life of the many residents of this nursing facility, and that has proven to be an invaluable source of growth in our own lives. With God's help, this "Outreach" will continue for those who are so in need of it. Thank-you!

By Parishioner Joyce Miller

PARISH ACTIVITIES YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN

The Second Annual Parish Service Day

The Parish Life Committee is sponsoring the second annual Parish Service Day on Saturday, May 19. The Service Day was started last year as a way to bring the teachings of the Good Samaritan lesson to life in our parish. The Good Samaritan lesson reminds us to help our neighbors and to let our neighbors help us. Last year's Service Day brought together about 40 parishioners who dedicated the day to helping other members of the parish with spring cleaning projects. We raked and prepared planting beds, washed windows and carpets, did small painting projects, cleaned out attics and basements, and moved furniture.

This year, we are again looking for ways to bring together parishioners who need help with parishioners who want to help. Our volunteers can do many things, but we will be recruiting only as many volunteers as are needed for the cleanup activities requested. We're eager to help, but we need to know where we can be most useful. If you've had a project in mind that just felt too big to tackle alone, this is the perfect opportunity to get it done.

If you have a spring cleaning, painting or any other project that we can assist with, please contact **Suzanne King at 431-5657** or **Gayl Callis at the rectory** no later than May 10.

PARISH ACTIVITIES YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN

Parish Reflection Day

We need your input! Help us to evaluate our strengths and weaknesses as a parish, and to determine where we need to improve in order to meet your needs.

All parishioners are invited to attend our second Parish Reflection Day. It will be held on Saturday, June 9th, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Parish Hall. There is no cost to attend.

The day will begin with refreshments, such as coffee, juice, and muffins, introductions, opening prayer, and an overview of the day. Parishioners will then break into small groups to facilitate discussion.

Lunch will be provided. After lunch, a summary of the small groups' comments and suggestions will be given.

The Parish Reflection Day is an outgrowth of the Disciples in Mission program, but it is not limited to Disciples in Mission participants. Everyone is urged to come. Last year approximately sixty people attended, and the small group discussions were very productive. Many of the new programs and activities which were implemented this year, such as the parish newsletter, the events sheet, and the Spiritual Formation Committee, were all suggested at our last Reflection Day.

We want to hear your ideas for the parish. Your comments and suggestions can make a difference. For further information, please contact **Norbert Gauvin at 436-0684** or **Sister Mary Joan Walsh at 436-6612**.



The Altar of the new Immaculate Conception Church in 1874.

The new church featured stained glass windows by the Tyrolese Art Glass Company of Innsbruck, Austria. One of the windows was donated by Frank Jones and another was donated by R.E. Rider, a local tailor and organist of Immaculate Conception.

A TIME OF TREMENDOUS GROWTH

In 1875, the church purchased adjoining property on Chatham Street to serve as the Parish House for \$8,000. Father Walsh applied for and received a leave of absence due to ill health. Father Eugene M. O'Callaghan assumed the pastorate at Immaculate Conception on October 20, 1875. He found the parish \$25,000 in debt with an interest payment of \$2,000 annually from construction of the new church. One of his first endeavors in the parish was to eliminate the debt through events such as parish excursions, house-to-house collections, subscriptions and festivals. His successful fund raising eliminated the building debt and enabled the parish to have the church frescoed, install heating, and in 1882, purchase the house and land of the Pickering Estate that adjoined the church property on Summer Street. And in 1884 a new pipe organ was installed. Even with the new expenditures, in 1885 Pastor O'Callaghan announced to the parish that thanks to the generosity of parishioners, the original debt had been retired. The parish at this point in time now numbered almost 1800 Catholics.

Since its establishment, Immaculate Conception was part of the Portland, Maine Diocese. On Palm Sunday 1884, the Church of the Immaculate Conception became a part of the Diocese of Manchester when the Catholic population reached 45,000 and the new Diocese of Manchester was established.

In 1885 we purchased the Kennard property. The two properties gave the church a full city block on Austin Street to erect a school. The school, begun in 1887, was completed in 1888. The new school was erected at a cost of \$8,000, \$5,000 from the parishioners, \$500 gift from Pastor O'Callaghan and \$1000 gift from former pastor Rev. Daniel W. Murphy. 7 nuns of the Sisters of Mercy returned to teach in 1887. 290 children began their education at the new St. Patrick's School. Sister M. Catherine was the first Mother Superior.

During 1890, the church purchased a bell and Angelus at a cost of \$1,652 from the McShane Bell Foundry, Baltimore, MD. The 4½ ft. wide bell resides in today's bell tower and it's inscription reads:

"MY NAME IS MARY
I WAS PLACED IN THIS TOWER BY THE CATHOLICS OF PORTSMOUTH, N.H.
OCTOBER 20, 1890
THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASTORATE
OF EUGENE M. O'CALLAGHAN, R.C.P."

By 1890 the parish realized that the present burial grounds would not meet their needs. The Marden Farm, across the road, was purchased for \$2,300, consecrated and renamed Calvary Cemetery.

Father O'Callaghan was offered a pastorate in Nashua in 1891. He declined the offer, much to the pleasure of the parishioners. In 1891, Father O'Callaghan was appointed one of the four permanent rectors in the diocese. May 22, 1894 marked the pastor's Silver Jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood. Bishops and priests from all over New England came to Immaculate Conception to celebrate the anniversary. Parishioners, now numbering 2,200, presented the

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH HISTORY - 1874-1907

THE CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

Dedication of the new church by the Most Rev. David W. Bacon, D.C., Bishop of Portland, Maine took place Holy Thursday, April 9, 1874 and was renamed the Church of the Immaculate Conception. Large attendance by the Protestant and Catholic Community made the ceremony standing room only.



The Second Church of the Immaculate Conception in 1874.

pastor with a Jubilee Gift in the amount of \$1,500. And Father O'Callaghan not to be outdone, gave the \$1,500 as well as \$2,500 to the parish to pay for a new annex to the school land and for two new marble fonts in the church. This annex was completed in 1894. In 1896, the Frisbee property at 3 Chatham Street was purchased at a cost of \$3000 and added to the parochial estate.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION IN THE 20TH CENTURY

October of 1900 saw the Silver Jubilee of the parish and the twenty-fifth anniversary of Father O'Callaghan as pastor at Portsmouth.

In 1885, the good pastor took out a 15-year endowment insurance policy for \$10,000, with the parish of Immaculate Conception as beneficiary and paid the premiums from his income. The insurance policy matured in 1885. Half the proceeds were used to purchase stained glass windows from the Tyrolese Art Glass Company, Innsbruck, Austria. The balance was applied to the parish. There are two stained glass windows in which a face in the window does not match the others. The first window, "St. Patrick Preaching to the People of Ireland" is the first window on the left side at the front of the church. A monk stands to the right of St. Patrick. This is the face of Rev. Eugene O'Callaghan, pastor of Immaculate Conception from 1875-1901. The second window is



This Stained Glass Window is of St. Patrick Preaching to the People of Ireland.

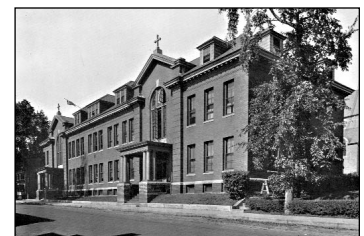
The face of the monk to the right of St. Patrick is that of Rev. O'Callaghan, Pastor from 1875 - 1901 and donor of the windows

located on the left side of the church and it is the fourth on from the front and is entitled, "Jesus Blesses the Children". The face of the woman bringing her child to Jesus is said to be Rev. Eugene O'Callaghan's mother. Father O'Callaghan continues to watch over his flock eighty years after his death.

On Sunday, January 1, 1901, Father O'Callaghan announced his departure from the parish. On December 17, 1900 he was named Vicar General of the Diocese of Manchester to succeed the late Very Rev. John E. Barry. He became pastor of St. John's Church, Concord, as the Bishop wished to keep the Vicar General in Concord. He left the Immaculate Conception Parish free from debt. In his 26 years as pastor, the parish increased from 1,700 to 2,500 and he was beloved by all in the city. After his farewell reception, the February 23, 1901 *Portsmouth Herald* reported that The Music Hall was filled with city officials, business and professional men and clergy from the Protestant churches of Portsmouth.

In February 1901, Rev. Patrick Finnegan arrived. In 1905, the spiritual life of the parish was advanced by establishment of two societies: the **Organization of the Holy Name** and the **Catholic Union** for the young men of the parish. Father Finnegan, an excellent singer, also took a great interest in the choir.

Once again, due to the increased number of pupils in the parochial school, it became necessary to build a new and larger school. In 1904, the present school and convent was constructed at a total cost of \$45,000. The extensive renovation virtually obliterated the old school and annex and what was retained was covered by a facade of sand struck red brick and granite trimmings to match the new construction. The structure contained 5 classrooms on the first floor.



St. Patrick's School after the renovation of 1904

The second story contained 5 classrooms, while an assembly hall was located on the third floor. A new convent was connected on to the school.

Father Finnegan passed away on July 14, 1906 after a lingering illness. In July, 1907 the Rev. Edward J. Walsh was appointed as the new pastor of Immaculate Conception. In August, 1907, Father Walsh took charge of the parish and devoted his energy to spiritual and financial affairs. In order to discharge the new school and convent debt, he instituted a 10¢ offertory collection and in less than 8 years this debt was reduced by more than \$20,000.

Watch for the next Connections when we cover another period of Immaculate Conception history. Much of this history comes from the Alexander V. Munton history published in 1977. John O'Sullivan, a parishioner, is conducting research and updating the history from 1977 to the present. If you have any items, stories of interest, you can contact John at 603-436-1622 or email him at adcetera@mediaone.net.

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Here's Your

Connections

to the Events and Goings on of
Immaculate Conception Parish

Memorial Guild

The Memorial Guild was established in 1999 for the remembrance of our deceased friends and family members. A specially prepared memorial card is sent to the family of the deceased. All donations will remain here in the parish, to be used in the Church.

A special Mass is celebrated monthly for all Memorial Guild members.

The Memorial Guild does not replace the traditional announced Masses of the parish, but is another way of remembering the deceased.

Any purchases made for the Church through this fund will bear the name Memorial Guild and will thus be a remembrance of all who have been enrolled.

For more information, contact Janice Ferguson, Church Secretary at 436-0048, ext. 6.



*Tidbits about
What's going on in
your parish this quarter!*

Stained Glass Window Update

The Marriage Feast of Cana has been restored and was replaced during Holy Week. The last of the twelve main stained glass window, The Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven, on the right side of the Church closest to the Saint Joseph's altar is out for renovation. When this window is returned, all twelve of our main windows will have been restored. Congratulations to all whose donations made this project possible.

Would you like to include info in News for the Pews

Any information you would like included in "News from the Pews" should be forwarded to the Parish secretary (e-mail: icc150@juno.com, telephone: 436-0048 ext. 6, or fax: 436-8848).



Anniversary Celebration Activities

~ May 2001

19th: Parish Service Day & Spaghetti Supper
20th: May Crowning after 9AM Mass

~ June 2001

9th: Parish Reflection Day

~ July 2001

8th: Portland Seadogs Game

~ August 2001

7/31-8/8: Trip to Ireland with Father Kelley

~ September 2001

16th: Parish Picnic at Jamaica Island

~ October 2001

13th-17th: Parish Mission
with Msgr. Robert Ecker

~ November 2001

3rd & 4th: Stewardship Fair

~ December 2001

8th: Anniversary Closing Mass with
Bishop McCormack followed by
the 150th Anniversary Dinner
at the Elks

Parish Sacraments

The following Sacraments
were administered
in our Parish since
our last publication.

BAPTISMS

Zacharie Cloutier Ledoux

Anna Grace Lukacz

Nora Rose Mitchell

Macarthy Michael Whitworth

CONFIRMATIONS at Easter Vigil, April 14, 2001

Jennifer Currier

Trisha Currier

Kerry Donahue

Thomas J. Murphy

Camilla Walsh

FUNERALS

Marion Marcotte

We ask God's perpetual light to
shine upon all the souls
who have departed this world.