

A Short-outline of the History of St. Joseph's  
Congregation, Victoria P. O. Mercer Co. Ohio.

St. Joseph's Congregation, Victoria, Ohio, is situated in the south-western Part of Mercer Co. on the S. E. + W. R. R., about 2 miles east of Ft. Recovery. It was one of the first parishes in this part of the County or State, the so-called mother Church of the neighboring Congregations which in course of time were formed and separated from St. Joseph's Church, the last one, Ft. Recovery, as late as 1893.

St. Joseph Congregation was formed in 1836, when a number of families came from the eastern part of the State and settled here in the wilderness. Some of the first settlers were Jos. Doll, Jos. Studer, Anton Blum, and John Heis. The little settlement was visited once a month by a missionary priest Rev. S. Navarron, who said Mass in the log-house of Jos. Doll and sometimes at John Heis. At once upon their arrival in Mercer Co., one of the Settlers, Jos. Doll, had donated 80 acres for a Church in the year 1836. The site for a Church, and <sup>for</sup> a cemetery was selected, and in 1838 they began building a small log-Church a short distance south of the present-Church. However it was not til 1845 then the Rt. Rev. bishop Purcell, delegated Father Navarron to bless the Church

which accordingly he did May 20. 1845.

It was dedicated in honor of St-Joseph.

In the year 1849 the people build a little parsonage and for 2 years they had the happiness of having their pastor residing in their midst; viz; the Rev H Herzog, who from here attended the neighboring missions as St-Henry and others.

In the Fall 1849 the Cholera visited St-Joseph and the surrounding country & required a great many victims, entire families dying out or being broken up. But soon new settlers came in from all sides and the Congregation grew rapidly, being in 1860 (before the Church was build in Ft-Recovery about twice as large as at present. The little log-Church naturally becoming too small, the people made preparations to build a large brick Church. The 80 acres donated by Jos. Doll, were now laid out in lots, and all that was not necessary for a large cemetery & Church grounds was sold. To the money obtained from this sale, the people liberally added donations and in 1862 Rev. Jos. Albrech ~~publicly~~ in Spring of 1863 build the present-brick Church, which was dedicated or blessed privately in Spring of 1863 by Rt-Rev. bishop Purcell. In the year 1866 a great misfortune again befell the flourishing Congregation. The pastor Rev. Jos Albrech refusing to obey his bishop & superiors, was suspended

Many members of the parish, probably not knowing much about the affair sided with their pastor and about one half of the ~~family~~ members sold their farms and left St-Joseph and went with their suspended priest to Minnesota. Thereupon the Church was closed for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  year. But soon new members came in, filled up the ranks and in Fall or Winter 1866 the Church was reopened & St-Joseph kept on growing. After Rev H. Herzog, a secular priest, had left St-Joseph in 1857 it was attended to by the fathers C.P.S. from their convent Himmelgarten about 8 miles east of St-Joseph. In 1883 when the P. Blood fathers had build a mission house in Ft Recovery & formed a new Congregation their St-Joseph was attended from that Place

In 1903 Rev. Seraphina Kunkler C.P.S. then Pastor of St-Joseph build a new brick tower to the church in which <sup>new</sup> 2 large bells were placed; together with the 2 old ones which had been in the old steeple

In 1905 Rev. Theodosiaas. H. Brackmann C.P.S. was send to St-Joseph to take up his residence in the Parish. At first for about 1 year he boarded with a private family; but in 1906 a new brick parsonage was build at the cost of about \$3000. - St-Josephs Church has the following communally erected societies: The B. Virgin Sodality

for young men 47 members The B. Virgin Sodality for young ladies, 39 members. The Quirion

mothers Archconfraternity 40 members, the  
League of the Sacred Heart + Apostleship of prayer  
149 members, besides several minor confraternities  
etc. The parish has 51 families and no debt.  
One boy of the parish has become priest and  
3 boys have entered a religious order and  
are now preparing for the priest hood. 16 girls  
of the parish have become sisters in religious  
orders. Besides a few of the older fathers C.P.P.S.  
who visited St Joseph occasionally as early as  
1846 eg. P. J. vanden Brock M. Kreutch, J. Kitzner;  
the following priests worked principally as  
pastors in St Joseph, from <sup>1836</sup> 1786. Rev L. Kavarron  
Rev. H. Herzog (these 2 were secular priests all  
the following were priests of the Congregation  
of the Precious Blood.) They were in the parish in  
the order here given. Rev Stephan Falk C.P.P.S.  
Rev. P. A. Carpenter C.P.P.S. Rev. Rochus Schuly C.P.P.S.  
Rev. Jos. Albrech. C.P.P.S. Rev. ~~F. H. Griefmayer~~ C.P.P.S.  
Rev Aloys Schelbert C.P.P.S.  
Rev. F. H. Griefmayer C.P.P.S.  
Rev Emmerbert Ruf C.P.P.S. Rev. Ferdinand Halber C.P.P.S.  
Rev Aug Seifert - C.P.P.S. Rev. Otto Missler C.P.P.S.  
Rev Jacob Marté C.P.P.S. Rev J. P. Shirack C.P.P.S.  
Rev Louis Hoefele C.P.P.S. Rev Sraphim Kunkler C.P.P.S.  
Rev Aloys Malin C.P.P.S. Rev Theod H Brackmann C.P.P.S.

P. Th. H. Brackmann. C.P.P.S.