

# St. Mary's of the Barrens Parish: The Early Days

by  
Fr. John J. Bagen, C.M.

Edited by Fr. John E. Rybolt, C.M.

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**Edited by John E. Rybolt, C.M.,  
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**Association of the Miraculous Medal  
St. Mary's Seminary  
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## Preface

The sesquicentennial anniversary of the dedication and consecration of St. Mary's of the Barrens Church seems to be an appropriate occasion for presenting a sketch of the events that led to the construction of the church and its consecration in 1837. Between 1797 and 1818, a group of zealous Catholics, predominantly Anglo-Saxons, had settled in the Barrens area. At first lacking any pastoral care, then experiencing only the occasional visits of a priest, these people persevered in their efforts to become a permanent parish. In 1818, they had their own resident pastor and by 1837, they had witnessed and helped in the construction of a seminary, a school for girls, a college, and finally a new church.

After the coming of the Vincentians in 1818, Catholicism at the Barrens presents a somewhat complex picture. Bishop DuBourg wished to establish a seminary in which clergy could be trained for his diocese: the Vincentians desired to found a center for their community life where they could engage in educational and missionary activities: and the people at the Barrens, in wishing to have a permanent pastor, served as catalyst to attain all these goals. While the combination of these various objectives determined the early history of St. Mary's of the Barrens, in the course of time all these activities were transferred to other locations. Before the middle of the nineteenth century, the diocesan seminary had moved and eventually found a permanent home in St. Louis. In the early part of the twentieth century, the provincial headquarters of the Vincentians had again moved from the Barrens, this time to St. Louis, and the school year of 1984–1985 marked the final year of formal seminary training at St. Mary's. With the completion of the new St. Vincent de Paul Church in 1964, St. Mary's, or the Assumption, parish and St. Boniface parish were united as St. Vincent's parish. The church of St. Mary's of the Barrens is now the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal.

Hopefully someday the complete history of the early days of St. Mary's Seminary will be written. Incomplete though it may be, this present study concentrates on only one facet of this history, namely that of the early settlers in what is now Perry County and of their desire and efforts to become a true parochial congregation. Naturally, the leadership, physical aid, and encouragement provided by people like Bishop DuBourg, Father and later Bishop Rosati, the priests, brothers, and seminarians cannot be omitted: neither can the financial assistance and material gifts received from Europe be ignored, since all these played an important role in the development of the parish.

Timothy J. O'Rourke, in his *Maryland Catholics on the Frontier*, has given a practically complete genealogical study of these early Catholic Anglo-Saxon families from their ancestors in Maryland down to the time of the publication of his work in 1973. These relationships will be mentioned only in connection with those families who figured prominently in the beginnings of the parish. Among the works that describe the journey from Europe to Missouri of Bishop DuBourg and his band of missionaries, both diocesan and Vincentian, are Bishop Rosati's *Memoires*, the manuscript copy of Father Souvay's *History of the Lazarists in the U. S.*, and Father [John] Easterly's *The Life of Right Reverend Joseph Rosati, C.M.* This present sketch is concerned with Bishop DuBourg, the Vincentians and seminarians only to the extent that they were



responsible for the founding and development of the parish and for the construction of the various buildings ultimately constituting the parish complex in 1837.

May this study, presenting only one phase of the early history of St. Mary's, be of some assistance in understanding and admiring the success of the early missionaries in overcoming many difficulties and succeeding so well in their efforts.

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## IN APPRECIATION

The author wishes to express his gratitude to a number of people for their assistance in completing this sketch and he extends his special thanks to: Father Charles Rice. C. M., who first proposed the project, then, by his encouragement and assistance, helped to complete the task: to Father Charles Shelby. C.M., who, having persevered through many alterations, additions and corrections in the text. has graciously offered to print it: to Mrs. Judy Kirn, who has rendered invaluable assistance in locating materials in the Seminary library and archives: finally, to Sister Felicitas Powers, R.S.M.. who kindly sent xerox copies of letters, some of them previously unknown to the author, from the archives of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

## Editorial Foreword

This important work had remained largely unknown. One reason may be that the title refers to the parish in Perryville, whereas much of the text involves more generally the Vincentians at Saint Mary's Seminary and their ministry, in addition to the life and development of the parish. Another reason for being unknown may be that the format in which it was published was informal, mimeographed, and spiral bound, and in relatively few copies.

Since it deserves to be known, I undertook to reformat the text, making it easier to read. I added illustrations and captions, mainly from the St. Vincent de Paul – Image Archive – <https://vincentianpersons.azurewebsites.net/StVincentImages/Home/ViewArchive/331>

In addition, the endnotes were changed to footnotes for easier reference, and the notes of with their original enumeration were placed in square brackets. The original endnotes also began their enumeration anew in each of the three chapters. These have been changed to consecutive enumeration. The References and notes, along with the Abbreviations page, have been moved to the front of the volume.

Father Bagen's spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, and other editorial details have been retained as he left them.

In addition, I identified some references to people and places, placing them in square brackets, either by added given names, or with explanatory remarks in the notes. These are shown as “JR Note.”

The author, the late John J. Bagen, C.M. (1913–1992), was born in Illinois, and entered the Vincentians in 1931. After his ordination in 1939, he was assigned to St. John’s Seminary, San Antonio in 1941, where he remained until he entered graduate studies at Catholic University of America in 1948, earning his Ph.D. in philosophy. His next assignment was at DePaul University from 1953, followed by an extensive career at St. Mary’s Seminary, Perryville, from 1964 to his retirement in 1981. He returned to his native Illinois in retirement at DePaul University and in 1988 returned to Perryville, where he died 30 January 1992.

In the paragraph above, “In Appreciation,” moved from the back of the original publication, he relates the story of the beginning of his research on the history of the Barrens. His numerous sources demonstrate his deep interest in the topic and his research abilities. He would have appreciated reading Richard J. Janet, *In Missouri’s Wilds. St. Mary’s of the Barrens and the American Catholic Church, 1818 to 2016*, Kirksville, Missouri, 2017, in addition to many other recent studies.

### **Enslaved People at St. Mary’s of the Barrens**

Among the recent studies are those dealing with the presence of enslaved people at the Barrens. Fathers Stafford Poole, C.M., and Douglas Slawson, C.M., prepared an important work on the topic: *Church and Slave in Perry County, Missouri 1818-1865*, Lewiston, NY/Queenston, ON, 1986. They wrote:

“Slaveholding at the seminary originated with Bishop Dubourg. The first slaves were sent there by him, not purchased by the Vincentians. The bishop owned the seminary and was ultimately responsible for its entire support. Although it had been incorporated, the title rested with him. There was no distinction between the bishop’s property, and the seminary’s, and this included slaves.” (p. 148)

Perhaps because of this fine distinction, Fr. Bagen chose not to deal with the question in his work, published the following year. It was an unfortunate decision, but his text appears here as he wrote it.



*The old College building, formerly on the site of the Administration building, later moved south to the site of the Student Building, as pictured here.*

## References and Notes

Unless otherwise noted, all letters of Bishop DuBourg, Fathers DeAndreis, Rosati, Odin and Timon, as well as Rosati's *Diary*, are copies of the originals typed by Father Souvay with the location of the original letter usually indicated by him on the letter itself.

## Abbreviations Used

ABA - Archdiocese of Baltimore Archives

ASLC - Archdiocese of St. Louis Chancery Archives

*RACHS* - *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*

SGRO - Ste. Genevieve Records Office

*SLCHR* - *St. Louis Catholic Historical Review*

SMSA - St. Mary's Seminary, Perryville, Mo., Archives [later DRMA, DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives, DePaul University Special Collections, Chicago, Illinois]

SVPR - St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Perryville, Mo., Records

VH - *Vincentian Heritage* [later VHJ, *Vincentian Heritage Journal*]



*John J. Bagen, C.M.*  
*(1913–1992)*



[1]

## CHAPTER I

### THE FIRST CATHOLIC SETTLERS

Apparently, the earliest explicit mention in historical records of any Catholics spending some time on the soil of what is now Perry County is to be found in the description of Marquette's first voyage down the Mississippi River in 1673. It would seem that Joliet and Marquette actually camped on, and partially examined, the southeast corner of the county near the now-abandoned town of Birmingham.<sup>1</sup> Some time later, on November 11, 1698, Father Jean Francois Buisson [de] Saint-Cosme (1667–1706) and his companions, on their voyage down the Mississippi, were detained by rain and camped in the present Perry County.<sup>2</sup> The place and nearby creek were known in subsequent years as Cape Saint-Cosme and Saint-Cosme Creek. The General Land Office in Washington<sup>3</sup> and a Mississippi River guide<sup>4</sup> used these titles. Unfortunately, the French pronunciation of Saint-Cosme was spelled by some early settlers as Cinque Hommes, a spelling that is still used today. To explain such a name, a legend was started that five men had drowned in the creek. Thus myth replaced history and the name of an early visitor to the area disappeared from the map of Perry County.

It was not until 1787, however, that Jean Baptiste Barsaloux and his father obtained a land grant in the Bois Brule section of modern Perry County and became permanent residents. Between 1794 and 1804, about eighty or ninety other predominantly Protestant families settled in that area.

During the last two decades or so of the eighteenth century there was a number of English speaking Catholics residing principally in Nelson, Marion, and Washington Counties, Kentucky. To avoid persecution in England and Ireland, their ancestors had migrated from the British Isles to Maryland. Then, after the Revolution, they had moved on to Kentucky for greater religious freedom. As there was usually only one priest there during that period they had to be satisfied with the occasional ministrations of Father Badin. Moreover, their financial condition did not enable them to acquire sufficient land to make farming profitable so, when the opportunity arose, some decided to seek a Spanish land grant in Upper Louisiana. The area in which many settled has been referred to by at least two authors as the *Bonnes*, a term that quite possibly should have been the *Barrens*.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Note 1] Louis Houck, *History of Missouri* (Chicago: Donnelley, 1908), pp. 161–162. See also: Charles L. Souvay, "Notes," *St. Louis Catholic Historical Review*, III (1921), 303–304: hereafter cited as *SLCHR*.

<sup>2</sup> [Note 2] John G. Shea, ed., *Early Voyages up and down the Mississippi* (Albany: Munsell, 1861), p. 68. See also: Souvay, *op. cit.* 304.

<sup>3</sup> [Note 3] Perry County Historical Society. Book Committee, *The Spanish Land Grants in Our Own Perry County*, 1984 supplement to the *Perry County Heritage*, 8–11: hereafter cited as *Spanish Land Grants*. Using a microfilm copy of the Land Office Records, the authors have used the terms, St. Cosmos and St. Cosme twice as often as Cinque Hommes to designate the water courses of 24 claims.

<sup>4</sup> [Note 4] Samuel Cumings, *The Western Pilot* (Cincinnati: Guilford, 1832), pp. 77–78. In this and in the 1841 edition (p. 82) the name is spelled St. Cormes, St. Corne and St. Combs. See also: letter of W. Breckenridge to Ben Blewett quoted in: James M. Breckenridge, *William Clark Breckenridge* (St. Louis: 1932), p. 199.

<sup>5</sup> [Note 5] [Robert Sidney Douglass] *History of Southeast Missouri* (Chicago: Goodspeed, 1888), p. 524. See also: *A Modern Eden: a History of Perry County* (Perryville: Republican, 1895), p. 11.

In 1796, Joseph Fenwick, then living in Kentucky, was reported to have received from the Spanish governor a land grant of two thousand acres for himself on Apple Creek at the mouth of Indian Creek, as well as twenty thousand acres along the Mississippi at the mouth of Brazeau Creek for those who might wish to migrate with him to Upper Louisiana. In addition, the governor promises to have a chapel built and an English priest to attend them.<sup>6</sup> Such concessions induced a number of other Maryland Catholics in Kentucky to think seriously of moving to Upper Louisiana in the future. To make this move was somewhat difficult. First, one had to go there, select a good piece of land, apply for a land grant, plant some simple crops to claim cultivation, and then return for the rest of the family.

Joseph Fenwick and his family moved westward in 1797, and, while building a home on their own land, lived in New Bourbon. Isidore Moore, on his second trip to Upper Louisiana, visited Fenwick in New Bourbon, but in his own words “a difference of opinions in worldly matters and some other circumstances prevented our wishing to be very close to each other.” So Moore chose a section of land about three miles east of the present site of Perryville at a spring on the Cinque Hommes Creek. It was not until February 9th 1801, that Moore returned with his wife, two children and an orphan girl, the first Catholic settlers in what was later to be known as the Barrens. In June, Joseph [2] Tucker and some of his sons visited him. That fall, Tucker and his family moved to the same general area.<sup>7</sup>

Joseph Tucker had a grant of 640 acres just south of the present site of Brewer. Of his nine sons and a daughter, three of the sons also had acquired equal amounts of land. His daughter, Mary, was married to one of the few Irishmen among these settlers, Aquila Hagan, who laid claim to 640 acres just north of his father-in-law's land. With this influx of Tuckers, it is not surprising that Thomas Henry Layton wrote, a century or so later, that “my father often told me that this was known as the *Tucker Settlement*.”<sup>8</sup> The father of Thomas Layton was John Baptist, son of Joseph and nephew of, among others, Zachariah, Ignatius and John Layton and through marriage, of Joseph Manning, all of whom are to play an important role in the future of the parish. By 1804, almost thirty other Catholic families had settled in the same area in and around the present locations of Perryville and Brewer. Together with the Catholic families in the Fenwick Settlement and the Bois Brule section, there were now about forty-five Catholic families in the community.

Just when, and by whom, the name *Tucker Settlement* was replaced by *Barrens* is difficult to determine. Back in Kentucky, as late as 1809, *Tucker Settlement* was still being used.<sup>9</sup> Quite likely, the term *Barrens* was not unknown to those in Upper Louisiana because it had been used to designate five or six thousand square miles back in Kentucky. Mr. Bayless Hardin, the officer in charge of historical research for the Kentucky State Historical Society, explains its origin in the following way. It was a custom of the Indians to burn the trees and underbrush to provide a more vigorous pasturage for the buffalo and other large game. When the white men came, they were

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<sup>6</sup> [Note 6] Badin to Carroll, August 24, 1796. Quoted in: "Letters from the Baltimore Archives," *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, XIX (1908), 270: hereafter cited as *RACHS*.

<sup>7</sup> [Note 7] Isidore Moore to Rosati, September 29, 1837. Archdiocese of St. Louis Chancery Archives: hereafter cited as ASLC.

<sup>8</sup> [Note 8] Layton to Shaw, September 6, 1912. Original letter in St. Mary's Seminary Archives: hereafter cited as SMSA.

<sup>9</sup> [Note 9] Nerinckx to Carroll, September 15, 1809. Archdiocese of Baltimore Archives: hereafter cited as ABA.

slow to believe in the fertility of any soil untenanted by trees and so gave the name *Barrens* to that section of Kentucky. Time proved that the soil was indeed quite fertile but the name persisted. He goes on to say that this custom of the Indians was not limited to Kentucky but was rather common to other places where the Indians lived.<sup>10</sup>

In view of the fact that Missouri was once the home of various Indian tribes, it is not surprising then that part of present Perry County was called Bois Brule (Burnt Forest) and that the early Vincentians used the Latin title *Parochia Sanctae Mariae ad Silvam Crematam* (Parish of Saint Mary's at the Burnt Forest) in the oldest extant record books, dating back to 1822, of baptisms, marriages and deaths. In the archives at St. Mary's Seminary there is an early seal of the college which reads: *Collegium Sanctae Mariae ad Silvam Crematam*. Father Rosati, with his usual curiosity about matters of this type, probably asked why *Barrens* was used as the name of this area. In one of his letters, he explains that the seminary is in the midst of a country containing many trees of various types but, since they are not dense, this section is called *Barrens*, not because it is not fertile, but because it is not heavily wooded.<sup>11</sup>

When Louisiana formally became part of the Union on March 10, 1804, there were approximately 145 Spanish land grants claimed by settlers in what is now Perry County. The majority of these claims were located in the northern section of the county beginning at a point just south of present Perryville and running northeast to the Mississippi and northwest to the present boundary between Ste. Genevieve and Perry Counties. Other claims, much smaller in number, were along the Brazeau Creek and on the Mississippi near the present site of Wittenberg. Water supply, whether from the river, creeks or springs, seems to have been a deciding factor in locating one's claim. Unfortunately, many of these claims had never been properly registered in accordance with Spanish law. Residency on, and cultivation of, the land were the bases on which settlers had to rely in order to substantiate their claims. At that time, many grants had not been duly surveyed.

On March 26, 1804, Congress divided the Louisiana Purchase into two territories, Orleans and Louisiana, and also declared retroactively as null and [3] void all grants of land issued between the Treaty of San Ildefonso on October 1, 1800, in which Spain secretly relinquished her claims in the Mississippi Valley to France, and the actual cession of the land to the United States on December 20, 1803. After a heated protest, this act was repealed on March 2, 1805, by a new act providing for a Board of Land Commissioners to determine the validity of land claims. This resulted in extending the date of valid claims to December 20, 1803, and limiting those claims to one square mile in size – all provided that the claimant followed the laws, usages and customs of the Spanish government and that actual habitation and cultivation had been in effect by that date. Such a decision still left many settlers in doubt as to the legal ownership of their land. Finally, by an act of March 3, 1813, Congress conferred 640 acres to practically every person who had previously held that amount but had been granted less by the Board of Land Commissioners. On April 12, 1814, Congress decreed that grants made by a French or Spanish concession, warrant, or order to survey issued prior to March 10, 1804, were confirmed if the claimant was an actual

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<sup>10</sup> [Note 10] Hardin to North, April 17, 1943. Original in SMSA.

<sup>11</sup> [Note 11] Rosati to Father Thomas, March 6, 1819. SMSA



resident of the territory at the time of concession.<sup>12</sup> Thus ten years of doubt had passed before the validity of some of these claims was acknowledged. Proof of residency and cultivation was still necessary for many of these claimants. This uncertainty of land titles and the increased cost of land were some of the reasons for immigration to the Barrens gradually tapering off between 1804 and 1817.

Joining the Union also meant higher taxes which presented another problem after the comparatively lenient attitude of the French and Spanish authorities in this matter. However, recognizing the lack of financial means among the settlers, the government accepted lead and deer skins in lieu of currency. Despite these experiences with the government, the people of the Barrens were still rather active citizens as will be observed later in the separation of Perry County from Ste. Genevieve County, in the development of the city of Perryville and in its selection as the county seat.

While some of these settlers were still in doubt as to the validity of their land claims, the Barrens area was affected by a natural disaster, the New Madrid earthquake. On December 16, 1811, January 23, 1812, and February 7, 1812, there occurred the three principal shocks of sufficient amplitude to be felt in Cincinnati and from Canada to the Gulf coast. There were numberless other shocks some of which were large enough to be noticed as far away as Louisville. In general, the area of greatest shaking was about 40,000 square miles. Little is known how far west the quake was felt due to the fact that, at that time, the area was relatively uninhabited by the white man. Doubtless a number of homes in the Barrens suffered but there is apparently no extant account of the resulting damage.

These pioneer Catholic families in the Barrens were a tightly knit group. Practically all of them were related to others either by their own marriages or by those of their offspring. It was not unusual for a family to raise ten or more children. A number of those coming after 1804 were relatives of the early settlers, or their children married members of the pioneer families. When a spouse died, the survivor, after a few years, usually remarried. For the later arrivals, there were always helping hands for building homes and assisting in many other ways. Thus marriage ties were one of the factors accounting for the close bond between these early Catholics. Their comparatively close geographical location also tended to strengthen this tie and made communication among them a rather common occurrence despite the distance that may lie between some of their homes, and the lack of anything like modern day roads. It did not take a newcomer long to learn the way to the other homes in their little community. However, they did not ignore their non-Catholic neighbors. Any number of Catholics testified on behalf of Protestants that they had established residency on, and cultivation of, their land grants in order to have these claims recognized by the govern- [4] ment.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, there was a certain rugged individualistic spirit required. Each family had to be quite independent when it came to farming, caring for stock, etc. The women contributed to this independence by becoming quite efficient in spinning and dyeing thread and making both summer and winter clothing including both buckskin breeches and shoes. The nearest stores, and

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<sup>12</sup> [Note 12] Lemont K. Richardson, "Private Land Claims in Missouri," *Missouri Historical Review*, in three parts, L (January, April, July, 1956), 138, 271, 382-383.

<sup>13</sup> [Note 13] Spanish Land Grants, *passim*.

the nearest doctors, were in Ste. Genevieve, a good twenty miles from the closest home, and with prices that usually taxed the financial capacity of the early settlers. There were no schools so the fundamentals of education had to be passed from one generation to the next. One peculiar result of this was that most men could read and affix their signature to a document such as a deed whereas the women would often have to be told the contents of a document by a clerk of the court and then make their mark on the document.

The early Catholics had lived in Maryland and Kentucky where they had seen slaves being used in parishes and religious houses. Their general attitude seems to have been that slavery is a moral evil but somewhat of an economic necessity. They took care to provide for their slaves' religious instruction, baptism when desired, and burial in the parish cemetery without discrimination. Church records referred to them as servants. The Catholic settlers made an honest effort to keep slaves within their own family and to take care that members of their slaves' families were not separated.<sup>14</sup>

Before coming to Upper Louisiana, these Anglo-Saxon settlers had Father Badin as their pastor back in Kentucky. Having come to America in January of 1792, Stephen Theodore Badin was elevated to the priesthood on May 25, 1793, and became known as the "Proto-Priest of the United States" because he was the first priest ordained in this country. His education in Europe was in a more rigid school of theology which has been described as one which "savored greatly of the Jansenistic spirit."<sup>15</sup> Father [Charles] Souvay tempers this somewhat by writing that the relative rigorism found in some European schools of theology had less to do with Jansenistic doctrines than with the reaction against the "baneful principles with which the French Encyclopedists had saturated the minds."<sup>16</sup> At any rate, the Catholic settlers in what is now Perry County had a firm grasp on their faith and endeavored to practice their religion in a serious way. It is little wonder, then, that the lack of even an occasional visit by a priest rather deeply distressed them.

So, in view of the promise made in 1796 to Joseph Fenwick of a chapel and a priest, one of the real disappointments for these early settlers was the absence of a priest in their midst. The nearest pastor was at Ste. Genevieve. "Families occasionally made the journey to Ste. Genevieve for marriages but almost all baptisms and burials were performed in private."<sup>17</sup> Somewhat in desperation, on August 14, 1806, they sent a letter by Mr. M. Tucker to their former pastor, Father Badin, to ask his help in obtaining for them at least the occasional services of a priest. The letter was written by Isidore Moore, then signed by Joseph Tucker, Isidore Moore and more than forty other men of the area including the Fenwick Settlement and Bois Brule. Since the original letter is now in the archives of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Father Badin evidently forwarded the letter to Bishop [John] Carroll who had been appointed Administrator Apostolic of the Louisiana Territory. The general tenor of this appeal is summarized in the following paragraph.

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<sup>14</sup> [Note 14] Timothy J. O'Rourke, *Perry County, Missouri: Religious Haven in the Trans-Mississippi West* (Parsons, Kan.: Brefney, 1979), pp. 18–19.

<sup>15</sup> [Note 15] Peter Guilday, *The Life and Times of John Carroll, Archbishop of Baltimore (1735–1815)* (New York: Encyclopedia Press, 1922), p. 520.

<sup>16</sup> [Note 16] Charles L. Souvay, "Notes," *SLCHR*, III (1921), 88.

<sup>17</sup> [Note 17] O'Rourke, op. cit., p. 27.

The people expressed their hope that Father Badin would inform the proper authority of their desire for a priest to come to them, at least every now and then, and stay with them for a month or so. This was the one thing they lacked in their new home. Otherwise, they were well satisfied with their situation: the land was well watered, produce beyond expectation, salt convenient, and lasting range for their stock. To leave all this and to return to Kentucky would involve a serious financial loss. At a recent meeting of the people, they agreed to provide whatever [5] is necessary for a clergyman to come and stay for a month or so and to donate two hundred acres for the support of the church.<sup>18</sup>

Whatever may have been the results of this letter, different accounts of the early pastoral care of the Barrens have been varied and interesting. O'Rourke, on page five of his *Maryland Catholics on the Frontier*, writes that "according to tradition, the first Mass was said at the home of Bede Moore." There is no indication, presumably, in this tradition as to the identity of the priest or the date on which the Mass was celebrated. In the *Centennial History of Perry County, Missouri*, a booklet without paging, chapter eight deals with "Religions" and states that Fathers [Paul] De St. Pierre, [James] Maxwell and Alier cared for the Barrens people until 1816. According to a recent history of Ste. Genevieve, "in February, 1797, St. Pierre made his last entry in the Ste. Genevieve parish records and by early April he was on his way back downriver never to return."<sup>19</sup> There seems to be no record anywhere of Father Alier but the missionary efforts of Father Maxwell will be the subject matter of the following paragraphs.

Late in 1837, Bishop Rosati, seeking information on the early history of the Barrens, asked Isidore Moore five questions, the last two of which dealt with the building of the old church and with the early missionaries who cared for the people there. In his letter of response, Moore, then 65 years old, modestly states that since he has "nothing but a frail and treacherous memory to rely on, there must be many errors." When one considers Moore's long and very successful career in a number of public offices, he is inclined to give credence to what Moore has to say. When there is any doubt in his mind as to the accuracy of his statements, he does not hesitate to mention this in the answers he gives.



*Site of the original parish church and surrounding cemetery*

<sup>18</sup> [Note 18] Congregation of St. Mary's to Father Badin, August 14, 1806. ABA.

<sup>19</sup> [Note 19] Carl J. Ekberg, *Colonial Ste. Genevieve: an Adventure on the Mississippi Frontier* (Gerald, Mo.: Patrice, 1985), p. 407.



When asked by Bishop Rosati just when the old church was built, Moore replies that the old chapel, a term perhaps used deliberately to distinguish it from the old church still in use at the time, was built in 1812. Father Maxwell, Vicar General, blessed it and said the first Mass in it, then served the congregation in 1813, but how often Moore does not recollect. He continues that Father Maxwell had previously said Mass a few times in the house of old Mr. Tucker, perhaps in the year 1806 or 1807. He also mentions another priest, Father O'Flinn, who also stayed but a short time and said Mass a few times at old Mr. Tucker's. This is probably the Father [Thomas] Flynn listed as having charge of the church in St. Louis from 1806 to 1808 by Spalding on page 136 in his life of Bishop Flaget.

In answer to the question as to when they began to have the regular services of a priest, Moore answers that in the fall of 1814, Bishop Flaget of Bardstown visited the Barrens in the company of Father Mary Joseph (Dunand). Thereafter, Father Dunand visited them regularly three or four times a year until Bishop DuBourg made other arrangements.<sup>20</sup>

Corroboration from other sources is available for some of these dates given by Moore such as the accidental death of Father Maxwell at Easter time in 1814 when he fell from his horse and the visit of Bishop Flaget in the Fall of 1814. Father Yealy, depending upon either the contents of Moore's letter or on the records of the church in Ste. Genevieve, gives much the same information about Father Maxwell's visits – he said Mass several times during 1806 and 1807 at the home of Joseph Tucker and, when a church was built by the people in 1812, he blessed it and returned to serve the congregation in 1813.<sup>21</sup>

In 1810, Archbishop Carroll received a letter in which forty-three men, presumably heads of families, condemned Father Maxwell for his personal conduct. It would appear from a letter of Father Badin to the archbishop that these men had acted under the leadership of Joseph Fenwick but just who the others were is uncertain since the original letter has not yet been found. Father Badin also mentions that twelve were unknown to him, seven were not much entitled to his esteem, and twenty-four were his former parishioners in Kentucky.<sup>22</sup> The substance of their charges, however, [6] can be found in the draft, in Archbishop Carroll's handwriting, of the letter he sent to Father Maxwell on May 30, 1810. He was accused of "wasting days and nights at the card table, gaming for large sums of money, even on Sundays, frequenting balls, and giving a dancing party at your house." The archbishop goes on to say that he is appointing Father Badin to investigate this matter in his name.<sup>23</sup>

Father Maxwell answered on November 17, 1810, by a letter in which he refused to submit to Father Badin because Father Badin would be both a party and a judge. He blames Joseph Fenwick as the instigator of a movement set on foot by Fenwick and Father Badin to have him removed from Ste. Genevieve and replaced by Father Badin. Father Maxwell also informed the archbishop that he will cease exercising the pastoral duties at Ste. Genevieve and other places and

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<sup>20</sup> [Note 20] Moore to Rosati, September 29, 1837. ASLC.

<sup>21</sup> [Note 21] Francis J. Yealy, *Sainte Genevieve: the Story of Missouri's Oldest Settlement* (Ste. Genevieve: Bicentennial Historical Committee, 1935), p. 99.

<sup>22</sup> [Note 22] Charles L. Souvay, "Notes," *SLCHR*, IV (1922), 231.

<sup>23</sup> [Note 23] Carroll to Maxwell, May 30, 1810; draft of letter in Carroll Letterbook III, 1799–1815, ABA.

asked for his successor to be appointed.<sup>24</sup> There followed an exchange of letters between Fathers Maxwell and Badin in which the latter states that he is happy that Father Maxwell objects to his making a judicial inquiry for which he has neither the leisure nor the inclination.<sup>25</sup>

This seems to have been the end of the investigation into the personal conduct of Father Maxwell. Moore's letter, cited above, indicates that he evidently remained as pastor of Ste. Genevieve and bore no ill-will against the people of the Barrens since he returned there in 1812 and 1813 to serve the people there.

The last author to be consulted regarding the early pastoral care of the Barrens is the Trappist pastor of Florissant, Father Marie Joseph Dunand, who was personally involved in serving the people at the Barrens three or four times a year from early 1814 until Bishop DuBourg arrived in April of 1818 to make more permanent arrangements for the care of the parish. Father Dunand eventually returned to France in 1820. A few years later, in 1823, his superior, the Rev. Father Abbot of La Trappe, Dom Augustine [de Lestrangle], received a letter from Father Dunand in which he describes his missionary activities in America since the year 1805. From this one can appreciate that the expression, "Father Dunand's *Diary*," refers not to a day by day entry giving names and dates, but to a description in general terms of his missionary efforts.<sup>26</sup>



*Reconstructed two story house, the Fenwick house, used by some of the pioneer Vincentians. It was moved from Apple Creek to the Saxon Lutheran Memorial, Frohna, MO  
Characteristic of early log buildings*

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<sup>24</sup> [Note 24] Maxwell to Carroll, November 17, 1810, ABA.

<sup>25</sup> [Note 25] Maxwell to Badin, November 17, 1810. Badin to Maxwell, December 23, 1810. ABA.

<sup>26</sup> [Note 26] Marie Joseph Dunand, "Epistle or *Diary* of the Reverend Father Marie Joseph Durand [sic]," translated from the French by Ella M. E. Flick, *RACHS*, part one, XXVI (1915), 328–29. In a reference to the title, translator states: "Surname of Father Marie Joseph is taken from a footnote in the October number of the *Catholic Historical Review* on Bishop Flaget's report to the Holy Father." p. 328.





*Bishop Louis William Valentine Dubourg*



Despite its length, it seems preferable to give the section dealing with the Barrens in Father Dunand's own words rather than to paraphrase so long a passage. They convey the impression the people made upon him, their efforts to preserve their faith, and the splendid leadership and guidance they received from Father Dunand to become a truly parochial unit and to take advantage of the situation confronting them in 1818.

On one of my Journeys on which I encountered all kinds of difficulties and dangers from robbers or from crocodiles, of which there are a great number in this country and which have mouths wide enough to swallow a man whole, since they are about twenty-five feet long, and can seize in their mouth an ox by the middle of its body.<sup>27</sup> I arrived at the house of M. Tucker, a good Catholic who had eight sons and one daughter, all except the youngest married and settled about him in good homes. We had travelled a long time on this marshy ground, in fear every minute of sinking with our horses, and surrounded on all sides by wild beasts and enormous serpents.

But we were well repaid for all our trouble by the warm reception of our excellent Catholic and his family. For seventeen years they had not seen a priest. I enquired how they had passed their Sundays and holy days, without Mass. They answered that on those days all the families of the district assembled three times; the first time they recited the prayers of the Mass; the second time they recited the beads or other prayers and followed this by singing hymns and canticles: and the third time some one of the better Instructed taught catechism not only to the children but to the married folks as well. I could not help admiring this beautiful arrangement, which the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of righteousness and simplicity, has established among these pious planters, so simple and so free from malice.

I imagined myself carried back to that blessed epoch of the birth of the [7] Church. I fancied I saw those first Christians Instructed by the Apostles and so united by their charity that they were but one heart and one soul. I would have liked well to have remained with such good people and to have chosen this holy spot for my home but Divine Providence called me elsewhere. However, I did not wish to leave these virtuous souls without giving them hope of again seeing me. Finally to preserve, or increase, if such were possible, the concord reigning amongst them, I advised them to build a church.

“It is the one thing you lack,” I said to them. “From it you will draw the greatest benefit. On Sundays you could all assemble there. Some one of your number of good reputation and who to piety adds an exact knowledge of his religion, could teach catechism or give some pious reading. You might chant the psalms, some canticles or hymns. All this would be a great aid to fervor and a bulwark against Protestants who will not dare attack you, seeing you so well united. God, for his part, will bless you abundantly and when you are all assembled in His Name He will be pleased to be in your midst.” I added as a last motive for their encouragement that if they followed this advice I would return from time to time to visit them and celebrate for them the Holy Sacrifice. I then bade them good-bye and continued my journey. But if I was not with them in body, my heart remained with them.

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<sup>27</sup> JR note: Crocodiles, or more likely alligators, have been found as far north as Memphis; they cannot survive cold winters in Illinois or Missouri.

On the following day they met to consider the building of a church. It was resolved to do so by common agreement. They chose a very beautiful site. Beginning the next day, some prepared the materials, and others worked at its construction with such ardor that in less than two months the edifice was under cover. There were two hundred workers. When it was in readiness, M. Tucker knowing where I lived, came to remind me of my promise. I had been taxing my strength too much, for I had travelled over a region of more than three hundred and fifty leagues visiting various settlements in the Upper Louisiana. I likewise had gone to visit congregations beyond the Wisconsin [River]: and this new foundation which was on the opposite side presented fresh hardships. But I had pledged myself and it was necessary to add this congregation to those I already attended. I held for these good people a feeling of affection that attracted me towards them. Nevertheless difficulties and dangers of travel caused a kind of repugnance. It was necessary to cross several rivers which were very dangerous when high.

However, I overcame all these difficulties. I did not wish to show less courage than the good old man whom these obstacles had not hindered from coming to seek me, The voyage was laborious, but their joy at seeing me in their midst rewarded me abundantly and Induced me to return there several times.

M. Flaget, Bishop of Kentucky, came to give Confirmation In my French parish, and I begged him when he had finished to visit this new mission. The good report I gave of It made him comply most willingly with my request. The rivers had subsided and we crossed them without difficulty. Many of the congregation came as far as St. Genevieve, which is seven leagues farther up to meet us. Several of the prominent people of the city accompanied Monseigneur as far as the settlement. On the next day after our arrival everybody gathered in the church and Monseigneur preached so fervently that tears flowed from the eyes of all present. We remained nearly nineteen days with them. Much of this time was spent In Baptizing, in preaching and in the confessional

When we were leaving I promised to see them again In a little while and stay an entire month. They were overjoyed. I kept my promise, and when I arrived I found that the seed which Monseigneur had planted in these well prepared hearts had produced fruit a hundredfold. Their fervor was admirable: their conspicuous piety and virtues spread In all directions the most beneficent results....

I was so well pleased with these good people that I have since returned there four times a year, although they are forty leagues [about 130 miles] from my parish. The good Mr. Tucker received me in his home. One day on arriving there I found him ill. I administered the last Sacraments to him and soon after he ended his days full of merit before God. He left some valuable donations to the church in his will.

Every time I visited this congregation I had the good fortune of making some converts of one or the other sex. [8] These new converts were more fervent than the older Catholics. They had more zeal for the conversion of heretics and were often the first cause of their return to the Church, as In all their conversations with Protestants who appeared to have



dispositions to become Catholics they never ceased to encourage them to give up their errors and return to the true religion. They Instructed and prepared them little by little; they lent them books of controversy: and when they were fully decided, presented them to the priest.

When I learned that M. Dubourg, the newly chosen Bishop of Louisiana, intended to establish his See in the state of Missouri, that piece of land on which the church of my good Americans had been built seemed to me most appropriate for an institution. Persuaded that nothing would contribute more to perpetuating the good in this parish than an educational institution, I decided to propose to them that they buy the full depth of their land for this purpose.

On the following Sunday I preached on the great advantages of a school for the education of the young and especially for the training of young ecclesiastics. I made them feel that a good work of this kind would place them in a position of never wanting priests. I contented myself on that day with this opening and did not explain matters further: but I said to them that, wishing solely for their happiness, I had for the morrow something important to tell them and that I therefore begged them to be present at Mass.

They all came, impatient to know what I had to say to them. I then proposed that they buy the ground mentioned above for a college or seminary: and fearing they might think I wished to run them into useless expense, since so large an edifice could serve for nothing while they lacked priests for such an institution, I told them of the coming visit of the Bishop and a large number of ecclesiastics, who came to Louisiana only for the purpose of founding an Institution, and who would be delighted at an offer so advantageous and so well adapted to the accomplishment of their aims. I added that I might have proposed this good work to others, but knowing their zeal I had preferred addressing myself to them, They listened to me with pleasure and on the spot the matter was settled. The owner of the land was willing to make some sacrifice, and he sold it at a very reasonable price: moreover, that he also might have a hand in the good work he gratuitously gave an eighth part of the land. When Monseigneur arrived he built a seminary on the ground and placed in charge of it the Lazarists, who had come from Rome to work on the mission.<sup>28</sup>

Some of the variations found in a comparison of the letters of Father Dunand and Isidore Moore may be somewhat reconciled. The home of Joseph Tucker, for instance, was situated just south of the present town of Brewer and so was ten miles from the Catholics in Bois Brule and about twenty miles from those in the Fenwick Settlement. Communications being what they were in those days, it is possible that a good number of Catholics never knew of Father Maxwell's saying Mass there especially if he arrived unexpectedly and stayed but a day or two. In view of the letter written in 1810 to Archbishop Carroll concerning his character, one might wonder whether some would have even come if they knew Father Maxwell was to say Mass. This might explain why some of the congregation had not seen a priest in seventeen years.

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<sup>28</sup> [Note 27] Marie Joseph Dunand, "Diary of the Reverend Father Marie Joseph Durand [sic]," translated from the French by Ella M. E. Flick, *RACHS*, part two, XXVII (1916), 45–50. See note above on surname of Father Marie Joseph.

The old chapel, mentioned by Moore as having been built in 1812, could have been too small to be considered a church for so many people or could have become rather dilapidated. One fact does seem to stand out, though, that Father Dunand had visited the Barrens quite some time before he came there with Bishop Flaget.

Some of the events mentioned by Father Dunand can be given approximate dates and a person or two positively identified. It would seem that he first visited the Barrens around the beginning of 1814 and, since a church seemed to be his first priority, the old church was built perhaps early in 1814. The biographer of Bishop Flaget dates his visit to the Barrens from October 5th to the 19th in 1814.<sup>29</sup> Joseph Tucker died sometime between March 10th and July 12th, 1816, and left the Congregation of the Barrens one hundred dollars and a [9] silver chalice.<sup>30</sup> As will be described later, the location of the church was at the northern end of the land grant of Ignatius Layton, a site far more centrally located than the home of Joseph Tucker.

Occasionally one hears that the seminary was located at Perryville because it was believed that Ste. Genevieve, and not St. Louis, would be the principal city in Missouri along the Mississippi. Ste. Genevieve, at that time, had the largest number of Catholic families, a well organized parish, a rectory, a church and a native son, Father Pratte, as the resident pastor.<sup>31</sup> But St. Louis had been the district headquarters in 1804, when Congress had created the district of Louisiana; again it was the seat of government when the territory of Louisiana was created in 1805; and 1812, when the territory of Missouri was created, it was again the territorial capital. It is little wonder, then, that Bishop DuBourg finally selected St. Louis as the center of his missionary activities in Upper Louisiana and as the location of his proposed seminary. As will be seen later, his choice of Perryville as the site of his seminary stemmed not from any desire of proximity to a large city but rather from the offer of land and financial assistance which, under the circumstances facing him at the time, he could hardly refuse. However, he was rather hesitant about going directly to St. Louis where there was no resident pastor who could announce his coming and prepare the people for the presence of a bishop in their midst.

While still en route from Europe to his diocese, Bishop DuBourg sent word from Baltimore to Bishop Flaget asking him to go to St. Louis to tell the people of his intention to live there, to ask them for financial aid and to prepare a proper residence. The good bishop of Bardstown readily agreed to do so and in the company of Fathers DeAndreis and Rosati, Brother [Martin] Blanka, and a Mr. Tucker as guide, set out on horseback for the three hundred mile journey on October 1, 1817.<sup>32</sup> On October 17th, they arrived in St. Louis and found both the church and the rectory in a pitiful condition. Due to the influence and persuasion of Bishop Flaget, the people agreed to help in the restoration of these buildings and to take up a collection for their new bishop.

No doubt informed by Mr. Tucker of Bishop Flaget's presence in St. Louis, the Barrens congregation lost no time in sending two delegates to the bishop asking him to intercede with

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<sup>29</sup> [Note 28] Martin J. Spalding, *Sketches of the Life, Times, and Character of the Rt. Rev. Joseph Flaget, First Bishop of Louisville* (Louisville: Webb & Levering, 1852), p. 138.

<sup>30</sup> [Note 29] Timothy J. O'Rourke, *Maryland Catholics on the Frontier; the Missouri and Texas Settlements* (Parsons, Kan.: Brefney Press, 1973), p. 331.

<sup>31</sup> JR Note: Henry Pratte was the first Missouri-born priest of the diocese of Louisiana.

<sup>32</sup> [Note 30] Spalding, *op. cit.*, p. 169,

Bishop DuBourg to accept their offer of a church and land in order to have his seminary located in their midst. The good bishop remembered the people, the site and the church from his visit to the Barrens three years previously, and was again touched by the zeal of these people. So the delegates were received very kindly and were given every hope for the fulfillment of their request. Fathers DeAndreis and Rosati must have marveled at the manner in which Divine Providence was working on their behalf. His mission in St. Louis being now completed, Bishop Flaget placed Father Pratt, the pastor in Ste. Genevieve, in charge of making arrangements for the coming of Bishop DuBourg to St. Louis and then asked Father DeAndreis and Brother Blanka to remain in Ste. Genevieve to care for the parish there. Then the bishop and Father Rosati started their journey back to Bardstown where they finally arrived on November 6th.<sup>33</sup>

While Father DeAndreis was in Ste. Genevieve, as Vicar General of Bishop DuBourg, he listed all the parishes in the vicinity of St. Louis giving their location, distance from St. Louis, number of families, the priests needed to attend them, and the means at hand to support them. Writing of the Barrens, he located it 81 miles southwest of St. Louis, consisting of 80 families, a log church dedicated to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and added that the people had begun to build a priests' house in the form of a "Petit Seminaire." In this report the size of the congregation at the Barrens was exceeded only by Ste. Genevieve with 140 families and St. Louis with 125 families.<sup>34</sup> The growth of the Barrens congregation was perhaps principally due to the marriages of the numerous offspring of the early [10] settlers and to the immigration of their relatives and friends during that period. Though not likely an average example, Isidore Moore, the first settler in the Barrens area, was the nephew of the wife of old Joseph Tucker and had 15 children eventually marry into neighboring families.<sup>35</sup>

Around the end of December in 1817, the Barrens people were surprised and delighted to welcome a rather unexpected visitor, their former pastor in Kentucky, Father Badin. He had accompanied Bishops DuBourg and Flaget, along with a seminarian, on their journey from Bardstown to St. Louis where Bishop Flaget, at the invitation of Bishop DuBourg, was to install the latter formally as Bishop of Louisiana. Father Badin had left the group when they had arrived at the widow Fenwick's place on December 28th, to visit his former parishioners briefly and then rejoined the bishops at Ste. Genevieve as they continued on their way to St. Louis, where they arrived on January 6, 1818.<sup>36</sup>

Knowing that their new bishop was finally in St. Louis, the people of the Barrens again sent a delegation there, this time the trustees of the parish, Aquila Hagan, Wilfred Layton and John Layton, to repeat their offer to the bishop of their church and the 640 acres on which it stood.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> [Note 31] Charles L. Souvay, "History of the Lazarists in the U. S.," pp. 92–99. Unpublished original typed copy in SMSA. See also: J. B. Semeria, comp., *Sketches of the Life of the Very Rev. Felix DeAndreis, First Superior of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States* (Baltimore: Kelly, Hedian & Piet, 1861) pp. 135–137: hereafter cited as *Sketches*.

<sup>34</sup> [Note 32] Joseph Rosati, "Memoires sur l'Etablissement de la Congrégation de la Mission dans les Etats Unis d'Amerique," pp. 46–47. Photostat of original in SMSA: hereafter cited as Rosati, *Memoires*. Father Stafford Poole, C. M. has translated this work in serial form so corresponding passages will be indicated in this way: *Vincentian Heritage* III (1982), 144–146: hereafter cited as *VH*.

<sup>35</sup> [Note 33] Timothy J. O'Rourke, *Perry County, Missouri* (Parsons, Kan.: Brefney Press, 1979), appendix I.

<sup>36</sup> [Note 34] Souvay, *op. cit.*, pp. 103–105, SMSA.

<sup>37</sup> JR note: In U.S. land surveying, 640 acres constitutes a "section," usually one square mile in extent.

“The bishop was charmed at the simplicity, edified by the zeal and struck by the honesty of these good people: and if he did not return at once an answer of acceptance, he held out before them encouraging hopes.”<sup>38</sup> That the bishop had reached at least a tentative decision is evident from a letter, written on February 8th, from Father DeAndreis to Father Rosati: “Mgr. is fixed on establishing us at *Bois Brule*, where he thinks of going as soon as possible, in order to superintend the construction of the building, ...”<sup>39</sup> It would be a month or two before the bishop would be able to leave St. Louis, his presence there being essential for planning and directing the renovation of his home and the replacing of his crumbling church with a new one. His desire was also to become better acquainted with his new parishioners and to preside at the numerous meetings required for planning the new church and for the awarding of contracts. In time his home had been made habitable, ground was broken for the new “cathedral” and, on the Sunday after Easter, March 29, 1818, the corner stone was laid with due solemnity. A few days later he was ready to visit the Barrens and to investigate personally the situation existing there.<sup>40</sup>

Just prior to this, on March 23, 1818, Ignatius Layton, owner of the 640 acres on which the church stood, had his claim surveyed by Henry Eliot and recorded at the Surveyors Office in St. Louis as survey number 845. However he did neglect to obtain a certificate for his claim which would have entitled him to an official Patent for this tract from the United States. It was only on September 22, 1826, that Bishop Rosati obtained this certificate, number 1049, which resulted in a printed form of this Patent, signed by President Adams and the Commissioner of the General Land Office, from the United States on October 8, 1828, in which the owner is listed as Louis William Dubourg as assignee of Ignatius Layton.<sup>41</sup> This would indicate that the trustees of the parish, as such, never owned the land.

Compared to later methods, surveys at that time were somewhat difficult for the ordinary man to determine accurately since they consisted of the distances in chains and links between trees of different types with their diameters measured in inches and by the limits of a neighboring grant surveyed in the same manner. It is little wonder, then, that there was an occasional mistake in the exact limits of one’s claim as will be seen later regarding the seminary property. In general, the tracts of Ignatius Layton and his immediate neighbors appear to have run in a northeasterly direction. Ignatius Layton’s grant was somewhat in the shape of a rectangular parallelogram with the northeast corner as well as the land to the east belonging to his brother, John Layton, Jr. To the west was the grant of his brother-in-law, Joseph Manning, with an additional tract running southeasterly and crossing the northern boundary at the present Sycamore Lane. Zachariah Layton, [11, map]

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<sup>38</sup> [Note 35] *Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>39</sup> [Note 36] DeAndreis to Rosati, February 8, 1818. SMSA.

<sup>40</sup> [Note 37] Souvay, *op cit.*, p. 113. SMSA. See also: DeAndreis to Rosati, April 2, 1818. SMSA.

<sup>41</sup> [Note 38] Original deed dated December 12, 1826. SMSA. Original Patent in SMSA.





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another brother, had arrived too late to receive a land grant but had been given a piece of land in the southern portion of his father's grant which bordered partially on the remaining north side. To the south, there was no land grant. The map on the preceding page illustrates more clearly the relative positions of these land grants.

About the beginning of April, Bishop DuBourg, accompanied by Father Dunand, finally had his first opportunity to visit the Barrens.

Having examined the nature of the soil, the condition of the people, the prospects which the future held out, the bishop found, a quarter of a mile north of the present site of the Seminary, on the left side of what in after years, because of the rows of sycamores, was called Sycamore Lane, the little cemetery, about two acres in area: in the center stood a log-building, about forty by forty, one story and a half high, shingled, weatherboarded, opening westward and southward: this was the church, erected early in 1814.

Naturally there were meetings with the people of the parish, a group which deeply impressed the bishop, Attending at least some of the meetings was a delegation from nearby Apple Creek who also wished the Bishop to select their area as the location of his future seminary. After some heated and lengthy discussions, the bishop decided on the Barrens as the site for his seminary.<sup>42</sup>

The church was located in the northeast corner of the tract of Ignatius Layton and probably quite close to the home of Joseph Manning. In subsequent visits to the Barrens during the building of the seminary, and probably also on this first visit, Bishop DuBourg lived in Joseph Manning's home. He gradually grew to trust the judgment of Manning and, in later years, would recommend to Father Rosati to consult him before making some decisions. Ignatius Layton had other pieces of property in the area either through inheritance or by purchase.

The next order of business for the bishop was to come to some agreement with the people that would guarantee their financial and material assistance for the priests and for the construction of his seminary. Finally an agreement was reached which took the following form:

1. A tax shall be levied on all Catholics of the settlement for the purchase of the land destined for the new foundation (\$900).
2. The people of the parish should engage themselves to do personally their share of the work in the construction of the building.
3. A sum of \$7500.00 shall be subscribed by the people of the parish, to be paid in five yearly installments of \$1500.00 each, for the purpose of aiding in the erection on the premises of a Seminary of learning, contributing to the expense of the church services, and to the maintenance of the missionaries.

The total amount once paid, the Catholics of the settlement shall be free from all further obligation either of assuring a salary to the priests, or of extraordinary contributions. They shall, in return, convey the title of the property to the Bishop. They agree, moreover,

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<sup>42</sup> [Note 39] Souvay, *op. cit.*, p. 114. SMSA.

to feed during the first year, the crew of workmen engaged in the construction of the buildings.<sup>43</sup>

A few comments on each of the paragraphs in the above agreement may be in order. From the wording of the first, it is obvious that the Barrens people had not yet raised sufficient funds to purchase the 640 acres from Ignatius Layton. Since there is no date given for the above agreement in the secondary sources, it is not known whether the following act of Ignatius Layton occurred before or after this agreement or whether it was at the instigation of Bishop DuBourg or not. The attitude of the bishop concerning lay trustees and the ownership of church property was well known as is indicated in the third paragraph above. Whatever may have been the cause or occasion, the fact remains that on April 10, 1818, Ignatius Layton and his wife placed [13] themselves under a bond of \$1,800 to Bishop DuBourg, and his heirs or assigns, guaranteeing the delivery to Bishop DuBourg of a deed to 640 acres bordering on the lands of Joseph Manning, John Layton and Zachariah Layton. This was signed by Ignatius Layton and his wife and witnessed by M. Dunand and Joseph Manning.<sup>44</sup> It was not recorded, however, until the bishop returned in August. Such a bond, it has been said, was usually for twice the amount of the purchase price.

As for the second paragraph, the size of the proposed seminary, to be described shortly, was simply beyond the expertise of the ordinary settler, a fact readily realized by the bishop himself. But the basement could be excavated and the foundations laid by the parishioners. So the bishop singled out Zachariah Layton, John Layton, Aquila Hagan and Joseph Manning as a committee to keep watch over the construction. They led the others by their own personal efforts and the rest followed their example by helping in the various tasks and by lending their oxen, horses and wagons whenever needed.<sup>45</sup> Bishop DuBourg, on his return to St. Louis, secured the services of a professional carpenter named Badaud whom he sent to the Barrens as soon as the foundations were ready.<sup>46</sup>

The comments of Rothensteiner on the third paragraph are indicative of difficulties to come when he writes that the “sum of \$7,500 was certainly a most noble offering, made at a time when money was scarce and many of the colonists were beginners.”<sup>47</sup> A little more than a year later Bishop DuBourg also recognized the impossibility of their raising such an amount and formed a new agreement which seemed to replace this one.

Shortly after his return to St. Louis, Bishop DuBourg informed Father Rosati back in Kentucky of his needs at the Barrens, of the necessity of the group there improving their English and a general description of the proposed seminary. Badly in need of skilled workers, he says that he has already asked Bishop Flaget to direct his Flemish band of cultivating Brothers to depart immediately under the guidance of their saintly Father DeLacroix. He asks Father Rosati to add four more to this group and gives rather specific directions as to how to reach the Barrens.

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<sup>43</sup> [Note 40] Martin J. O'Malley, “The Centenary of the Foundation of the St. Louis Diocesan Seminary,” *SLCHR*, I (1918), 48.

<sup>44</sup> [Note 41] Ste. Genevieve County Court House. Recorder's Office, Book C, p. 70: hereafter cited as SGRO.

<sup>45</sup> [Note 42] Rosati, *Memoirs*, pp. 65–67. SMSA. *VH*, IV, 2 (1983) 116–117.

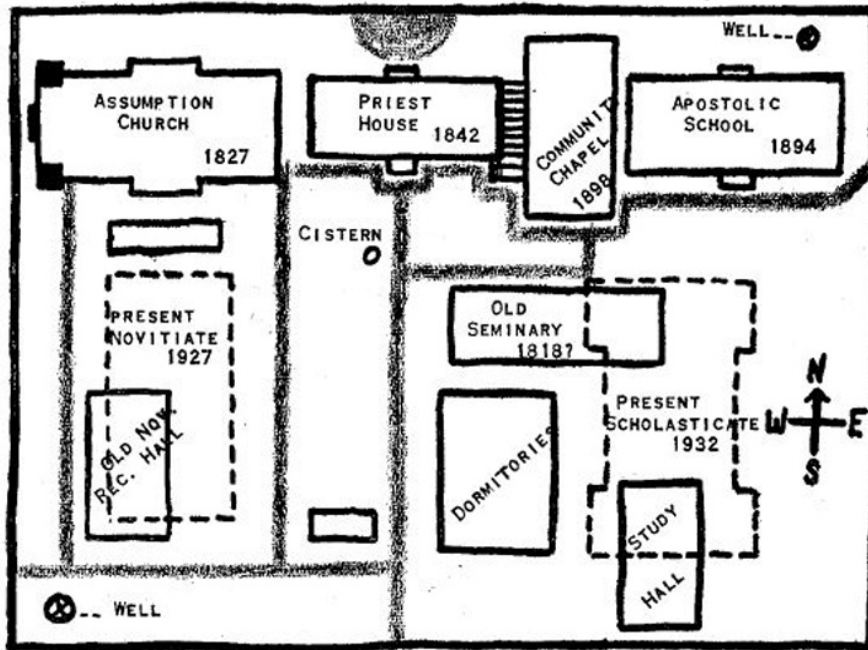
<sup>46</sup> [Note 43] Souvay, *op. cit.*, p. 116. SMSA.

<sup>47</sup> [Note 44] John E. Rothensteiner, *History of the Archdiocese of St. Louis* (St. Louis: Blackwell, 1928), v. I, p. 295.

The people there are most anxious to have this extra help in the building of the seminary and have promised to keep them in provisions for the first year and even for the second if that be necessary, he is high in his praise for the people there – “the best set I ever knew.” Before he summons the whole band from Kentucky, the bishop advises Father Rosati to have them spend their time in acquiring and improving their knowledge of the English language since without it they could be of no service in the area where only English is spoken.

From this description of the proposed seminary, one can see why he called it a vast undertaking. The house will measure sixty by thirty-six feet, 2½ stories high, with a cellar underneath – much like the brick house at St. Thomas in Kentucky. There will be two halls, 25 by 17 feet, both on the first floor and in the cellar. He concludes by saying that he awaits the moment when they will be reunited, perhaps by late fall.<sup>48</sup> Such a hope on the part of Bishop DuBourg for the early completion of such a project perhaps typifies what Louise Callen has written of him: “His optimism was surpassed only by his vivid imagination, which always bypassed the difficulties involved in the arrangements he proposed.”<sup>49</sup>

[14, blank]



St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary as it appeared some sixty years ago. Two very important but more recent additions have been superimposed in broken lines. All four buildings at the top of the drawing are still sturdy and in service.

*Drawing of the main buildings at the Barrens in their original and later positions.*

*Source: The DeAndrein 29:7, 1959.*

<sup>48</sup> [Note 45] DuBourg to Rosati [in Kentucky], April 22, 1818. SMSA. Regarding Father DeLacroix: this is the form of his surname used by Bishop DuBourg in this and other letters; it is also the way in which Father DeLacroix, as secretary to the bishop, signed his name in announcing the death of Father DeAndreis to the clergy according to *Sketches*, p. 175, and the *Life of Felix DeAndreis, C.M.*, pp. 231–232.

<sup>49</sup> [Note 46] Louise Callen, *Philippine Duchesne* (Westminster: Newman Press, 1957), p. 305.

## CHAPTER II

### FORMATION OF THE PARISH

With the arrival of Father [Charles] DeLacroix in the spring of 1818, the congregation of what was originally known as the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish at the Barrens experienced a twofold blessing of which, quite naturally in their estimation, the more important was the presence of their first resident pastor since moving west from Maryland. Father DeLacroix resided in a house built near Joseph Manning's home where he took his meals. At the construction site, about a quarter of a mile south of the church, those who had come with him from Kentucky lived in three cabins, one of which served as a kitchen and refectory.<sup>50</sup> The extent of the parish at that time covered practically all of what is now Perry County and the name of the parish changed to Holy Mary's, as Bishop DuBourg referred to it as late as 1819, or simply St. Mary's.

The second benefit to the community was that Father DeLacroix was an architect capable of planning and directing the construction of the seminary for the bishop. Under the leadership of Zachariah Layton and his committee, the parishioners, most of whom were simple farmers, willingly did what they could such as cutting down trees, digging foundations and hauling materials, but to erect a building of this size was something they had never done so they were in need of direction. They also welcomed the group of workers who had come from Kentucky and who could devote more time to the task at hand. Father DeLacroix evidently made the plans in accordance with the general description and size of the building already given by Bishop DuBourg. It was decided that the seminary would be built of upright logs or timbers, a mode of construction regarded as stronger and more durable, upon the stone foundation walls of the cellar.<sup>51</sup>

A few months later, in July of 1818, Bishop DuBourg again returned to the Barrens and, almost at once, appreciated the enormous task in the building project and realized that his hope of having it ready for occupancy by the fall would be impossible. On his return to St. Louis he stopped at Kaskaskia where he wrote Father Rosati a letter in which he expressed no complaint about the slow progress of the work and mentioned that Father DeLacroix and his workers were very well pleased with their situation and that the people were gratified by their exemplary life and industry. Though the seminary would not be ready for them, the bishop wished to have all his missionary band with him in the early fall and gave them instructions on how they were to transport themselves and their baggage. He also announced that he had purchased a mill, about a mile and a half from the seminary, where he planned to have a sawmill to provide lumber for the seminary.<sup>52</sup>

The actual deed to this mill property, measuring almost thirty nine acres and costing \$195.00, was not completed until September 28, 1818, and signed by the two owners. Ignatius

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<sup>50</sup> [Note 1] Rosati, *Memoires*, p. 60. SMSA. *VH*, IV, 2 (1983). 111.

<sup>51</sup> [Note 2] Souvay, *op. cit.*, pp. 115–116. SMSA. Father Souvay was well acquainted with the structure of the seminary building. On March 22, 1924, in an effort to preserve this landmark of the past, he brought an architect from St. Louis to determine if the building could possibly be restored. After an examination, the conclusion was reached that it was unsafe so the novices had to move their recreation room elsewhere. Finally the old seminary was destroyed in early January of 1925. See *Student Diary* for 3-22-1924; 1-3-1925; 1-17-1925. SMSA.

<sup>52</sup> [Note 3] DuBourg to Rosati, August 2, 1818. SMSA.

Layton and his wife and Nicholas Miles and his wife, and witnessed by Zachariah Layton and Joseph Manning.

The mill tract, part of the original land grant of Michael Tucker, was surveyed by Isidore Moore for the bishop at the request of Joseph Manning.<sup>53</sup> However, the cabin housing the mill was in such poor condition that it was necessary to replace it with a new cabin to house two sets of millstones and a saw as well as to rebuild the dam and to clear the channel bringing water to the mill.<sup>54</sup> Still proud in the acquisition of the mill and with the expectation that the final result would prove beneficial to his present and future needs, the bishop willingly paid the expenses incurred in putting the mill in working condition.

One moment of great happiness experienced by the bishop was when he finally greeted Father Rosati and his missionary band on their arrival at the [16] Barrens on October 1, 1818.<sup>55</sup> As they approached their destination, one of the highlights of their journey seems to have been the sight of a cross over the main entrances of the Catholic families in the parish. They soon learned that Father Dunand had established this custom by urging the heads of families to make a cross for this purpose, to bring them to the church on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross on which occasion he solemnly blessed them.<sup>56</sup> A piece of good news to the weary travelers was that they did not have to go on to Ste. Genevieve since a wealthy widow, Mrs. Sarah Hayden, had placed a home at their convenience. For so many people it was a small house, about thirty by twenty feet, one story with an attic and a partially excavated cellar and a front porch but, crowded though it may be, it served as the first home of the seminary at the Barrens.<sup>57</sup>

Sarah, the daughter of Thomas Shircliff and Nancy Wheeler, and her first husband, Thomas Riney II, had three children, one of whom, Mary, had become the wife of Zachariah Layton back in Kentucky on February 10, 1801. Some time after her first husband died in 1793, Sarah married Clement Hayden. In 1804, when the Haydens moved to the Barrens, Clement did not receive a land grant in his own name but, before his death about 1812, he did acquire two large tracts of land north of Brewer. Of their nine children, one daughter, Susannah, entered the Sisters of Loretto, and a son, Clement, was one of the first lay students at the seminary. Since Zachariah Layton's son, Thomas, was also one of the original lay students, both Sarah Hayden and her daughter, Mary Layton, had sons at the seminary in 1818.<sup>58</sup>

Since he was the principal source of financial assistance to the seminary, the bishop, pleased though he was at the presence of local boys in the seminary, warned Father Rosati that these students must pay for their education either in the form of money or of provisions for the table. As he often did, the bishop advised him to seek the advice of Joseph Manning or of some other intelligent person capable of considering fairly both the interests of the institution and of the parents. In the same letter, the bishop gave him the task of announcing to the people that it was

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<sup>53</sup> [Note 4] Original deed in SMSA. Recorded on October 21, 1818. In Book C, pp. 109–110. SGRO.

<sup>54</sup> [Note 5] Rosati, *Memoires*, p. 66. SMSA. *VH*, IV, 2 (1983), 117.

<sup>55</sup> JR note: Rosati arrived on October 2, and the others followed in the next few days. (Rybolt, *Felix de Andreis. Frontier Missionary*, Chicago, 2005, p. 486, n. 44.)

<sup>56</sup> [Note 6] Rosati, *Memoires*, p. 59. SMSA. *VH*, IV, 2 (1983), 109–110.

<sup>57</sup> JR note: Described at greater length in Easterly, *Rosati*, p. 57. It was two miles from the old church.

<sup>58</sup> [Note 7] O'Rourke, *Maryland Catholics on the Frontier* (Parsons, Kan.: Brefney, 1973), *passim*.



with regret that he was withdrawing Father DeLacroix and his two brother workmen who were needed elsewhere and that he was appointing as their second pastor, Father Vallesano,<sup>59</sup> who was to live in the same cabin near Manning's home where his predecessor had resided. Father Rosati was also to inform the trustees that Father DeLacroix had never received any salary during his six months as pastor, a situation which the bishop wanted to be corrected. Having now been placed in charge of the construction of the seminary, Father Rosati was also to tell Badaud, the carpenter from St. Louis, that the two galleries or porches running lengthwise on both sides of the new seminary, were not to have flooring on the ground floor but only on the second floor or roof, and that their pillars were to be on solid stone foundations.<sup>60</sup> Judging from a letter written by Father [John Joseph] Lynch in 1850 to the director of the seminary in Paris, each gallery must have been about twelve feet wide, because in describing the moving of the old seminary about a hundred feet or so to make room for the present Administration Building, he gives the measurements as 60 x 60 feet including the galleries.<sup>61</sup>

Unaccustomed to the normal activities of seminarians, the Barrens people were soon to be a source of anxiety for Father Rosati. While the students were enjoying their recreation periods, the sight of seminarians running and playing created wonderment, and perhaps even scandal, among some neighbors who regarded this as a lack of ecclesiastical gravity and a waste of time. Although he personally harbored no doubt as to the necessity and propriety of such reasonable activity, Father Rosati sought the advice of Bishop DuBourg. The reply, typical of an experienced educator, was that Father Rosati was not to forbid the boys to play but rather to encourage them and, if necessary, to enliven their games by his presence in accordance with the customs of the best European colleges. [17] Boys on the farm, working all day in the fields, are in no need of recreation since their whole life is one of uninterrupted physical exertion, but apply them to a life of study and they soon feel the need of corporeal exercise. He concludes his advice with this statement: "the people of the Barrens have yet many things to learn. This is one of them." Always interested in the work at the Barrens, he also directs Father Rosati to speed up the mill project and to remind Zachariah Layton and the trustees that the congregation had bound themselves to haul logs to the mill for the boards necessary to finish the seminary. In concluding, the bishop adds that he has been disappointed with them in many things and hopes that they will redeem themselves in this.<sup>62</sup>

Father Vallesano's tenure as the second pastor of St. Mary's lasted from the latter part of November, 1818, to the late spring of 1819, when Father Rosati became the first Vincentian pastor of the parish. From that time to the present, the Vincentian Fathers have continued to act as pastors at the Barrens. Due to his lack of facility in speaking English, Father Vallesano was unable to preach, to hear confessions or to go on sick calls. So each Sunday, after saying Mass at Mrs. Hayden's, Father Rosati would go, usually on foot, the two miles or so to the church to hear

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<sup>59</sup> JR note: Secondo Vallesano/Valezano, a priest, had joined the Congregation of the Mission in Italy, but never completed his novitiate or took vows. He left Bordeaux with Dubourg in 1817, and served as pastor of the Barrens before moving on to Donaldsonville.

<sup>60</sup> [Note 8] DuBourg to Rosati, November 1818. SMSA.

<sup>61</sup> [Note 9] Lynch to Martin, August, Quoted in French in *Annales de la Congregation de la Mission*, XV (1850), 558. (JR note: The move took three to four weeks.)

<sup>62</sup> [Note 10] DuBourg to Rosati, December 4, 1818. SMSA,

confessions in the little sacristy before Mass while Mr. Maenhaut,<sup>63</sup> a seminarian who accompanied him, would teach catechism to the children in the church, and then, during the Mass celebrated by the pastor, Father Rosati would preach. At the conclusion of the services in the church, the three of them would have dinner with Mr. Manning. On the regular weekly holiday at the seminary, Thursday, Father Rosati would spend the morning hearing confessions in the small chapel and Mr. Maenhaut would teach catechism in the study hall. Not surprisingly, then, that for all practical purposes, the people considered Father Rosati as their pastor and did not hesitate to ask him to go on sick calls.<sup>64</sup>

In much the same manner as the people, the bishop regarded Father Rosati as his spokesman when he wished to deliver a message to the people, often inserting a paragraph in English instead of French, perhaps to avoid a benign translation and interpretation on the part of the superior at the Barrens. About this time, the bishop wrote that these people at the Barrens are undoubtedly good, but they are Americans: very unconcerned and in need of being stimulated.<sup>65</sup> As will be seen later in a number of cases, Father Rosati considered the parishioners among the best people in the world, although, when the occasion demanded, he could be firm with them but his generous nature did not permit him to have any ill-feeling. He recognized their faults but emphasized their virtues. This is somewhat indicative of the different personalities of the two men as described by Father Faherty when he stated that the bishop “was more a church dignitary of the old school than a spontaneous religious leader. Rosati, on contrast was a spiritual servant of the people.”<sup>66</sup>

About five months after their arrival, Father Rosati wrote to a certain Father Thomas that they live in the center of ninety English speaking Catholic families, each of whom lives on their own land so they are widely scattered. “They are the finest people in the world, anxious to hear the word of God, to frequent the sacraments and to lead a simple life.” The population grows rapidly due to the influx of people from other places and to the almost incredible growth of the families, since it is common here to find families of ten, twelve, fifteen and more children who marry very young. The products of the land are great quantities of corn, grain and potatoes and, since the pastures are excellent, there is an abundance of cattle, horses and even sheep. With his usual knack for interesting details, he even explains how sugar is obtained and refined.<sup>67</sup>

Due to the regularity of Sunday Masses and the presence of priests at the seminary, the congregation increased to such an extent that they soon overflowed the small church. So, early in 1819, the people doubled the capacity of their church by building an addition and adding a choir loft over the door.

Through the generosity of Bishop [18] DuBourg and their fellow Vincentians in Europe, the priests had obtained all the vestments and other materials necessary for Holy Week. With the

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<sup>63</sup> JR note: Constantine Maenhaut, a Belgian, came to America with Dubourg in 1817. After ordination, he served in various posts in the South.

<sup>64</sup> [Note 11] Souvay, "Notes," *SLCHR*, III (1921), 307. Rosati, *Memoires*, pp. 64–65. SMSA, *VH*, IV, 2 (1983), 115–116.

<sup>65</sup> [Note 12] DuBourg to Rosati, January 4, 1819 SMSA.

<sup>66</sup> [Note 13] William B. Faherty, *Dream by the River: Two Centuries of St. Louis Catholicism, 1776–1967*, (St. Louis: Piraeus, 1973), p. 30,

<sup>67</sup> [Note 14] Rosati to Father Thomas, March 6, 1819. SMSA.

active participation of the priests and seminarians from Mrs. Hayden's, all the ceremonies, including the singing, were celebrated with all the solemnity possible. The parishioners, practically none of whom had ever witnessed this before, attended all the services and received Holy Communion in great numbers on Holy Thursday and Easter Sunday.<sup>68</sup>

Shortly after Easter and again in the summer, the people of the Barrens were enkindled with a new spirit in the construction work by the presence of their bishop. Under his personal supervision, and inspired by the manual labor he himself performed, progress was made but the hope that the seminary would be ready for occupancy by November was now seen as an impossibility. It would be months before the building would be habitable.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, the monetary obligations, which the people at the Barrens had assumed just over a year previously in their original contract with the bishop, were now recognized as far beyond their financial capabilities. As Father Rosati was later to comment, the people were able to live well off the land but were unable to set money aside. Quite possibly during this period, the bishop, while working with them, may have reached the same conclusion, or the difficulty he himself was having in raising funds for his new church in St. Louis, may have convinced him of the scarcity of ready cash.<sup>70</sup>

Whatever the reason may have been, on June 18, 1819, the bishop himself penned a new document which seems to have replaced the former one and in which he acknowledged that the land was now in his possession and the total expected from the parish was reduced from \$7,500.00 to \$1,500.00.

On the back of the document is this description: "Bishop DuBourg To The Trustees of Holy Mary's Congregation at the Barrens. Securing bond for the Seminary Land." There is no indication that it was recorded anywhere and there seems to be only one copy extant. Save for the signatures of the witnesses, the whole document is in the bishop's handwriting.<sup>71</sup> The document is now given in full.

Know all men by here presents, that I, Lewis William DuBourg, Bishop of Louisiana, am held and firmly bound unto Aquila Hagan, Wilfred Layton and John Layton, and to their successors in their official capacity of Trustees for the Roman Catholic Congregation of Holy Mary in the Barrens Settlement, county of St. Genevieve, Territory of Missouri, in the full sum of three thousand dollars in legal tender in this territory, to which will and truly to be paid, I bind myself, my heirs, Executors and assigns forever.

Whereas the People of said Congregation by a Deed, dated [blank] in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred & eighteenth, did purchase from Ignatius Layton and his wife, for the sum of Nine hundred Dollars, a tract of six hundred and forty acres of land situated in the aforesaid settlement, for the purpose of securing the maintenance of a Priest for the service of said Congregation, and for greater security did cause the title to the same to be

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<sup>68</sup> [Note 15] Rosati, *Memoires*, 69, 71. SMSA. *VH*, IV, 2 (1983), 121–122, 124.

<sup>69</sup> [Note 16] Souvay, *History of the Lazarists in the U.S.*, pp. 195–196. SMSA,

<sup>70</sup> [Note 17] Faherty, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>71</sup> [Note 18] Original document in SMSA. This document is not specifically mentioned in: F. G. Holweck, "The Historical Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Louis," *SLCHR*, I (1918), 24–39.

vested in me as Bishop, and moreover They subscribed a sum of fifteen hundred Dollars, more or less, to be paid in five equal yearly installments, one of which was already paid previous to the date hereof, for the purpose of aiding in the construction of a Seminary of learning on said premises. Now the condition of the above obligation is such that, as long as there will be no alienation made by me, my heirs or assigns, of said property, tending to defeat the intentions of the Donors, and appropriate the same to private purposes, so long is said obligation to remain void and of no effect, else to receive its full force and operation.

Signed, sealed and acknowledged at the Barrens, county and Territory aforesaid, this eighteenth day of [19] June, eighteen hundred and nineteenth.

L. Wm. DuBourg

In the presence of:  
Joseph Rosati  
Joseph Manning

In this document the bishop guarantees the people that the 640 acres which they had given him would be used for the purpose for which they had intended it to be used but, unfortunately, other than the year, 1818, he does not give the exact date on which the property had been first sold by Ignatius Layton nor does he give the names of the parties involved in the sale.

In January of 1819, the number of missionaries had been increased by new volunteers from Europe for the Louisiana mission. As a result, the seminary at Mrs. Hayden's became quite crowded but the situation was alleviated when two cabins, connected by a spacious corridor, were built in June near the site of the new seminary. The kitchen and refectory, quite possibly the same ones used by the workers of Father DeLacroix, were in another cabin quite some distance away. This was to be the second home of the seminary for more than a year. This new location, though not as comfortable as Mrs. Hayden's, was only a quarter of a mile from the church thus making it more convenient for Father Rosati, now in charge of the parish as well as of construction. With the presence of the seminarians and a choir under the direction of Father Rosati, the parishioners present for the High Mass now heard the various parts of the Mass sung in plainchant and, after the Mass, heard their own parish choir sing English hymns. Another innovation for the people was the introduction of processions on Rogation Days, St. Mark's feast day, Palm Sunday and especially on the feast of Corpus Christi.<sup>72</sup> One of these new recruits, Father [Francis] Cellini, was 38 years old but of a robust constitution that enabled him to render considerable assistance in the construction work. More important for the people though, was the fact that, as he learned English and was able to take care of sick calls, he possessed an adequate knowledge of medicine and was able to put this to use with the Holy See's permission obtained for him by Bishop DuBourg. Hence, as Father Rosati writes, on sick calls he could care for the health not only of the soul but also of the body with medicines he dispensed freely, a considerable saving for the people who might otherwise have to pay a doctor to come from Ste. Genevieve.<sup>73</sup>

Once again, in March of 1820, Father Rosati had a rather unpleasant task assigned to him. The bishop had become quite upset upon learning that no salary had been paid for the pastoral care

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<sup>72</sup> [Note 19] Rosati, *Memoires*, 70–72. SMSA. *VH*, IV, 2 (1983), 123–125.

<sup>73</sup> [Note 20] Rosati to Baccari, May 4, 1821. SMSA.

administered by Fathers DeLacroix, Vallesano and Rosati. Therefore, on the Sunday after he received this letter Father Rosati was to assemble the congregation and read the following warning: Bishop DuBourg was going to suspend the faculties of all the priests at the Barrens to hear confessions until such time as the people had made arrangements with the trustees to pay this sacred debt and the trustees had given Father Rosati a list of the delinquents.<sup>74</sup> One can possibly better appreciate this action on the part of the bishop when it is remembered that he had to bear all the expenses for the construction of the new seminary and of the mill as well as to provide food and other materials necessary for maintaining the seminary. Gradually, the seminary became a bit more self-supporting by growing their own vegetables and fruits and by raising their own livestock – all of which took about two years or so. On the other hand, the parishioners, until now, had enjoyed only the occasional visits of priests and were unaccustomed to provide for the continuous daily support of a pastor. More than a year later, Father Rosati commented that while the people fared well as far as food and clothing were concerned, they had no way of saving money so, as in almost all the parishes in Upper Louisiana, they cannot support their pastor.<sup>75</sup>

Shortly after the middle of October in 1820, the people attended the Office of the Dead and the Requiem Mass for Father DeAndreis who had been the [20] superior of the Vincentians in America since their departure from Europe to his death on the fifteenth of October. Probably much to the relief of the grief-stricken Father Rosati, the bishop had counseled him on the funeral arrangements including the advice that the body be laid to rest in a place where it can be easily disinterred when this may be necessary. Following this suggestion, Father Rosati had a brick tomb built behind the little church to receive the remains of his beloved superior.<sup>76</sup> As Vicar General and co-worker of Bishop DuBourg in St. Louis, Father DeAndreis had been kept so busy that, according to a well-founded tradition, he never had the opportunity to visit the Barrens though his deep interest in the work of his subjects there had been manifested on many occasions. Among the small number of parishioners to have had the pleasure of meeting him were the delegates sent to Bishops Flaget and DuBourg in St. Louis to ask that the seminary be built in their midst and possibly a few others who may have needed to call upon him while he was caring for the Ste. Genevieve parish in late 1817.

One must admire the foresight of Bishop DuBourg's recommending a burial place from which the remains of Father DeAndreis may be easily removed when necessary. For the musically inclined Father Rosati, a minor regret on this and other solemn occasions was the lack of an organ in the church. In a letter to his brother Nicholas, shortly after the funeral, he stated that "when we build a church, we will have an organ."<sup>77</sup> It would seem that the idea of a new church was already germinating in the minds of both the bishop and the superior.

According to a life of Father DeAndreis, ". . . in 1820, part of the house was habitable, and divine service could be performed in the church: the latter was blessed by Mr. Rosati . . . assisted by Frs. [Philip] Borgna, [John] Aquaroni and [Francis Xavier] Dahmen."<sup>78</sup> This reference to a church would seem to be more historically accurate if it is considered as applying to the new

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<sup>74</sup> [Note 21] DuBourg to Rosati, February 29–March 4, 1820. SMSA.

<sup>75</sup> [Note 22] Rosati to Baccari, May 4, 1621. SMSA.

<sup>76</sup> [Note 23] Rosati, *Memoires*, 81–81 bis. SMSA. *VH*, IV, 2 (1983), 137–138.

<sup>77</sup> [Note 24] Rosati to Nicholas, December 19, 1820. SMSA.

<sup>78</sup> [Note 25] *Sketches*, p. 163. *Life of Felix DeAndreis, C.M.*, p. 212.



seminary chapel since there is no mention in contemporary records of any work being done on a church other than the addition to the old church in 1819. Father Souvay insists that there was no new church built at that time,<sup>79</sup> and Father Rosati gives the same testimony when, in May of 1821, he writes: "The church, built before our arrival, is of logs laid one over the other in the form of a parallelogram." He also mentions that they had moved into the new seminary after the death of Father DeAndreis, probably around the middle of November. Their new home, built of timber, measures sixty by thirty-five feet and is four stories high. The various facilities and their location he lists as follows: the refectory, kitchen, dispensary, store room and a study hall on the first floor or basement: the chapel, library, infirmary, and a hall on the second floor; nine small rooms and a dormitory for twenty-four beds on the third floor: the same accommodations as the third floor will be on the fourth floor but it is not yet finished.<sup>80</sup> Considering the imposing nature of the building for those times in an area as remote as the Barrens, it is easier to understand why it took so long for the people there to complete it. This was the third and final home of the seminary in the early days, very complete, comfortable and convenient when compared to their previous quarters.

In the same letter to Father [Francesco Antonio] Baccari in Rome, Father Rosati again gives his favorable impressions of the Barrens congregation which has now increased to 130 or 140 Catholic families. Since practically all of them receive the sacraments once a month, many twice a month and some on all feast days, there are confessions each Saturday morning and from the early hours each Sunday until the 11:00 o'clock Mass. Before Mass, the people recite the rosary and after Mass they say various prayers including the Angelus and then sing English hymns. After Vespers at 4:00 P.M., when some are still in church, he reads the life of a saint and makes a few moral reflections when necessary. They are remarkable for their modesty in church where the men are separated [21] from the women. On Thursdays, catechism classes are held for those preparing for their first communion and also for those wishing to be confirmed because the bishop comes at least once a year and stays for at least several weeks. In the home, the families say morning and evening prayers, grace before and after meals, and they fast and abstain on the prescribed days even though this sometimes presents difficulties. The young men have not as yet shown much inclination for the clerical life but five young girls have entered the religious state, though, if Providence permits, schools for the young people might give promise for more vocations. While he hesitates to rate their piety as exceptional, yet it is as good as can be expected under the circumstances in which they live and he still regards them as among the best people in the land.

In a different area of activity, the congregation played an important role in a movement to elevate the then Cinque Hommes Township of Ste. Genevieve County to the status of a separate county and, fortunately for them, they had a member of the community with considerable experience and success in the field of politics. What his legal training might have been is not exactly known, but Isidore Moore had become a prominent public figure. From 1806 to 1811, he had served as justice of the peace in Ste. Genevieve County and then, in 1812, he was justice of the court of appeals in the county. The people of the county then elected him in 1814 to his first term in the House of Representatives in the Territory of Missouri and, in 1820, they elected him as their senator. After Missouri had become a state of the Union in 1821, he returned to his position as state representative from Perry County in 1822 and served in the same office in 1824 and again in 1826 when he seems to have begun his last term. Throughout these years, he had been very

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<sup>79</sup> [Note 26] Souvay, "Notes," *SLCHR*, III (1921), 307.

<sup>80</sup> [Note 27] Rosati to Baccari, May 4, 1821. SMSA.

active in the territorial and state Assemblies, his name often appearing as presenting bills and acting on various committees. Thus he had the honor of serving in all three capitals, St. Louis, St. Charles, and Jefferson City.<sup>81</sup>

As a senator from Ste. Genevieve County, Isidore Moore introduced a bill on October 13, 1820, to separate his Township from Ste. Genevieve County. The legislature approved the bill on October 24th and created Perry County, named after Oliver Hazard Perry who had gained fame in the War of 1812 and who had died in 1819. Bernard Layton and his wife, on May 6, 1821, donated fifty-one acres for the purpose of establishing a county seat of government which was to be known as Perryville. This donation of Bernard Layton, a brother of Zachariah and Ignatius, was to be divided into town lots to be sold and the money used for county purposes. Though the geographical position of Perryville was ideal, its choice as the county seat demonstrated the desire of the Catholics to have the government of the county situated in their midst. Until there was a suitable Court House, the county court first met in the home of Bede Moore, Isidore's brother, and continued to do so until 1827. Court sessions, usually lasting a few days, met four times a year to effect a complete organization of the county which included partitioning the county into townships, appointing county officials, planning roads, etc. Since Bede Moore owned the first distillery in the county, attendance at these sessions must have helped his business.<sup>82</sup>

Father Rosati's primary concern for his congregation was naturally their spiritual development but he also had a strong conviction that their intellectual improvement, especially among the young, was necessary for the preservation and strengthening of their faith. Thus far, the opportunity for any real progress in this latter interest had not presented itself. Even after moving into the new building in November of 1820, he writes that, because the fourth floor would not be ready for occupancy until the following autumn, the novices, seminarians, brothers and externs sleep in the same room.<sup>83</sup> At this time, three priests, three Vincentian clerics, twelve diocesan seminarians, one lay student and five brothers constituted the house. This [22] last piece of information is part of an interesting Latin graph or chart of thirteen columns or classifications, beginning back in Kentucky in 1816 and continuing to the end of 1823. One indication that Father Rosati drew up these lists at the end of each year is that, in 1817, he lists Father DeAndreis, while caring for the parish in Ste. Genevieve in the closing weeks of that year, as among those sent out on mission. Of particular interest here is the fourth column devoted to lay students or collegians: in 1818, the first year at the Barrens, there are three names: in 1819, four names: in 1820, one name; in 1821, no name. Up to that time, all these students were taking courses in preparation for their entering the seminary. But in 1822, there are seven names, and in 1823, eleven names.<sup>84</sup> The reason for this sudden increase in the number of lay students is that St. Mary's Seminary had now started classes for the education of the young men in the area.

While the seminary was located at Mrs. Hayden's and at the few cabins built near the church, there was practically no room for students other than those preparing for the priesthood. The new building, on the other hand, was a comparatively impressive and spacious structure

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<sup>81</sup> [Note 28] Timothy J. O'Rourke, *Perry County, Missouri* (Parsons, Kan.: Brefney, 1979), pp. 36–40.

<sup>82</sup> [Note 29] *Ibid.*, pp. 21–23.

<sup>83</sup> [Note 30] Rosati to Baccari, November 29, 1820. SMSA.

<sup>84</sup> [Note 31] F. G. Holweck, "The Historical Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Louis," *SLCHR*, I (1918), 28. The author terms this: "Statistics of St. Mary's Seminary, 1816–1824."

seemingly capable of caring not only for seminarians but for others as well. Some families in the region considered this an excellent opportunity for the education of their sons and accordingly asked the seminary to receive their sons as students and offered to pay for all the expenses incurred by their presence. The answer they received, that this was strictly an ecclesiastical institution, hurt and somewhat shocked them but it did not prevent them from repeating their requests. For them, and for many others at the time, the term “seminary” did not mean an exclusively theological school, but rather a center of learning in general. Even some of the Protestants, who were aware that their educated ministers were graduates of different colleges, were equally surprised and concluded that the seminary had no interest in the public welfare. Finally, when the available space permitted some separation of the seminarians from the lay students, both the bishop and the superior agreed to grant these repeated requests and to open the doors to lay students, much to the satisfaction of some of the more affluent parents, especially in the Ste. Genevieve area, such as J. Pratt, Rozier, S. Roussin and F. Valle.<sup>85</sup> Among the seven listed for the academic year of 1822–1823, were Bernard and Francis Pratt, Ferdinand Rozier and Charles Roussin, with Amadeus Valle and Siegfried Roussin joining them the following year.

In opening a college in connection with the seminary, Father Rosati was following the examples of the seminaries at Bardstown and Baltimore. Not only did the youth of the area benefit in this way but also their tuition provided an added income to help defray the expenses of the seminary. The seminarians at the Barrens, most of whom came from Europe and were unable to pay for their education, could help the priests by teaching various classes in the college. In a letter to his superior in Rome, Father Rosati informed him of this move, the reasons for which he had previously made known to him, and assured him that, as far as possible, the lay students would have no communication with the seminarians. The college would also teach the rudiments of knowledge necessary for any who may later wish to enter the seminary.<sup>86</sup>

When the State of Missouri formally became part of the United States in 1821, article XIII, paragraph 5 of the state constitution concluded with the declaration “that no religious corporation can ever be established in this state.” In his desire to have St. Mary’s Seminary legally incorporated as soon as possible, Father Rosati no doubt consulted Isidore Moore on the technicalities necessary to have this accomplished. Due to the trustee mentality of the times in the Missouri legislature, the first step seems to have been the formation of a St. Mary’s Seminary Board of Trustees consisting of Frederick C. Hase, John Layton, Aquila Hagan, Joseph Manning and Joseph [23] Rosati. Isidore Moore, then a state representative from Perry County, on Tuesday, November 12, 1822, presented to the House of Representatives, meeting in St. Charles, “the petition of sundry inhabitants of the settlement called ‘Barrens’ in the county of Perry, reciting the establishment of a seminary of learning, and praying an act of incorporation, by the name and style of ‘St. Mary’s Seminary’.” The bill was read a first time on Thursday, November 14th, a second time on November 15th, and a third time on November 16th, after which the House ordered the blank space to be filled in with “the first day of January next,” and the bill to be sent to the Senate for concurrence.<sup>87</sup> In the Senate,

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<sup>85</sup> [Note 32] Rosati, *Memoires*, 83–84. SMSA. *VH*, V, 1 (1984), 104–105.

<sup>86</sup> [Note 33] Frederick J. Easterly, *The Life of Rt. Rev. Joseph Rosati, C.M.; First Bishop of St. Louis, 1789–1843* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1942), pp. 60–61. Extract on page 61 of letter: Rosati to Baccari, November 29, 1822.

<sup>87</sup> [Note 34] *Journal of the House of Representatives of the Second General Assembly of the State of Missouri, Begun and Held at the Town of St. Charles, on Monday, the Fourth Day of November, 1822* (St. Charles: Paschall, 1823), pp. 47–61.

the first and second readings took place on November 20th, and the third reading on November 22nd, after which the Senate passed the bill and ordered that the House of Representatives be informed thereof.<sup>88</sup>

Thereby St. Mary's Seminary became the first institution of higher learning west of the Mississippi to be incorporated legally. In the actual wording of the act of incorporation, reprinted two years later, it is interesting to note that in section 1, the individuals mentioned in the preceding paragraph are hereby confirmed as trustees of the seminary: and in section 2, "the aforesaid persons shall be, and they are hereby constituted a body corporate, to be known by the name and style of St. Mary's seminary, and by that name shall have perpetual succession and a common seal." The act received its final approval on November 28, 1822, and became effective on January 1, 1823.<sup>89</sup> Shortly thereafter, on January 6, 1823, the Board of Trustees of the seminary held their first formal meeting at which all the members were present, took their oath of office, and unanimously elected Father Rosati as chairman. They also resolved that the present constitution of the seminary shall be the fundamental law of the establishment, that the usages and bylaws of the seminary shall be in force until further ordered and, for the seal of the seminary, they selected a representation of our Saviour teaching. The minutes of the meeting were signed by all present.<sup>90</sup>

Having provided an opportunity for the young men of the area to receive an education, Father Rosati was already planning a convent school for the young girls of the parish. In the same letter in which he told Father Baccari that the seminary was now open to boys, he also mentioned that the bishop had thoughts of establishing a monastery school at the Barrens under the direction of the Sisters of Loretto from Kentucky. Father Rosati, on November 24, 1822, had proposed the idea to the parishioners who unanimously agreed to contribute their labor since they had little else to give. The convent will be only two log cabins connected by a long corridor, situated about a quarter of a mile from the church. He hopes for the greatest benefit from this new arrangement and adds: "Providence will not fail to supply the necessary means. We are in a new country: it is necessary to be energetic, otherwise nothing will ever be accomplished."<sup>91</sup> Joseph Manning had provided two acres for the convent site on his property which, running in a southeasterly direction, extended along the north boundary and beyond the northeast corner of the seminary land which seems to have ended, at this point, at the present Sycamore Lane. Thus Father Souvay writes that the new convent was "about a quarter of a mile north of the Seminary and a little east of the old church."<sup>92</sup>

In a letter to Bishop DuBourg in late April, Father Nerinckx mentions that he had just received a letter from Father Rosati telling him that four or five sisters would be sufficient for the needs of the Barrens parish. While admitting that this might be a sufficient number for teaching, he personally prefers a larger number so that the convent would be more self-supporting and of greater assistance to the people. For this reason he plans to send thirteen sisters among whom there

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<sup>88</sup> [Note 35] *Journal of the Senate of the Second General Assembly of the State of Missouri, Begun and Held at the Town of S. Charles, 1822* (St. Charles: Paschall, 1823), pp. 36–48.

<sup>89</sup> [Note 36] *Laws of the State of Missouri; Revised and Digested by Authority of the General Assembly* (St. Louis: E. Charles, 1825), v. 1. pp. 77–78.

<sup>90</sup> [Note 37] *St. Mary's Seminary Board Meetings, 1823–1830*. SMSA.

<sup>91</sup> [Note 38] Easterly, *op. cit.*, p. 62. Extract on page 62 of letter: Rosati to Baccari, November 29, 1822.

<sup>92</sup> [Note 39] Joseph Rosati, "Documents from Our Archives; *Diary of Bishop Rosati*," translated and copiously annotated by Charles Souvay, *SLCHR*, III (1921), 369: footnote number 69.

will be four teachers, six weavers and spinners, a tailor, a shoemaker, gardeners, washers, infirmarians, catechists and a good sacristan.

Obviously some of these [24] sisters were capable of performing more than one of these activities. In the following paragraph, a list of those to go to the Barrens is given because some of their family names were those of people in the Barrens congregation or of friends back in Kentucky. "In charge of the proposed convent is Mother Johanna, formerly Cecily Miles, who had also been a Mother at Loretto; Sister Eldest, next to the Mother in authority, is Sister Barbara, formerly Henny Clements; Sister Assistant is Sister Benedicta, a Fenwick, who is the head teacher: Sister Mechtildis, daughter of Mrs. Sarah Hayden: Sister Rose, an Elder, is a shoemaker: Sister Lucretia, a Coomes, is the third teacher; Sister Theresia, a Mattingly, is a weaver; Sister Regina Cloney, from Baltimore, is the second teacher: Sister Veronica, a Caho, is a weaver: Sister Eulalia, a Kelly from Maryland, is the fourth teacher: Sister Beatrice Bryan, an associate: Sister Clodia, a Vessells, is a novice; and Isabella Holden is a postulant."<sup>93</sup>



Portrait of Father Charles Nerinckx, from *The Life of Rev. Charles Nerinckx* by Rev. Camillus Maes.

This band of missionary sisters began their journey to the Barrens on May 12, 1823, and arrived there on May 22nd. Like the priests back in 1818, they were forced to accept the hospitality of Mrs. Sarah Hayden who invited them to use her home until their living quarters were finished. With the help of some of the inhabitants and the seminarians and priests including Fathers Rosati and DeNeckere, a small log cabin was constructed, So, on June 14, 1823, they moved to their humble abode when "Father Rosati, with one seminarian, accompanied them to their convent, named it, because of its poverty, *Bethlehem*, blessed it, and gave them a very appropriate exhortation." The first summer there proved to be a difficult one, with the dry and sickly heat causing most of them to become ill. By the fourteenth of September, however, they had a room fitted up for a school which opened on September 24, 1823, with six pupils and they also had a chapel where they could say their prayers and hear Mass.<sup>94</sup>

About ten years later, the sisters attempted to extend their services to nearby Apple Creek where Joseph Schnurbusch and his wife had donated land and a convent to the superior of the Bethlehem Convent. Missioned to Apple Creek were Mother Benedicta Fenwick and Sisters

<sup>93</sup> [Note 40] John Rothensteiner, "Father Charles Nerinckx and His Relations to the Diocese of St. Louis," *SLCHR*, I (1919), 163–165: letter of: Nerinckx to DuBourg, April 29, 1823.

<sup>94</sup> [Note 41] Camillus P. Maes, *The life of Rev. Charles Nerinckx* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke, 1880), pp. 499–505. Sister M. Lilliana Owens, *Loretto in Missouri* (St. Louis: Herder, 1965), p. 17. The author here gives the date, June 23, 1823, as the time the Loretines first occupied their new convent.

Eulalia Kelly and Lucy Meyers who arrived in Apple Creek on April 10, 1831, to start St. Joseph's School. For no apparent reason the school was dissolved in October of 1832.<sup>95</sup> To continue the story of the Loretines at the Barrens a bit further, on May 17, 1833, Joseph Manning sold to Julianna Wathen, superior of the Bethlehem Convent, a parcel of land, measuring a little over forty-four acres, bordering on the properties of Zachariah Layton, Joseph Manning and the seminary, thus including the Bethlehem Convent land, for the listed price of \$130.00. The deed was witnessed by John Layton and John Timon. John Layton was the justice of the peace who certified the transaction and Frederick Hase was the county clerk.<sup>96</sup>

To the congregation at the Barrens, and especially to those who had worked with him, it was not surprising to have Father Rosati, along with Father DeNeckere and the seminarians, help in the construction of the new convent. Their pastor and his subjects in the seminary, for instance, had previously shown that they were willing to help in the building of the log cabins that once housed the seminary and that they were ready and able to cut down trees, haul lumber and to do other manual labor. This, no doubt, inspired the people to work for the good of their parish whenever it was possible and engendered in them an admiration for their pastor. Father Rosati, in turn, was very proud of his congregation and of their accomplishments. One wonders, though, where he found the time and energy to do all he did. In addition to his exercises of piety which he performed religiously, he was pastor, superior of the Barrens, professor in the seminary, director of novices and superior of all the Vincentians in America, this last position given him by Father DeAndreis shortly before his death. Father Rosati had often bemoaned his lack of administrative talent to Father Baccari in [25] Rome and had begged him for a more experienced man to replace him as superior. Five months or so before Father Rosati had even come to the Barrens, Father DeAndreis, basing his judgment no doubt on his observations back in Kentucky, had written of him:

Great are my anticipations concerning Father Rosati. Young, robust, very pious, absolutely devoid of self-seeking, full of zeal and of talent. . . . All who know him are fascinated by the piety and cheerful geniality of his conversation. I have not the slightest doubt that before long they will want to make him a bishop: well, God's will be done!<sup>97</sup>

The first part of this statement seems to have been verified during Father Rosati's tenure thus far at the Barrens and, much to his dismay, the prediction concerning the episcopacy was now about to come true.

Among a number of letters received by Father Rosati on November 20, 1822, there was a Pontifical Brief, dated August 13, 1822, which appointed him Bishop of Tenagra [Tanagra], *in partibus infidelium*,<sup>98</sup> and Vicar Apostolic of the Territories of Mississippi and Alabama, the acceptance of which would have necessitated his permanent departure from the Barrens. He lost no time in writing to his superior in Rome, Father Baccari, to ask him to intercede with the Holy Father to accept his refusal of a burden for which he lacks the necessary qualities and also to have prayers said to St. Vincent that he may not be denied the grace of continuing to live among his

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<sup>95</sup> [Note 42] Owens, *op. cit.*, pp. 24–25.

<sup>96</sup> [Note 43] Recorded in the Perry County Recorder's Office on July 18, 1833. Book I, pp. 370–371.

<sup>97</sup> [Note 44] DeAndreis to Colucci, April 27, 1818.

<sup>98</sup> JR note: "in the lands of unbelievers," the standard designation for a titular see, that is, a diocese that was no longer active, and whose title was given to a bishop who did not have his own diocese, such as an auxiliary bishop.



sons. He also wrote to Bishop DuBourg and to Bishop Flaget of Bardstown to ask them to plead with the Pope to free him from the obligation of accepting this dignity. Since ultimately the Holy See repeated Bishop DuBourg's reasons against Father Rosati's appointment to these Territories, they seemed to have been quite influential. Mentioned are three points emphasized by the bishop: 1, it was purposeless due to the small number of Catholics living there; 2, it was inopportune because the Catholics there could not support a bishop; 3, it would be a calamity to the Diocese of Louisiana because the departure of Father Rosati, due to the scarcity and youth of priests in that area, would strike the death-blow to the house of the Vincentians, to the Seminary and to the College. Seemingly moved by the opposition by men well-acquainted with the missions in America, Pope Pius VII issued a new Brief, dated July 14, 1823, which appointed Father Rosati as Coadjutor to Bishop DuBourg. Urged by his bishop to accept this, Father Rosati reluctantly answered in a letter of December 6, 1823, and announced his acceptance of the Holy See's wishes.

In order that Father Rosati might become better acquainted with the priests and with the problems of Lower Louisiana, Bishop DuBourg finally, in a letter of January 10, 1824, set the date for his consecration on March 25, 1824, the feast of the Annunciation, and the place as the beautiful brick church of the Ascension in Donaldsonville, La.

One consolation for Father Rosati at this time was the agreement, reached at the time of his appointment between the Prefect of Propaganda and Father Baccari, that Father Rosati, after his consecration as a bishop, would not be compelled to sever his relation with the Congregation of the Mission but was actually to remain at the Barrens as superior of the house and head of all the missions with the ordinary powers of Visitor and even of "Vicar General, for all cases where there is no time to write to Rome and wait for an answer..."

Leaving Father DeNeckere, whom he later called his right arm, in charge of the seminary, Father Rosati felt relieved about the situation at the Barrens and started his first journey to Lower Louisiana on January 31st to become the first bishop to be consecrated west of the Mississippi. Due to river travel during the winter being on an irregular schedule, it was necessary for Father Rosati to be in Ste. Genevieve and ready to board the first boat heading south. He had to wait three weeks with Father Dahmen before he was able to board a boat on February 22nd and landed at Donaldsonville where he was warmly received by the pastor on March 11th. After paying a visit to Bishop DuBourg, Father Rosati retired [26] to Assumption where he prepared himself for his episcopal consecration by a retreat from March 14th to the 21st. After visiting a few priests he arrived at Donaldsonville on March 24th. On the next day the church was filled with people from the city and from many miles around to witness the procession of a cleric and thirteen priests leading the Bishop-elect and the Diocesan Prelate. The ceremony itself was very impressive, the sermon being preached by Father [Aristide] Anduze, a friend and admirer of Bishop Rosati. After the consecration, Bishop Rosati visited a number of priests in various places in the south. The new bishop was very pleased with the reception given him by the priests in this portion of the diocese. Finally, on May 10th, Bishop Rosati, in the company of Father [Anthony] Potini and a seminarian on his way to the Barrens, boarded a ship to head back north. They reached Bois Brule on the 19th, where they left their baggage to be carried to the Barrens by wagon and said good-bye to the seminarian who was also to go to the Barrens. On the following day they arrived in St. Louis where the bishop stayed until May 22nd, when he boarded a boat for Ste. Genevieve where he arrived on May 23rd.

On his arrival at Ste. Genevieve he found Mr. [Joseph] Paquin,<sup>99</sup> a seminarian who had been sent there by Father DeNeckere to determine the time of the bishop's arrival at the Barrens. The congregation at the Barrens had planned a royal welcome for their bishop and the men of the militia had wanted to come to meet him. On hearing this, Bishop Rosati forbade Mr. Paquin to go ahead, so he had to join the bishop on the return to the Barrens where they arrived on May 24th a little before noon. The next day, however, he could not prevent his many friends in the parish from coming to the seminary to congratulate him.<sup>100</sup>

After his arrival at the Barrens, Bishop Rosati returned to practically the same daily routine in the seminary and parish as he had before his departure. Both Fathers DeNeckere and Potini were now sick and soon would go south for their health. This had left much of the work in the parish as well as a good part of the teaching in the seminary and college to Father Odin who was still only a novice in the Congregation of the Mission. So the first day the bishop said Mass at the seminary, the next day at the convent, and, on Sundays, he would either pontificate or preside at the High Mass and occasionally preach, as well as hear confessions. Moreover, the bishop gave conferences both in English and Italian to the seminarians some of whom were not yet fluent in English. The small church, much to his dismay, hardly allowed room for pontifical ceremonies. He also writes Father Baccari that he has need of some gold trim for vestments and also a piece of damask since there is no cover for the little throne in their church.<sup>101</sup>

From the viewpoint of the parishioners, however, there was quite a change. Their pastor, now a bishop, in his pontifical attire became a rather usual sight in the little sanctuary. They had witnessed this before, of course, on the many visits of Bishop DuBourg, but now it was a weekly occurrence. Within a few weeks of his return, they had the opportunity of seeing Bishop Rosati's conferring tonsure and ordaining men to the subdiaconate, diaconate and priesthood.<sup>102</sup> In his diary, the bishop describes the Corpus Christi procession in a rather detailed manner. In the morning it was raining so additional prayers were said for good weather and obviously these prayers were answered. At four-thirty, Bishop Rosati celebrated Pontifical Vespers before the Blessed Sacrament, after which the procession began. With a banner of the Blessed Virgin at the head, the order of the procession was as follows: the girls, the women, the boys, the men, the Sisters of Loretto, all marching two by two with lighted candles and saying the rosary. Then came the cross-bearer, a subdeacon in tunic, accompanied by two acolytes, the clerics, four in tunics and dalmatics, two in chasubles and two in copes, then a cleric in cope carrying the crozier, four boys

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<sup>99</sup> JR note: Paquin (1799–1844) was the first American-born Vincentian and first Missouri native ordained to the priesthood. Rosati ordained him on September 23, 1826, at the Barrens.

<sup>100</sup> [Note 45] This summary of Bishop Rosati's appointment and consecration, incomplete but deemed adequate for this sketch, is taken from the following works in which a comparatively thorough treatment of the subject is given: Charles L. Souvay, "Rosati's Elevation to the Coadjutorship of New Orleans," and the conclusion: "Rosati's Elevation to the See of St. Louis (1827)," *Catholic Historical Review*, III (1917–1918), 3–21, 165–186. Joseph Rosati, "Documents from Our Archives: *Diary of Bishop Rosati*," translated and copiously annotated by Charles Souvay, *SLCHR*, III (1921), 311–317. From August 1832 to January 1824 contains only about seven entries. Footnotes number 1 to 16 by Father Souvay gives the Briefs of the Holy See, other letters and abstracts referred to in the text and other notes on the subject.

<sup>101</sup> [Note 46] Rosati to Baccari, June 14, 1824. SMSA.

<sup>102</sup> [Note 47] Rosati, *Diary*, June 5 - June 12, 1824. SMSA. Father Souvay's complete typewritten Latin copy of Rosati's holograph, *Ephemerides ab Electione ad Episcopatum*, 13 Augusti, 1822, is in the St. Mary's Seminary Archives.

in white cassocks strewing flowers along the way, and two thurifers [censer bearers]. The bishop, with a deacon and subdeacon at [27] his side, carried the Blessed Sacrament under a canopy carried by six brothers, and finally the miter-bearer. The procession marched from the church to the porch of the seminary where a repository had been prepared. There Bishop Rosati preached on the sacrament of the Eucharist after which he gave benediction. Then the procession went back to the church in the same order.<sup>103</sup>

So the congregation, some of whom, just ten years ago, considered themselves fortunate in having Father Dunand visit them four times a year, and who, just six years ago, enjoyed their first resident pastor and helped to construct a seminary to provide constant pastoral care, now had the honor of having a bishop as their spiritual leader. Services in their little church had changed from an occasional Mass by a visiting missionary to their bishop-pastor either presiding or pontificating at a High Mass with the singing provided by a seminary choir.

As has been mentioned, Bishop Rosati had desired for a long time to build a new church for his growing congregation. What he had in mind was not another wooden structure but a more permanent and spacious church. Due to the financial condition of the parish, he had realized that he simply could not afford to hire all the workmen necessary for such a project so, to make his dream a reality, once again he had to rely upon the cooperation of his Vicar General in Rome to send a brother who could plan and direct the building of this edifice. Father Baccari, who always seemed to be solicitous for his American missionaries, did not disappoint him but he could not fulfill this request immediately. Nevertheless, the then Father Rosati had been encouraged to such an extent that he wrote, in May of 1823, “we hope soon to commence the church.”<sup>104</sup>

Born about 1777 near Mount Vesuvius, Angelo Oliva, though a shoemaker by trade, spent a good part of his youth working in the lava quarries near his home. When twenty years old, he entered the Congregation of the Mission, the Vincentians, as a brother in their house at Oria in the Province of Naples.<sup>105</sup> In order to satisfy the needs of the superior at the Barrens for a plan for the new church, a brother and financial aid, Father Baccari first summoned Brother Oliva from Oria to Rome, had him renew his skills as a stonecutter and, with the aid of other skilled men, introduced him to the basics of architecture in which Father Baccari himself was well versed, and also instructed him in the way to supervise construction. He also had Brother Oliva build a scale model of the proposed church. When he thought Brother Oliva adequately prepared for his mission, he sent him, Brother [John] Sargiano, a novice, and Valerio Faina, a layman, as well as the donations of money he had collected, to America. With Valerio Faina, however, who had manifested some interest in becoming a brother, he made a contract that he was to pay for his passage by working as a mason for a determined period of time on the new church.<sup>106</sup>

In the reference cited above concerning the youthful Antonio Oliva, Father Souvay adds that Brother Oliva, bringing with him the plans elaborated in Rome, arrived in America on July 1, 1823, and reached the Barrens early in November. It was not long before he found, on the seminary

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<sup>103</sup> [Note 48] Rosati, *Diary*, June 17, 1824. SMSA.

<sup>104</sup> [Note 49] Rosati to Nicholas, May 24, 1823. SMSA.

<sup>105</sup> [Note 50] Rosati, "Documents from Our Archives: Diary of Bishop Joseph Rosati," *SLCHR*, IV (1922), 165; footnote number 4.

<sup>106</sup> [Note 51] Rosati, *Memoires*, 99–100. *VH*, 1 (1984), 126–127.

grounds, an adequate supply of fine limestone suitable for the building of the church. No doubt with the help of Faina, he began to quarry, shape and face the stones to be used. With the winter weather and the lack of skilled laborers, it was early in October of 1824 before sufficient material had been prepared to start hauling it to the site of the new church. Brother Oliva's skill in working with stone was amazing to all who had seen the finished products. Some of these measured twelve to fourteen feet in length and proportionately thick with excellent moldings intended for use on the main door. Seminarians, novices, and perhaps some of the parishioners, helped at the quarry to the best of their ability whenever time permitted.<sup>107</sup>

In the summer of 1824, the nuns at Bethlehem Convent suffered a very painful loss in the death of their Founder, Father Charles Nerinckx. On [28] July 12th, he had arrived at the Barrens to visit the sisters, had received from Bishop Rosati, on July 26th the faculty to receive two Barrens girls, Mary Stewart and Elizabeth Tucker, into the Loretines, and then went to St. Louis to visit some friends. On his return, not feeling too well, he stopped to visit Father Dahmen at Ste. Genevieve and soon became seriously ill. When Bishop Rosati heard of this on the evening of August 12th, he and Mister Paquin set out to visit him the following morning at 3:30 and arrived at Ste. Genevieve at 10:00 A.M., only to learn that Father Nerinckx had died the previous afternoon at 5:00 P.M. At 2:30 P.M., they hastened back to the Barrens where they arrived at 8:00 P.M. and began to make preparations for the funeral. The remains of Father Nerinckx were taken from Ste. Genevieve to the Bethlehem Convent, arriving there at 2:00 A.M. on August 14th. On the same day at 7:00 A.M., all the clergy assembled in the church and recited the entire Office of the Dead in the presence of the corpse, then sang the High Mass at which Father Odin was the celebrant and the bishop, too weak to say Mass due to his journeys the previous day, assisted in cope. After the final Absolution and the sermon by the bishop, the remains of Father Nerinckx were carried to the Sisters' cemetery and interred there, the only grave in their new cemetery. Just a short time before, on July 8th, Bishop Rosati had blessed this graveyard for the nuns. It is said that in one of his exhortations to the sisters, Father Nerinckx had declared that he would be the first to be buried there. The Motherhouse of the Loretines in Kentucky had often asked that the remains of their founder be returned to their cemetery, a request that Bishop Rosati finally granted sometime after January 2, 1833.<sup>108</sup> In fact, in his *Diary* for January 3, 1833, Bishop Rosati writes that he has decided to send the remains of Father Nerinckx back to Kentucky.

From time to time in his *Diary*, Bishop Rosati includes some items of information about the new church. On August 22, 1824, he mentions that "after Mass I urged the people to build a church, etc." It would seem that this was not the first indication that he had given to the congregation of his intentions in this regard but rather a further plea for their cooperation. At least some of the parishioners may have seen, or heard of, the work underway at the quarry and had probably learned the purpose for which stones were being quarried and shaped. Perhaps some of them had even volunteered to help Brother Oliva. In his entry for September 16th of the same year, the bishop writes that he was to receive from Rome a gift of 631 scudi (a scudi [scudo] was worth about 97 cents) in response to a plea he had made to the Holy See for financial assistance in the building of the new church. The Sovereign Pontiff sent 300 scudi from his own money and the rest from money offered to him. By today's standards, this does not seem to be much but in those days

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<sup>107</sup> [Note 52] *Ibid.*, 100–101. SMSA. *VH*, V, 1 (1984). 127. (This quarry eventually became the site of the Seminary Grotto. JR note.)

<sup>108</sup> [Note 53] Rosati, *Diary*, under dates indicated. SMSA. Owens. *op. cit.*, pp. 22–23.

it was a considerable help. On the day after his return to the Barrens after a confirmation tour of St. Louis and other cities, October 12th, he notes that, during the previous week, the people had begun to haul the stones from the quarry to the church site. He himself, on the following two days and again on the 18th, spent the day at the quarry. Like Bishop DuBourg back in 1818, his presence there very likely served as a stimulus for the parishioners to imitate his good example.

Although the exterior of the old church was not too attractive, the interior had a beautiful altar adorned with all the ecclesiastical furnishings, a great portion of which Father Baccari had sent from Rome. Pontifical ceremonies with all the usual solemnities were celebrated in the presence of the priests and seminarians who were now so numerous that they could not be accommodated in the little sanctuary. Bishop Rosati, well aware that the new church would not be completed for years, decided to extend the rear of the church to provide a new and larger sanctuary and to make the space of the old sanctuary available to the congregation. At the back of the church there was to be a cabin to be [29] used as a sacristy, which may be seen today on the grounds of St. Mary's Seminary in a protective stone structure exposing all four sides of the log cabin.<sup>109</sup>



*The log building, known as Rosati's Cabin*

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<sup>109</sup> [Note 54] Rosati. *Memoires*, 108. SMSA. *VH*, V. 2 (1984). 112.

Thanks to the bishop's *Diary*, some exact dates can be given for this addition. After Mass on the Sunday of February 13, 1825, Bishop Rosati spoke to the people about enlarging the church before Easter. The volunteers began to excavate for the foundations on the 16th, and on the day before Palm Sunday, March 26, 1825, they finished the new sanctuary and moved the altar to its new location. In a letter to Father Borgna on April 5, 1825, Bishop Rosati described this latest addition to the old church as measuring 25 x 25 feet. One biographer of Father DeAndreis adds an interesting note – that the new sanctuary now enclosed the tomb of Father DeAndreis in such a way that it was now directly in front of the altar steps.<sup>110</sup>

In their newly enlarged church, the parishioners attended Holy Week services that year more comfortably. On Palm Sunday, they were present for the Blessing of the Palms, a procession and a High Mass at which their pastor assisted in cope and preached. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons they had the opportunity of attending the Tenebrae services.<sup>111</sup> With a great number of people present, Bishop Rosati sang the Pontifical High Mass on Holy Thursday, preached and blessed the Holy Oils. He also performed the services on Good Friday, and, on Holy Saturday, he blessed the fire, the font, etc., and then was celebrant at the Pontifical High Mass. Easter Sunday, he again celebrated a Pontifical High Mass at which a seminarian, Mr. Timon, preached.<sup>112</sup> For the vast majority of the congregation, this was the first opportunity they had ever had to attend all the services of Holy Week celebrated by a bishop. Now that some of the older seminarians either spoke English as their mother tongue or had acquired fluency in the language, Bishop Rosati had instituted the practice of having seminarians, such as Mr. Timon, occasionally preach at Sunday Mass or Vespers. One can imagine the feelings of pride and joy on the part of the congregation when Lewis Tucker, grandson of old Mr. Tucker, and George Alexander Hamilton, grandson of Joseph Fenwick, rose to preach on such occasions.

Back in February, on Sunday the 27th, the election of new trustees of the parish took place, the result of which was that John Moore, John Baptist Moranville and Francis Miles were now the new officers. Among their duties was the collection of \$50.00 each year for lights, altar wine and other expenses. Each of them was to be responsible for this collection for one year during their term in office. Furthermore, they were to see that the stones, lumber, lime and other materials were to be ready at the proper time for the building of the new church.<sup>113</sup>

The people at the Barrens doubtless were proud to have a bishop as their pastor and enjoyed his presence, whether presiding or pontificating, at Sunday Masses, on solemn feasts, during Holy Week, and at their annual processions on Rogation Days and Corpus Christi, but they soon learned that, to a certain extent, they must now share his presence with other parishes. As coadjutor to Bishop DuBourg, who lived in New Orleans, Bishop Rosati was responsible for visiting a number of other parishes in Missouri and western Illinois and for administering confirmation in these various places.

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<sup>110</sup> [Note 55] Alceste Bozuffi, *Il Servo di Dio, Felice de Andreis, Prete de la Missione* (Piacenza: Collegio Alberone, 1929), p. 281.

<sup>111</sup> JR note: The celebration of Matins and Lauds of the last three days of Holy Week, done in a darkened church, hence the name "Tenebrae" or "shadows."

<sup>112</sup> [Note 56] Rosati, *Diary*, March 27 - April 3, 1825. SMSA.

<sup>113</sup> [Note 57] Rosati, *Diary*, February 27, 1825. SMSA.



A much longer absence, from July 22nd to November 21st that year, was due to the desire of Bishop DuBourg to confer with his coadjutor in Louisiana on matters pertaining to the diocese as a whole. On August 16th, Bishop Rosati, meeting with his superior, learned that the real reason for his coming south was to accede to Bishop DuBourg's request that the seminary be moved to the south because of the scanty income in the north. Only a priest or two would remain at the Barrens to care for the parish and to educate the boys of the lower classes and the rest of the Vincentians would come south with Bishop Rosati to conduct the seminary. So vehement was Bishop DuBourg's stand on this move that his coadjutor, [30] displeased as he was with such a change, finally assented. However, at a later meeting between the two, on November 8th, it was agreed that no final decision could be made on this until Bishop Rosati had consulted with his fellow Vincentians in Missouri and with his Vicar General in Rome. Shortly after his return north, on November 25th, at a meeting of Bishop Rosati with Fathers DeNeckere, Dahmen, [Bernard] Permolli and Odin, it was unanimously agreed that such a move should not be made until both the money and men would be available for such an undertaking. Otherwise the fruits of their labors for the good of religion in Missouri and for the seminary would have been in vain. Bishop Rosati promptly informed Bishop DuBourg of this decision.

While still in New Orleans, on November 1, 1825, Bishop Rosati had written to Archbishop Caprano, Secretary of the Propaganda in Rome. Before mentioning the plan of Bishop DuBourg to move the seminary, he lists all the churches in Missouri, Arkansas and western Illinois now cared for by the priests in Missouri and gives a brief description of each. Writing of the Barrens, he states that the parish now consists of 200 fervent and devout Catholic families, of a monastery school now instructing the young girls, and of the seminary educating 20 scholastics. He makes known his opposition to moving the seminary to lower Louisiana and hopes that the agreement, reached at the time of his elevation to the episcopacy, will be put into effect, namely, that after three years the Diocese of Louisiana will be divided into two dioceses, one centered in New Orleans and the other in St. Louis. In conclusion, he mentions that the 631 scudi, received the previous year, had to be used to pay debts contracted by the seminary and on the missionary journeys of his priests and on the visitations of parishes by himself. In view of his present needs, Bishop Rosati adds that he is enclosing a petition to Pope Leo XII for further aid and asks the archbishop to intercede with the Pope on his behalf. To this request, Father Trisco writes that "this time Leo XII responded even more generously than before, ordering five hundred scudi to be paid him by the Apostolic Datary."<sup>114</sup>

As a result of their early labor and sacrifices, the Barrens congregation not only had assured the permanent residence of a pastor for themselves but now they were beginning to see another result of their efforts, the source of missionaries for southeast Missouri, Arkansas, and southwestern Illinois. Now the Loretines of Bethlehem Convent, whose members originally consisted of twelve sisters and now had grown to seventeen, partially due to vocations among the girls of the parish, were sending three nuns south to Louisiana. Shortly after his return to the Barrens, on November 27th, Bishop Rosati bade farewell to the new recruits for the south. With

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<sup>114</sup> [Note 58] Rosati, *Diary*, under dates indicated. SMSA. Rosati to Caprano, November 1, 1825. SMSA. Robert F. Trisco, *The Holy See and the Nascent Church in the Middle Western United States. 1826-1850* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1982), p. 229.

them went a seminarian, Thomas Moore, who was rather seriously ill, and was going to Louisiana in the hope that the climate there would prove beneficial to his health.<sup>115</sup>

Another loss, this of a material nature, suffered by the sisters at the convent was the complete destruction of their kitchen by fire on December 10th. Writing to his brother on January 19, 1826, Bishop Rosati includes this in a list of problems that had arisen at the seminary. The summer had been such that practically no crops had been harvested by any of the people at the Barrens. Another fire had destroyed the nuns' cabin in which there were two looms, a quantity of cloth and a large supply of wool and cotton thread. At the mill, a newly installed wool carder had been recently damaged by the high waters. To replace or to repair all these facilities would cost about \$1,400.00, a sum of money which the bishop did not have nor did he know where he could raise it. Nevertheless, his trust in Divine Providence remained unshaken.<sup>116</sup>

The presence of Bishop DuBourg, assisting in cope and preaching at the High Mass on Sunday, April 23, 1826, must have awakened in the minds of the parishioners fond memories of years past. Little did they, or anybody at the [31] seminary, suspect that this would be his final appearance at the Barrens. He had arrived at the seminary on Thursday evening and during a long talk with his coadjutor had assured him that he was thinking of going to Europe for the good of the diocese. On Friday, they both visited the nuns at Bethlehem Convent. Bishop Rosati took advantage of Bishop DuBourg's going to Europe by having him deliver to Father Baccari a letter in which he once again asks for older and more experienced priests such as Fathers Tornatore and [Angelo] Boccardo. On Monday, Bishop DuBourg left the seminary with his coadjutor who accompanied him to Ste. Genevieve.<sup>117</sup>

Traveling north with Bishop DuBourg to Perryville was Thomas Moore whose health had not improved in the south and whose desire now was to return to the Barrens to die among his friends and fellow seminarians. Born on November 11, 1805, Thomas was the son of James Moore, Jr., who was Isidore Moore's first cousin. After begging admission for several months, he entered the seminary as a diocesan student on April 1, 1822, received tonsure on June 5, 1824, and died on May 11, 1826. That evening after supper, he had received the last sacraments from Bishop Rosati and then died at 10:30 in the presence of Fathers DeNeckere and Odin. In the account of his death in his *Diary*, the bishop adds that Thomas had endeared himself to the bishop and all the others by his exemplary life. In the *Catalogus Alumnorum*, instead of the usual paragraph or page or so devoted to other seminarians and lay students, almost two full pages are filled with a description of his character, his faithfulness to his religious exercises and to his application to his studies. A little over a year later, a similar loss was felt by the Loretines and by another family at the Barrens when, on September 5, 1827, Bishop Rosati said the Mass of the Dead for Sister Mechtildis, the daughter of Mrs. Sarah Hayden.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> [Note 59] Rosati, *Diary*, November 27, 1825. SMSA Richard J, Janet, *St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary and the Vincentians in Southeast Missouri. 1818-1843* (Cape Girardeau, Mo.: Southeast Missouri University, 1979), passim.

<sup>116</sup> [Note 60] Rosati, "Documents from Our Archives: *Diary* of Bishop Rosati," *SLCHR*, IV (1922). 169, In footnote number 22, Father Souvay gives a summary of this letter of the bishop to his brother.

<sup>117</sup> [Note 61] Rosati. *Diary*, April 20-24, 1826. SMSA.

<sup>118</sup> [Note 62] *Catalogus Alumnorum Seminarii S. Mariae, Diocesis Ludovicensis in America Septentrionali ab Ilmo. ac Rdmo. D. Ludovico Guillemo DuBourg eiusdem Diocesis, nec non Flordarum Antistitis [sic] Optime Meriti Fundati, et Sacerdotibus Congregationis Missionis commissi. Ab Anno Domini MDCCCXV*, no. 26. SMSA. Rosati, *Diary*, June 5, 1824; May 11, 1826; September 6, 1827. SMSA.

Father DeNeckere, in a letter dated July 31, 1826, informed Bishop Rosati that, according to the judgment of his doctor in St. Louis, the best way of recovering from his illness was to return to his native land. To cover the expenses of such a journey, he adds that there are people in St. Louis who have offered him some assistance. The day after he received this news, Bishop Rosati wrote to him, on August 6th, to tell how deeply such information had afflicted him and to grant permission for such a trip lest in any way he would have anything to regret later on. Upon his return to the Barrens. Father DeNeckere received from the bishop on August 24th, the necessary permissions and faculties on the condition that he should always consider himself as belonging to this mission so that, after he regains his health in Flanders, he should go to Rome and then return to America: and, finally, if his doctor and the superior should decide that he remain in Rome, he is to act as the Procurator for the American missions. As his bishop and superior, Bishop Rosati gave his esteemed and talented fellow Vincentian testimonial letters, letters of introduction to the superior at Amiens and finally, never one to miss an opportunity to seek help from Europe, a letter to the Catholics of Belgium asking their help for the mission in America. Father DeNeckere departed from the Barrens on August 26th, accompanied by Father Odin as far as Ste. Genevieve.<sup>119</sup>

How successful Father DeNeckere was in his appeal for assistance is evident from a letter of Bishop Rosati to his Vicar General in Rome almost two years later while Father DeNeckere was still in Europe. They had received a shipment containing a complete set of velvet vestments for High Mass, three copes for Vespers, another set of fine cloth vestments for High Mass, and twenty linen chasubles of the various colors used for Mass. Moreover, he had ordered twenty linen shirts and many excellent books from Flanders. And he had let the bishop know that soon there would come from Flanders an organ for the church and a press for printing books of devotion, catechisms, etc. Their benefactress for all this was a certain Baroness of Gesegham [Gysegem].<sup>120</sup>

Despite two letters of Father [Francis] Niel from Rome and Paris and the accounts in [32] the St. Louis papers. Bishop Rosati still found it difficult to believe that Bishop DuBourg had resigned as bishop of the diocese. However, on November 4, 1826, he received a letter from the Propaganda and two Briefs from Pope Leo XII, the first of which announced officially the resignation of Bishop DuBourg, and the second. the formation of two dioceses, one of New Orleans and the other of St. Louis, along with the intimation that he would ultimately be the Bishop of New Orleans. Meanwhile, until another bishop could be appointed, he was to be the Administrator of both New Orleans and St. Louis. Bishop Rosati lost no time in writing Rome to manifest his opposition to being named Bishop of New Orleans, giving a number of reasons for his hesitancy in moving south. In a letter received from Father Baccari on November 5th, his Vicar General told him that Archbishop Caprano had said that if Bishop Rosati persisted in his refusal, Rome would yield. The archbishop probably remembered his opposition to moving the seminary to Louisiana the previous year. In his answer to Father Baccari, Bishop Rosati informed him that he had already written Bishops Flaget, DuBourg, and [Michael] Portier asking them to intercede with the Holy Father on his behalf. He also tells him that the news of Archbishop Caprano's remarks made him

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<sup>119</sup> [Note 63] Rosati, *Diary*, under dates indicated. SMSA.

<sup>120</sup> [Note 64] Rosati to Baccari, May 10, 1828. SMSA.

breathe a little more easily. If all else failed, he was ready to go to Rome and beg, on bended knees, that the Holy Father would release him from New Orleans.<sup>121</sup>



*Joseph Rosati, C.M., first bishop of St. Louis, Missouri*

In a letter of October 8, 1826, Bishop Rosati had told Father Niel that he had adopted the plan of incurring no debts in the construction of the new church at the Barrens. Due to the limited finances of the parish, laborers could be hired only when donations from other sources and from Europe permitted. So progress depended in large part upon the contributed labor of the parishioners. No doubt the mere dimensions of the foundations, measuring roughly about 125 by 65 feet, caused some speculation in the minds of many as to whether or not such a vast undertaking could ever be completed in an area such as the Barrens. But with his indefatigable zeal, their pastor, speaking from the pulpit on Sunday, November 19th, urged them to press on with the work of building their church, or, if they continued to grow slack in their cooperation, he would simply refuse to send a priest from the seminary to the old church.<sup>122</sup> The seminarians, however, seemed

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<sup>121</sup> [Note 65] Rosati. *Diary*, November 4, 7, 10, 1826. SMSA. Rosati to Baccari, November 17, 1826. SMSA.

<sup>122</sup> [Note 66] Rosati, *Diary*, November 19, 1826. SMSA.

to be quite willing to help the amiable and patient Brother Oliva on many of their holidays. By the end of the year the work had progressed far enough to be ready for the laying of the cornerstone.

On the last Sunday in October, the 29th, Bishop Rosati gave an English version of the Bull of Pope Leo XII on the extension of the Jubilee Year to the whole world beginning on the first Sunday of Advent. Probably most of the parishioners had little knowledge of what that entailed but on Sunday, November 26th, they heard their pastor explain the indulgences they could obtain on such an occasion. To prepare themselves properly, they faithfully attended a mission during the first two weeks of Advent. Because of the distances they had to travel, the eight days of the mission were spread out over two weeks with the sermons given at the Masses on the three Sundays and at ten o'clock in the morning on five weekdays. The bishop had reserved for himself the conducting of the mission at the Barrens and had asked Father Timon to perform the same task in St. Louis and in Illinois. When Bishop Rosati spoke of a mission, he was dealing with a subject with which he was familiar, having been engaged in giving missions in Italy when he joined Bishop DuBourg's group of volunteers for Louisiana back in 1815. It would seem that these were the first missions given in the United States.<sup>123</sup>

Due to the somewhat vague boundaries resulting from the surveying method of the day, it was discovered that the seminary had been cultivating a small tract of land that actually belonged to John Layton, Jr., who, in turn, had been accidentally using an equal portion of the seminary land. To solve this problem, the Board of Trustees of St. Mary's Seminary, at a meeting on January 24, 1825, unanimously resolved [33] that an exchange of these respective tracts take place provided that no addition or diminution be made to the quantity of the seminary land. Such a trade was within the rights of the Board according to the Act of Incorporation. As for John Layton, he was a member of the Board at that time so the matter was settled easily and amicably.

A complete treatment of the ownership of the seminary property is somewhat involved and really beyond the scope of this sketch, so here only the first transfers of this property will be mentioned. As related in Chapter I, Bishop Rosati had obtained a certificate for this land grant thus fulfilling the last legal formality, neglected by Ignatius Layton, for obtaining a government Patent. On December 13, 1826, Bishop Rosati managed to have Ignatius Layton and his wife once again sign a deed selling to Bishop DuBourg the seminary property for a stated sum of \$900.00. By reason of Bishop DuBourg's letter appointing his coadjutor as his attorney in fact, Bishop Rosati, acting for Bishop DuBourg, on the same day sold this property to Fathers Francis X. Dahmen, John Odin and Joseph Paquin. On the same day, in the same manner and to the same three Vincentians, the bishop signed over other properties such as the mill land and a piece of property in Apple Creek. These deeds were recorded the next day in the Perry County Recorder's Office. Thus the seminary property was never in the name of Bishop Rosati himself. He then wrote to Bishop DuBourg to inform him of these transactions. As he wrote to Bishop [John] England in Charleston, South Carolina, according to the Constitution of the State of Missouri, no religious institution could ever be incorporated so church property must be vested in individuals.<sup>124</sup> St. Mary's Seminary had been incorporated, not as a religious body but as an educational institution.

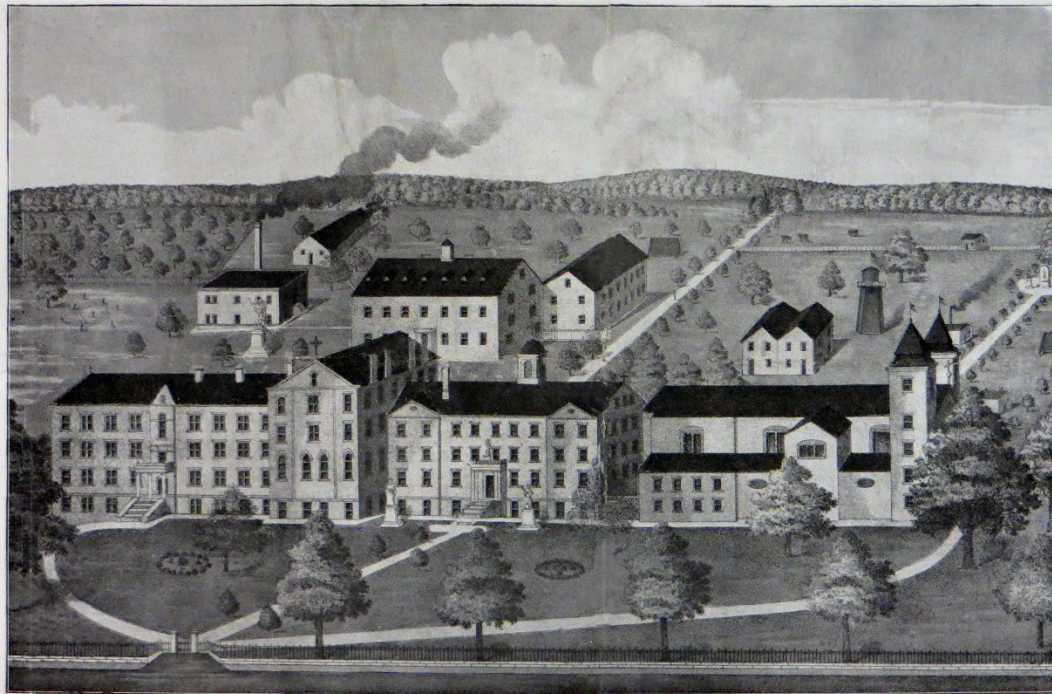
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<sup>123</sup> [Note 67] Rosati, *Diary*, October 29, November 26, December 3–16, 1826. SMSA. Charles L. Souvay, *Organized Missions – by Whom introduced in the United States*, short paper in SMSA.

<sup>124</sup> [Note 68] Original deeds for December 12, 1826 in SMSA. Rosati to DuBourg, December 29, 1826. SMSA. Rosati to England, December 7, 1826, SMSA.

In late December, the front wall of the new church was now sufficiently above ground to allow for the blessing and the laying of the cornerstone, Because of the intense cold and the snow on the appointed day, December 26th, Bishop Rosati had to postpone the ceremony until the weather improved. The delay, of course, was a minor problem when compared to his anxiety as to whether he would remain in St. Louis or be sent to New Orleans. Father Baccari had not yet received his letter of November 17th in which he expressed his desire, in the well-known statement, that he remain in Missouri “Where I would prefer to eat corn bread and to be poor the rest of my life than to have all my comforts in Louisiana.”<sup>125</sup>

[34, blank]



(The Barrens)

ST. MARY'S SEMINARY, PERRYVILLE, MO.

<sup>125</sup> [Note 69] Rosati, *Diary*, December 26, 1826. SMSA. Rosati to Baccari, November 17, 1826. SMSA.



## CHAPTER III

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARISH

Because the weather on New Year's Day was a little less cold than on previous days and there was a relatively good number of parishioners present at the eleven o'clock Mass, the bishop decided that, despite the snow still on the ground, he would perform the ceremony of blessing and laying the cornerstone of the new church. After Mass, the procession started from the old church led by a subdeacon carrying the cross between two acolytes and followed by the censer bearer, the clergy, Fathers Paquin and [Francis Regis] Loisel as deacon and subdeacon in dalmatic and tunic, the bishop in his pontifical robes and Father Odin as assistant priest in cope, and then the nuns and people going two by two. En route to the site of the new church, the clergy, divided into two parts, sang psalms. Arriving at the front of the new church where the walls were ready for the occasion, the bishop performed all that is prescribed by the *Pontificale Romanum*. The cornerstone itself, prepared and polished, measured fourteen inches in height, depth and width, with a hole in the top of three inches in each direction. Into this opening, the bishop placed a tin plate with an inscription in Latin, the English translation of which is as follows: "On the first day of January, 1827, A.D., I, Joseph, Bishop of Tenagra, have blessed and set in place this first stone of this church to be built for the supreme and highest God in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of St. Vincent de Paul." With this inscription the bishop also placed two copper coins of Pius VII, one of one cent and the other of a half cent, six copper coins of the United States, and a silver coin of the Kingdom of Italy under Napoleon.<sup>126</sup>

In the sermon after this ceremony, Bishop Rosati reminded the people of the honor bestowed upon them by God of building His House, an honor not given to David, dear though he was to God, but to his son, Solomon. Thus God has given them this enviable privilege and approves their work and is using their assistance in erecting this building dedicated to Him. Furthermore, perhaps aware of the objection of some of the parishioners and even some at the seminary to such a vast edifice, he added that, if anyone tells them that the undertaking is too much for them, they should beware lest they be frightened into yielding to the pretexts of laziness, indifference or avarice. They should also bear in mind that their poverty should be no excuse because they are working for God who can return their sacrifices a hundredfold even in this life. Some indication of the objection to the size of the church can be found in a letter of Father Timon in early 1837, where he described the church as too vast for the country. Again, Father Odin, six months or so after the consecration of the church, admired its beauty and stated that it is always filled at the eleven o'clock Mass and is not large enough to accommodate the crowds on big feasts, but admitted that, when the cornerstone was laid, "we considered its design gigantic and extravagant."<sup>127</sup> On the rear interior wall of the present church there is a plaque which describes the edifice as a one-third scale model of the chapel at Monte Citorio in Rome.<sup>128</sup> It is sometimes

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<sup>126</sup> [Note 1] Rosati, *Diary*, January 1, 1827. SMSA.

<sup>127</sup> [Note 2] Rosati, *Memoires*, 118–119. SMSA. *VH*, V. 2 (1984) 123–124. Timon to Ugo, February 5, 1837. SMSA. Odin to Etienne, April 24, 1838. SMSA.

<sup>128</sup> JR note: In fact, the church at Monte Citorio had approximately the same dimensions in width and breadth as the Barrens, except that the walls in Assumption Church were reduced in height, as mentioned elsewhere in this text. This reduction is the source of the erroneous description.

said that the original plan called for an exact duplication of that chapel but that financial and other reasons caused the reduction in size.

The parishioners were seeing less of their pastor now that he had to administer the needs of both St. Louis and New Orleans. However, as often as possible, he made a sincere effort to be in their midst and even to teach classes at the seminary but he was more than ever convinced of the need of some older and experienced Vincentian to take charge of the seminary. Frequently in the past he had asked Father Baccari for such a man but his Vicar General could not spare a qualified man. At long last, though, he was sending a man capable of [36] succeeding the bishop as superior at the Barrens. To make his presence even more of a delight, he was entrusting this new man, Father Boccardo, with two thousand dollars collected in Europe for the seminary. On July 6th, however, Bishop Rosati received word from Father Tichitoli that, upon leaving the ship in New Orleans, he had accidentally dropped his traveling bag containing the money and some letters into the Mississippi. All attempts to recover the bag and its contents having failed, Father Boccardo was so distraught that he sailed right back to Europe. Bishop Rosati could not reach him by letter in time to persuade him to remain in America and to come to the Barrens. On the other hand, the bishop was delighted and relieved to receive on July 12th, the Papal Brief, dated March 20, 1827, naming him as Bishop of St. Louis but also asking him to continue as Administrator of New Orleans until another bishop could be appointed.<sup>129</sup>

In a letter to Cardinal Cappellari, Prefect of the Propaganda, Bishop Rosati recounts the experiences of these first days of July. First he expressed his great joy at receiving the Apostolic Letters of Pope Leo XII by which he was appointed Bishop of St. Louis and thus enabled to remain in Missouri. He also thanked the Cardinal for his letters containing five hundred dollars from the Apostolic Datary in response to his request of the previous year and for another five hundred dollars from Father Baccari. He then recounts the experience of Father Boccardo who lost fifteen hundred dollars from the pious sodality in France under the direction of the Propagation of the Faith along with another three hundred dollars from Father Baccari, and two hundred dollars from other pious persons interested in the missions in America. But, for himself, Bishop Rosati confides that what is important is that Father Boccardo recover from his state of sadness and ultimately return to America where he is badly needed to replace the bishop at the Barrens.<sup>130</sup> He further recommends to the cardinal that he become acquainted with Father DeNeckere, soon to visit Rome, and to consider him as a possible candidate for New Orleans but asks that the question of the episcopacy not be mentioned lest Father DeNeckere choose to remain in Rome.<sup>131</sup>

Meanwhile, perhaps discouraged by the task of hauling the quarried stone by horse and wagon for the foundations of the church with hardly any noticeable signs of progress, the parishioners seemed to have lost some of their enthusiasm for their work. Probably they remembered how long it had taken them to finish the seminary building, compared to which the church seemed truly to be an impossible task. So, once again, the indefatigable zeal of their pastor had to rally his parishioners to the work ahead and, if necessary, to use stern measures to accomplish this.

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<sup>129</sup> [Note 3] *Diary*, July 6, 12, 1827. SMSA.

<sup>130</sup> JR note: Boccardo asked to return to America but ultimately did not do so.

<sup>131</sup> [Note 4] Rosati to Cappellari, July 14, 1827. SMSA.



(Left) One of the sacraria attributed to Bro. Oliva

At a meeting of the heads of families after Mass on July 29th, Thomas Riney, Thomas Hayden and John Tucker were elected to carry out the following commission: to draw up a census of the parish dividing the men into three classes according to their abilities, to see that the men enlist in one of these classes thereby indicating that they were ready to do what was necessary for building the church, and to name those who refused to do so who were then to be regarded as excluded from the list of parishioners. To clarify further his position, at a meeting of all the parishioners after Vespers on August 5th, the bishop emphasized five points: first, that no one has the right to enjoy the privileges of a society unless he is also willing to share the responsibilities of the society; second, that the society of the parishioners of St. Mary's has both privileges and obligations; third, that

anyone who refuses to bear his proportionate responsibilities is no longer to be considered a true member of the society; fourth, that a list of those neglecting their obligations is to be drawn up; fifth, that both the wives and children of these delinquents should continue to share in the privileges of the society since they cannot be held responsible for the failure of the men to cooperate in their duties.<sup>132</sup>

Progress on the new church was steady but slow not due so much to any failure on the part of the parishioners [37] but rather to the lack of funds necessary to hire skilled laborers to work full time on a large scale. Nevertheless, it would seem that by 1830, at least the walls of the sacristies were high enough to warrant the construction of two sacraria,<sup>133</sup> very probably chiseled by Brother Oliva himself, which are still in the new sacristy added to the church in the twentieth century. The basins of solid stone, about thirty six inches wide and thirty inches above the floor, are each supported by two stone slabs on either side. To the rear of the basins and against the wall, there are two ornamental slabs of stone, differing in design, but each bearing the date, 1830. These sacraria may be the reason that authors like O'Rourke state that "by 1830 the building was advanced enough in construction to be used and services have been held in it uninterruptedly ever since."<sup>134</sup> The plaque, already referred to, on the rear wall of the present church also states that the

<sup>132</sup> [Note 5] Rosati, *Diary*, July 29, August 5, 1827. SMSA.

<sup>133</sup> JR note: the sacrarium is a basin, usually in a sacristy, with a drain that empties directly into soil and is used for disposing of water used to wash sacred items.

<sup>134</sup> [Note 6] O'Rourke, *Maryland Catholics on the Frontier*, p. 7.

edifice was used as a parish church from 1830 to 1965. When one realizes that the walls of the church were not to be finished for another two or three years and that the roof was not finished until 1834, it seems quite improbable, if not impossible, that the building could be used as a parish church as early as 1830. Later in this chapter more will be said about how long the old church was used for parochial purposes.

While working on the church, the parishioners observed another building under construction, a project in which, fortunately, they were not involved. The number of lay students was increasing to such an extent that there was no longer adequate room in the seminary to accommodate them comfortably and to maintain the separation between seminarians and lay students, a concern for both the bishop and the faculty. Consequently, on June 16, 1828, the bishop made a pact with a Mr. George to take charge of the project, and later, on July 9th, the bishop contracted with him and two others to quarry the stone and lay the foundations and to make, burn and lay the bricks for the upper stories. The building was to be located east of the seminary and on a line with the new church and the seminary. On July 23rd, the bishop laid the first stone, Father Odin the second, Father Paquin the third, and Father [Joseph Anthony] Lutz the fourth. The students were able to move to their new quarters on February 11, 1829, after which they heard the bishop explain the rules to them.<sup>135</sup> A great help to furnishing this building was a supply of furniture, beds, wardrobes and linens as well as books received from the college in New Orleans which closed shortly after the consecration of Bishop Portier.

Bishop Rosati, as President of the Board of Trustees of St. Mary's Seminary, called for a meeting of the Board on September 27, 1830. At this meeting it was unanimously resolved that the trustees, president and professors of the seminary sign a petition to obtain the erection of the seminary into a college with the powers of graduating, according to the custom of the universities of the United States, such scholars who, having completed the usual studies, should deserve this honor. The Representative of the County was to be asked to present this petition to the legislature.<sup>136</sup> This appeal resulted in "An Act authorizing the St. Marie's Seminary to confer the degrees of A.B., A.M., etc.," enacted by the General Assembly on December 13, 1830, and to be in force on and after January 1, 1831. The Act empowered the seminary to confer on "those whose acquirements may merit such distinction, all the honorary degrees which are usual to be conferred on students in other seminaries and colleges in the United States."

The curriculum at St. Mary's College was much the same as at other colleges at that time. Well into the first quarter or more of the nineteenth century, colleges such as Harvard, Princeton, Yale and others were primarily interested in educating young men for the ministry and the magistracy and accepted students as young as fourteen years of age after they had completed their preliminary training in Latin and Greek. The college curriculum [38] continued to consist of the seven liberal arts crowned with Philosophy –Natural, Mental or Metaphysics, and Moral –almost exclusively Scholastic in content and method. The theological courses depended upon the fundamental doctrines of the particular religion responsible for each college. When Thomas Henry Huxley was elected Rector of the University of Aberdeen in 1872, he somewhat astounded the progressive educators in the audience when, after examining the early curriculum at Aberdeen, he stated in his inaugural address: "I doubt if the curriculum of any modern University shows so clear

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<sup>135</sup> [Note 7] Rosati, *Diary*, under dates indicated. SMSA.

<sup>136</sup> [Note 8] St. Mary's Seminary Board Meetings, 1823–1830. SMSA.

and generous a comprehension of what is meant by culture, as this old Trivium and Quadrivium did.”<sup>137</sup>

Since 1828, at the close of each school year in September, a day was set aside for granting special awards to students who had excelled in their classes. At each Exhibition, as they were called, among the guests present for the occasion were parents who must have been particularly proud of the completion of their sons' college education and especially so of any awards they may have received. Even after he was living in St. Louis, Bishop Rosati presided at these Exhibitions whenever it was possible. Two excerpts from his *Diary* are cited here because they give some further information about the college. On September 18, 1831, he mentioned that the enrollment had now climbed to 100 students; on September 18, 1833, he added that three students had received their Master of Arts degrees. In his 1833 annual report on the state of the diocese, published in the short-lived diocesan paper, he listed the faculty of the college as consisting of Father Odin, as President, Fathers Paquin, Loisel and [Joseph V.] Wiseman, two laymen, and some seminarians, and gave the number of students as 125, all boarders.<sup>138</sup> In a list of colleges in the United States, published in 1835, St. Mary's is mentioned as having a student body of 124 and a library of 6,000 volumes.<sup>139</sup> While only a small library when compared to most of the older and well financed eastern colleges, it was about average in size for Catholic colleges west of the Alleghenies. The first band of missionaries, while gathering materials in Europe for their future work in America, considered a good collection of books as necessary for their purpose.<sup>140</sup> After their arrival at the Barrens, a continuous effort was made to add to this collection by both Bishop DuBourg and the Vincentians.

Having discussed the rise of the college to its highest point of development, it should be mentioned that there were other events taking place during this period. When France finally ended its suppression of the Congregation of the Mission, or the Vincentians, the community held a General Assembly in 1829 and elected Father [Dominic] Salhorgne as Superior General.<sup>141</sup> Though the parishioners as such were not directly affected by this, the Vincentians in America were no longer ultimately subject to the Vicar General in Rome, Father Baccari, but to the Superior General, Father Salhorgne, in Paris. Once again, Bishop Rosati repeated his plea for an older and experienced priest to succeed him as superior at the Barrens in order to give him more time and freedom to exercise his duties as bishop.

Father Salhorgne fulfilled this long-desired wish of the bishop in 1830 when he sent Father [Giovanni Battista] Tornatore to be the superior at the Barrens. He seems to have arrived at the Barrens on June 22nd to begin his new duties.<sup>142</sup> After the bishop returned on July 18th from the

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<sup>137</sup> [Note 9] James J. Walsh, *Education of the Founding Fathers of the Republic; Scholasticism in the Colonial Colleges: a Neglected Chapter in the History of American Education* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1935), pp. 8–30, passim.

<sup>138</sup> [Note 10] *Shepherd of the Valley*, February 7, 1834, p. 3.

<sup>139</sup> [Note 11] Thomas G. Bradford, *A Comprehensive Atlas: Geographical, Historical and Commercial* (Boston: Wilkins and Carter, 1835). p. 152.

<sup>140</sup> [Note 12] Easterly, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>141</sup> [Note 13] Stafford Poole, *A History of the Congregation of the Mission 1625–1843* (n.p., 1973), p. 401.

<sup>142</sup> [Note 14] Catalogue Alumnorum, p. 95. On this page begins a continuation of the previous *Catalogus* entitled "Catalogus Sacerdotum, Clericorum, et Fratrum Laicorum Domus S. Mariae ad Barrens." It is a chart of three columns listing the name, date of arrival, and the date of departure. Father Tornatore is fourth on the list.

(Right) Bishop DeNeckere, C.M., of New Orleans

consecration of Bishop DeNeckere, he remained there for about two weeks to complete his business and to assure himself that all was going well at the seminary. In the St. Mary's Seminary Archives there is a brief document, written by the bishop on July 24, 1830, in which Bishop Rosati appointed Father Tornatore as his Vicar General for the diocese. Shortly thereafter, the bishop began to reside in St. Louis, his last letter from the Barrens being dated July 29th, and the next letter, dated August 7th, and subsequent letters coming from St. Louis. Writing to his brother on November 21, 1830, he said that since the arrival of Father Tornatore he no longer had charge of the seminary. [39]



The parishioners at the Barrens were probably very proud to learn that one of the Vincentians whom they knew quite well, Father Leo DeNeckere, was appointed the new Bishop of New Orleans. After much hesitation on the part of Father DeNeckere he was finally consecrated by Bishop Rosati on June 24, 1830, in New Orleans. Another future bishop, Peter Paul Lefevre, was ordained on November 20, 1831, at the Barrens by Bishop Rosati. After ten years of missionary labor in the neglected northern portion of Missouri and eastern Illinois, he was consecrated as coadjutor bishop of Detroit on November 21, 1841, thus becoming the second alumnus of the seminary to be a bishop.<sup>143</sup>

Needing a well-educated diocesan clergy, not to teach in a seminary but to convert or to refute the Protestants of the area, Bishop Rosati in 1830 asked for, and received, the privilege of sending two of his students to the Urban College in Rome. According to his *Diary*, on April 26, 1832, Hilary Tucker, grandson of old Mr. Joseph Tucker, and George Alexander Hamilton, grandson of Joseph Fenwick, left the Barrens for Rome with Hilary's brother, Lewis, going with them as far as Ste. Genevieve. After they finally arrived in Rome in 1833, Hilary kept in frequent touch with his bishop. Having completed their studies, Hilary was ordained in Rome on July 2, 1837, but waited there for the delayed ordination of his companion, George, before they returned to America. Lewis Tucker, two years older than his brother, Hilary, became the first student from the Barrens area at St. Mary's Seminary to become a priest when he was ordained for the diocese on September 22, 1833.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>143</sup> [Note 15] Rosati, *Memoires*, 134. SMSA.VH, V. 2 (1984) 141. Rosati, *Diary*, November 20, 1831. SMSA. Rothensteiner, *History of the Archdiocese of St. Louis*, v. I, pp. 579–589. Joseph B. Code, *Dictionary of the American Hierarchy* (1789–1964) (New York: Wagner, 1964), p. 164.

<sup>144</sup> [Note 16] Trisco, *op. cit.*, pp. 209–211. Rosati, *Diary*, September 22, 1833. SMSA.



Although it may extend far beyond the time period of this present sketch, it may be of interest to add a few comments about the careers of these descendants of the early Tucker and Fenwick Settlements. After his ordination, Father Lewis Tucker spent one year at Fredericktown, ten years at Potosi, one year at New Madrid and, finally, in 1845, he went back to Fredericktown where he remained until his death in 1880. Fathers Hilary Tucker and George Hamilton had their last assignments in the St. Louis Diocese at Quincy and Alton. After the death of Bishop Rosati in 1843 and the creation of the Chicago Diocese in 1844, which included both Quincy and Alton, both priests received permission to leave the Chicago Diocese and to work in the Boston Diocese – not thereby to seek a life of ease but rather to be with their classmates and friends from their days in Rome. Though brothers, Fathers Lewis and Hilary differed from each other in a number of ways. The first was unassuming, abstemious, careless of comfort and personal appearance and wrote letters only on compulsion. The second was a man of strong character, impulsive at times, with a high idea of his calling, filled with zeal for the conversion of souls and wrote long and interesting letters.<sup>145</sup>

Their first cousin, Matilda Tucker, had by this time become the wife of Valerio Faina. Just how long Valerio had to work with Brother Oliva to pay for his passage to America is not exactly known. At any rate, he had given up any desire to become a Vincentian brother as is evident from the fact that on November 29, 1830, when 25 years old, he married the granddaughter of old Mr. Tucker, Matilda, then only 18 years old.<sup>146</sup> He seems to have learned his trade well under Brother Oliva since in the following year he signed a contract with the trustees to do the stonework on the church.

In a contract dated May 30, 1832, between the trustees of the parish, James Riddick, Samuel L. Moore and Lewis Cissell, of the first part, Valerio Faina of the second part, and Bishop Rosati of the third part, it is stated that, in view of the alterations made in the plans for the church – reducing the walls of the principal building by two feet and raising the steeples to a height of fifty-two feet above the foundations – it was agreed to consider as null and void the articles of agreement previously made by the first two parties on May 16, 1831. Under the new arrangement, Valerio Faina agrees to furnish all the stone, with the exception of the heavier [40] ones, and to do the mason work of the church under the direction of the architect, Brother Oliva. In return, he is to be supplied with all the lime and sand necessary and is to be paid \$2,926 for the work in addition to \$150 for the foundations, a total of \$3,076. The trustees are to pay him the sum of \$1,885 and Bishop Rosati the balance, \$1,191. The sum of \$2,076 is to be paid to him as the work progresses and the remaining \$1,000 when the work is finished. This contract was signed by James Riddick, Lewis Cissell, Valerio Faina and Bishop Rosati and was witnessed by Father Odin and Brother Daniel Harrington. At the end of the contract in an added paragraph, signed by Valerio Faina and witnessed by Father Odin on September 19, 1833, it is indicated that this bill has been paid in full even though Faina has not yet completed the work on the steeples but binds himself to do so under a forfeiture of \$100. On the last page of this contract is another note, that the walls of the sacristy are to be reduced by six feet.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> [Note 17] O'Rourke, *op. cit.*, p. 398. Rothensteiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 753–764.

<sup>146</sup> [Note 18] *Liber Matrimoniarum Parochiae Sanctae Mariae ad Silvam Crematam ab Anno Domini 1822*. SVPR.

<sup>147</sup> [Note 19] Original contract in SMSA.

These changes in the heights of the walls and of the steeples were quite possibly the suggestion of Brother Oliva who may have concluded that the external appearance of the church would be improved by a greater contrast in height between the walls and the steeples. It could well be also that the sacristy walls were lowered to permit the installation of the large windows in the walls of the church above each sacristy. A photograph of the church, taken some time after the college building burned to the ground in 1866, shows the two steeples, quite possibly in their original form. At the top, each spire, tapering to a point from the four sides of the tower, appears to be about nine feet high, supported on the exterior by twelve stone columns, four larger ones at the corners with two smaller ones between them on each side, each of them being approximately six feet high.

Typical of Bishop Rosati's continued interest in his first love, the Barrens, was the financial assistance rendered in the contract cited above concerning the construction of the new church. What made his gift more significant was his own needs in St. Louis where he was collecting funds for the construction of a badly needed new cathedral as well as for other projects he had started there. During his visit at the Barrens, he was probably curious about how well his successor, Father Tornatore, was doing as superior of the Barrens. He was facing pretty much the same problems as the bishop before him, but, though he tried to make proper use of his authority, he had not enjoyed the same success as the bishop for a number of reasons. As for the parishioners, they very probably saw very little of him. According to one description, he was not a gifted speaker, he never acquired the idiomatic use of English and his health was somewhat precarious.<sup>148</sup> It may be significant that whenever the bishop in his annual reports, and the same is true of the Catholic Directories of the day, lists the parish as distinct from the seminary, he associates Father [John] Brands with the parish. So it would seem that, though Father Brands may not have been the official pastor, he appears to have been actually running the parish.

Bishop Rosati, in an attempt to pay some of the debts at the seminary and to gain new recruits for the mission, asked Father Odin, President of the College, to journey to Europe. Accordingly, on November 3, 1833, at the start of the new school term, Father Odin left the Barrens for Europe.<sup>149</sup> When the new college had been built in 1828, it was thought that the tuition of the students would be adequate to liquidate the resulting financial obligations. Instead, this income had been used to defray the annual operating costs of maintaining St. Mary's Seminary as a whole. As a result a debt of \$9,000 for the construction work remained unpaid. When in Rome in 1834, Father Odin, through the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda, had his petition relayed to the Nuncio in Vienna who was asked in emphatic terms to present this plea to the Leopoldine Foundation. Cardinal Ostini did so at once and promised to do so again when the distribution of the first semester would again take place. As a result of [41] this action, the Diocese of St. Louis was allotted six thousand florins (about \$2,850), a sum that was a good beginning in relieving the indebtedness of the seminary at the Barrens.<sup>150</sup>

About the time that Father Odin had left the Barrens for Europe in November of 1833, the walls and steeples of the new church were finished by Valerio Faina and, in the following spring,

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<sup>148</sup> [Note 20] Rothensteiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 380–382.

<sup>149</sup> [Note 21] Rosati, *Diary*, November 3, 1833. SMSA.

<sup>150</sup> [Note 22] Trisco, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

the roof had been completed.<sup>151</sup> It would take more than three years to complete the church, principally due to the lack of funds required to hire the skilled workers necessary for this task. Though all exterior stonework of the church was now in place, the remaining work suffered a tremendous setback by the death of Brother Oliva on January 21, 1835. With his skill, industry, and direction, he had been primarily responsible for the construction of St. Mary's Church: he had also aided in the ornamentation of the new cathedral in St. Louis, of the new church at Ste. Genevieve, and of the new church at Old Mines.<sup>152</sup> It was truly unfortunate that he had not lived to see the completion of the church at Perryville for which he had left Italy in 1823 and to which he had faithfully devoted so much labor and time.

On one of his many visits to the Barrens, Bishop Rosati must have recalled many fond memories of his early days at the seminary. Joseph Manning's first wife, the former Mary Layton, had died on November 2, 1832.<sup>153</sup> About a year-and-a-half later, Bishop Rosati was present to officiate at the wedding of two people who had been very closely associated with the Vincentians upon their arrival back in 1818. On May 12, 1834, Joseph Manning and Sarah Hayden were joined in matrimony, the witnesses being Mark Brewer and Susanna Moranville, the daughter of Manning. Joseph Manning's age was mentioned as 64 and Sarah Hayden's as 69.<sup>154</sup> It was very likely a most joyful reunion of the parties involved.

The period between early 1835 and the middle of 1837 was an eventful and trying time for the bishop. The death of Brother Oliva was followed by the need to appoint a new superior at the Barrens. Lacking both an adequate facility in English and a knowledge of the customs of the country, Father Tornatore had finally convinced the bishop of his ineptitude for the office of superior at the Barrens. Perhaps unnoticed by the parishioners, under his leadership morale among the priests and seminarians had fallen to a new low. A number of them objected to, among other things, the conducting of classes for the lay students. The practice of employing competent seminarians to teach in a college was common in other American seminaries since parents were reluctant to pay for their sons' room and board in a seminary. What the people in the parish very likely did notice was the sudden and quite definite decline in the enrollment in the college to only about 70 students due principally to the refusal on the part of some priests and seminarians to teach. Moreover, the debt resulting from the construction of the college building was still quite a formidable one. Such were some of the problems confronting Father Timon when he succeeded Father Tornatore as superior of the Vincentians at the Barrens in 1835.

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<sup>151</sup> [Note 23] Rosati, "Documents from Our Archives; *Diary of Rosati*," *SLCHR*, IV 165. Footnote number 4 by Father Souvay.

<sup>152</sup> [Note 24] *Ibid. Liber Defunctorum in Parochia Sanctae Mariae ad Silvam Crematam ab Anno Domini 1822*. Entry for date of funeral, January 23, 1835, states that Brother Oliva dies two days before. SVPR. Rosati, *Diary*, January 23, 1835. SMSA. On way back to Barrens, Bishop hears at St. Mary's that Brother Oliva had died two days ago. *Catalogus Alumnorum*, "Nomina Sacerdotum, Clericorum; et fratrum Coadjutorum qui in hac provincia Americae mortui sunt," SMSA. Gives date of Brother Oliva's death as January 23, 1834.

<sup>153</sup> [Note 25] *Liber Defunctorum in Parochia Sanctae Mariae ad Silvam Crematam ab Anno Domini 1822*. SVPR.

<sup>154</sup> [Note 26] *Liber Matrimoniarum Parochiae Sanctae Mariae ad Silvam Crematam ab Anno Domini 1822*. SVPR.



(Left) *Bust of John Timon, first bishop of Buffalo*

The General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission took place in Paris in 1835 and elected Father [Jean-Baptiste] Nozo as Superior General.<sup>155</sup> Father Odin, in France at that time, wrote a memoir to the Superior General in August of 1835, in which he described the present condition of the American Vincentians and expressed the sentiments of most of his fellow Vincentians there that, among other things, the college should be closed. Acting on this advice, the Assembly declared that “the college established and directed by the missionaries at St. Mary’s of the Barrens has been suppressed.” However, allowance was made for its reopening in the future should conditions become more favorable. Other decrees issued at this time affected the internal affairs of the Congregation and so made little or no difference as far as the Barrens people were concerned. As Father Baccari had died that year, the Assembly raised the Congregation of the Mission in America to the status of Province, directly [42] subject to the Superior

General in Paris, and appointed Father Timon as the first Visitor, or Provincial Superior, as well as the superior at the Barrens.

According to Father Easterly, Bishop Rosati receive a copy of these new edicts on November 7th, and wrote to Father Timon the next day to declare that he would make his observations to the Superior General on these new decrees and communicate them also to the Propaganda, but rather than place himself in a state of war with his fellow Vincentians, who should be his auxiliaries for more lawful combats, he will ask the Holy Father to accept his resignation and to permit him to spend the rest of his life in retirement to prepare for death. After conferring with Father Timon and Bishop [Anthony] Blanc of New Orleans, he finally wrote to Father Nozo on February 24, 1836, announcing that he willingly accepted some of the decrees but vehemently opposed others such as the closing of the college. The bishop had great trust in the prudence of Father Timon, who, indeed, had recognized the inadvisability of some of the edicts of the Superior General and had deferred their execution until the Superior General had replied to his own letter or to that of the bishop. For one thing, he continued to keep the college in operation.

To help to reduce the debt of the college, Father Timon made a trip to the south to collect some of the money owed the college. Between what he collected and the financial assistance from Europe, the college was finally out of debt so now the income from tuition could be used to help support the seminary. The changed spirit of the seminary and a debt-free college brought about a different attitude on the part of practically all the priests there who were now willing to teach lay students which, in turn, slowly caused an increase in enrollment.

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<sup>155</sup> [Note 27] Poole, *op. cit.*, p. 403.

Bishop Rosati was not to sit back for long and treat these new decrees passively. Hearing from others of Bishop Blanc's opinion that somewhat dire consequences might follow from the enforcement of all the edicts of the Assembly, the Propaganda asked for, and received, Bishop Rosati's personal views on the decrees. Upon receiving his reply, Propaganda, and even Pope Gregory XVI, seriously exhorted Father Nozo to modify them. Finally, on April 8, 1837, in a letter to Father Timon, he permitted the college to reopen provided that no seminarian be forced to teach against his will. The Propaganda also assured Bishop Rosati in a letter dated April 17, 1837, that all had been settled in a way acceptable to him.<sup>156</sup> Even Father Odin, after his return to the Barrens, in view of the situation then prevailing, had changed his mind and wrote to Father Nozo on December 10, 1836, to inform him that his former recommendations were now unnecessary. This letter may have disposed the General to comply more graciously with the Holy See's demands.<sup>157</sup>

During this period, in an effort to cover the rising costs of the new church, the parishioners, on April 15, 1836, presented to Father John Brands a list of subscribers numbering about 340 and pledging approximately \$2,500.<sup>158</sup> Predominantly English and Irish with a few French names are on the list – much the same combination as was found in the letter to Father Badin in 1806, asking him to obtain for them a regular visit by a priest. On the present list, though, are a few German names which together with those already mentioned, indicated the nationalities which, in time, would constitute the major portion of the Catholic population of Perry County. Father Timon, in a letter of February, 1837, states that the debt on the new church now amounts to \$2,500 and mentions the above subscription as covering this sum. But he adds that another \$2,000 or \$3,000 will be needed to finish the church. As for the college he says that the enrollment has now climbed to 80 students paying \$150 each year for their tuition, the same amount set by Bishop DuBourg back in 1819.<sup>159</sup>

In spite of his busy schedule in St. Louis, Bishop Rosati often found time to return to the Barrens for one reason or another. For instance, on June 2, 1836, he was once again present for the Corpus Christi procession in which he carried the Blessed Sacrament. On June [43] 12th, he was there to administer confirmation to 77 people. After Vespers that day he joined the procession to the new cemetery which he then blessed.<sup>160</sup> The cemetery seems to have been in use for a short time prior to its blessing because on April 25th, Eulalia Hagan, wife of Michael Spalding and niece of Aquila Hagan, is mentioned as having been buried in the new cemetery.<sup>161</sup>

How great was the need not only for a new cemetery but especially for a new church is gathered from a letter of Father Odin in which he states: "This is a list from the records of the parish, from January till now, Baptisms of Catholic infants 151, protestant 77, Marriages 42, burials 48, First Communions 140, Confirmations 128, families 400, and about from 2500 to 3000 souls of population."<sup>162</sup> If this is an accurate copy of Father Odin's original letter, he may have been including the number of sacraments administered elsewhere by the seminary priests on their missionary journeys. In the extant records of St. Mary's parish, throughout the entire year of 1837,

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<sup>156</sup> [Note 28] Trisco, *op. cit.*, pp. 290–296. Easterly, *op. cit.*, pp. 13–146.

<sup>157</sup> [Note 29] Odin to Nozo, December 10, 1836.

<sup>158</sup> [Note 30] Original nine page subscription list in SMSA.

<sup>159</sup> [Note 31] Timon to Nozo, February 3, 1837. SMSA. DuBourg to Rosati, November 12, 1819. SMSA.

<sup>160</sup> [Note 32] Rosati, *Diary*, June 2, 12, 1836. SMSA.

<sup>161</sup> [Note 33] *Liber Defunctorum Sanctae Mariae Parochiae ad Silvam Crematam ab Anno Domini 1822*.

<sup>162</sup> [Note 34] Odin to Timon, September 18, 1837. SMSA.

there were only 108 baptisms, 20 weddings and 28 burials.<sup>163</sup> There are no extant records for First Communions and Confirmations. Nevertheless, with the growing population, the need for more space was already critical since in no way could the old church accommodate such a number.

Providentially, the new church was nearing completion. In September of 1837, Father Odin writes:

The Rt. Rev. Bp. Rosati came here last Sunday week. He will return for the exhibition. Our new church is going to be consecrated on the 29th of October.... I have hurried the workmen and we shall have every thing ready for that time. It is a beautiful building, the Bishop cannot admire it enough, he has directed me to write to all the neighboring bishops to invite them to this Ceremony of the Consecration.<sup>164</sup>

On September 20th, Bishop Rosati returned to the seminary to perform a very solemn and somber ceremony the next day – the translation of the relics of Father DeAndreis from the old to the new church, thus giving the new church a precious treasure. At the bishop’s request, a new tomb of stone and brick had been prepared to receive the remains of Father DeAndreis. The congregation had been informed of this solemn ceremony and were present in great numbers.<sup>165</sup>

Bishop Rosati had given Father Odin the faculty of exhuming the remains of Father DeAndreis from the tomb under the sanctuary of the old church and of placing them in a new casket.<sup>166</sup> The bishop was present for the liturgical services in the old church after which a procession was formed to bear the remains to the new church. Following the cross bearer were the clergy singing psalms and then the lay people. When they arrived at the tomb already prepared in the new church, a final absolution was given and Father DeAndreis was buried on the gospel side of the altar dedicated to St. Vincent in the center of chapel of the south side of the church.<sup>167</sup>

In order to leave an official record of these services, Bishop Rosati wrote a Latin summary for the parish records, an English version of which may read as follows. “The mortal remains of Father DeAndreis, first superior of the Congregation of the Mission in America and Vicar General of Bishop DuBourg, were first transported from St. Louis in October of 1820 and buried in the old church. Now they had been disinterred and put in a new casket which was placed in the choir of the old church on September 21, 1837. Then, in the presence of many parishioners, a Solemn Mass in honor of St. Matthew was celebrated and a Nocturn and Lauds of the Dead recited, after which the remains of Father DeAndreis, lest they be deserted and left without due honor, were carried to the new church where they are now entombed in the Chapel of St. Vincent. That the memory of these events be accurately transmitted to posterity, the following have signed their names in

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<sup>163</sup> [Note 35] *Liber Baptismorum in Ecclesia Sanctae Mariae ad Silvam Crematam ab Anno Domini 1822. Liber Matrimoniarum Parochiae Sanctae Mariae... Liber Defunctorum Parochiae Sanctae Mariae...*

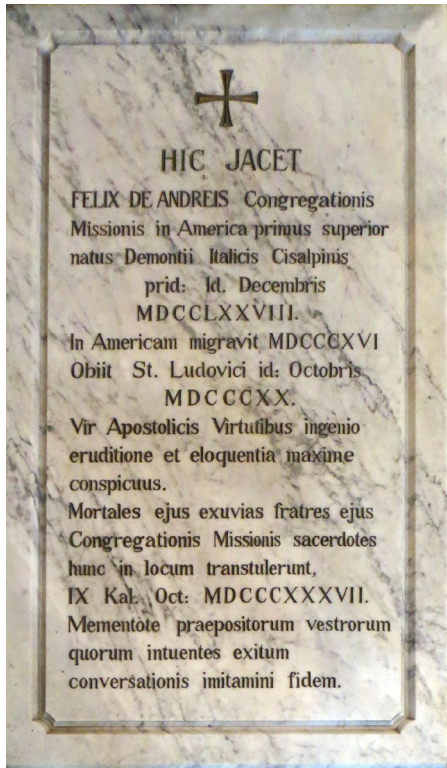
<sup>164</sup> [Note 36] Odin to Timon, September 18, 1837. SMSA.

<sup>165</sup> [Note 37] Giovanni B. Semeria, *Sketches of the Life of the Very Rev. Felix DeAndreis. First Superior of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, and Vicar-General of the Diocese of New Orleans; with a Sketch of the Progress of the Catholic Religion in the United States, from the Beginning of the Present Century to the Year 1860* (Baltimore: Hedian & Piet, 1861), pp. 173–174. Hereafter cited as *Sketches*.

<sup>166</sup> [Note 38] In 1928, when the new Shrine was being built, part of the church wall collapsed and a section of DeAndreis' tomb was exposed. Father Philip LeFevre, C.M., a student sacristan at that time, stated that one could see a good part of the box containing the relics. To his recollection it measured about 10 x 14 x 24 inches.

<sup>167</sup> [Note 39] Rosati, *Diary*, September 21, 1837. SMSA.





witness to the acts here related, at St. Mary's Seminary on this same day. Those signing this entry [44] were as follows: Joseph Ep[iscop]us S. Ludovici, Joannis Baptista Tornatore, C.M., J. M. Odin, C.M., Bartholomaeus Rollando, C.M., J. Bouillier, C.M., Joannis Kelly, Jos. V. Wiseman, Joannes Kenny, A. T. Kelin.<sup>168</sup>

In his *Diary*, Bishop Rosati also states that the following notice be inscribed upon a stone slab and be placed near the tomb:

Heic Jacet / Felix DeAndreis Congregationis Missionis in America / primus Superior et fundator / atque Dioecesis Neo-Aurelianensis / Vicarius Generalis. Natus Demonti in / Italiae Subalpinis prid. Id. Decembr. / MDCCLXXVII / in Americam migravit anno / MDCCCXVI / Obiit S. Ludovici Idib. Octob. / MDCCCXX / Vir apostolicis vlrutibus, ingenio / eruditione, et eloquentia / maxime conspicuus. / Ne mortuus a fratribus corpore abesset / qui vivens illis fuerat corde quam maxime / conjunctus / Mortales ejus exuvias S. Ludovico / exportatas / et in veteri coemeterio primum / tumulatas /

Fratres ejus in Xto amantissimi / Epus S. Ludovici caeterique / Congregationis Missionis Sacerdotes / decentiorem hunc In locum / transtulerunt / xi Kal. Oct. MDCCCXXXVII / "Mementote praepositorum / vestrorum, quorum intuentes exitum / conversationis imitamini fidem" / Haeb.xiii, 17.<sup>169</sup>

[English translation: HERE LIES / FELIX DEANDREIS first superior and founder / of the Congregation of the Mission in America and Vicar General of the diocese of New Orleans / born at Demonte in the / Italian Cisalpine district / December 12, / 1777. He came to America in 1818. / He died in St. Louis on October 15, 1820. / A man most remarkable for his / apostolic virtues, talent, learning / and eloquence. Lest he in death be separated in body from his brothers, who while alive was closely joined to them in his heart, his confreres, most beloved in Christ, the bishop of St. Louis, and other priests of the Congregation of the Mission transferred his mortal remains, at first buried in the old

<sup>168</sup> [Note 40] *Liber Defunctorum in Parochia Sanctae Mariae ad Silvam Crematam ab Anno Domini 1822*, September 21, 1837, pp. 57–58. SVPR.

<sup>169</sup> [Note 41] Rosati, *Diary*, September 21, 1837. SMSA. This typed copy of the inscription, made by Father Souvay, C. M., corresponds exactly with the original text found in Vol. II of the *Ephemerides ab Electione ad Episcopatum, 13 Augusti, 1822*, in the Archives of the Roman Province in the Collegio Leoniano. A xerox copy of the original text was obtained through the courtesy of Father [William] Sheldon, C. M. in Rome. There are two errors in this, the first of which is the year in which Father DeAndreis was born which should be 1778 instead of 1777. In the lives of Father DeAndreis which include this inscription, the proper date is given on the inscription, December 12, 1778, but in the text itself, *Sketches*, on page 9, and the *Life of the Very Reverend Felix DeAndreis*, on page 5. date his birth as December 13, 1778. Ricciardelli, page 1, and Bozuffi, page 5, both give December 12, 1778, in the text. The second error is the reference to Hebrews. It should read verse 7 instead of 17. The English text reads as follows: "Remember your leaders [who spoke the word of God to you]: consider how their lives ended, and imitate their faith." Father Rosati very likely omitted the phrase in brackets because Father DeAndreis had never preached at the Barrens. (A translation of the original inscription, omitted in the original publication, has been added in the text above. – JR)

cemetery, to this place / on September 23, 1837. “Remember your leaders: / consider how their lives ended, / and imitate their faith.” Heb. 12:17]

Space does not permit a discussion of the variations that have been given to this inscription in the various lives of Father DeAndreis. Ricciardelli, perhaps, has been the most accurate but even in his version, though he corrects the year of DeAndreis’s birth, he omits other aspects such as the date of his arrival in America and the quotation from Hebrews.<sup>170</sup> It would seem, however, that all agree that the stone slab was on a nearby wall. To the reader it would be perhaps more interesting and practical to quote the inscription now found on the marble slab placed over the original stone cover when the Shrine was built about 1929, and to give the English translation. Unfortunately, this version seems to follow that of the two editions of a life of Father DeAndreis in which the i and the x are inverted to read ix Kal. Oct., thus giving an erroneous date, September 23rd, as the date of burial in the new church.<sup>171</sup> With that in mind, the text is as follows:

HIC JACET / FELIX DE ANDREIS Congregationis / Missionis in America primus superior / natus Demontii Italicis Cisalpinis / prid: Id. Decembris / MDCCLXXVIII / In Americam migravit MDCCCXVI / Obiit St. Ludovici id. Octobris / MDCCCXX. / Vir Apostolicis Virtutibus ingenio / eruditione et eloquentia maxime / conspicuus. / Mortales exuvias fratres ejus / Congregationis Missionis sacerdotes / hunc in locum transtulerunt, / IX Kal. Oct: MDCCCXXXVII / Mementote praepositorum vestrorum / quorum intuentes exitum / conversationis imitamini fidem.

English translation:

HERE LIES / FELIX DE ANDREIS first superior / of the Congregation of the Mission in America born at Demonte in the / Italian Cisalpine district / December 12, / 1778. He came to America in 1818. / He died in St. Louis on October 15, 1820. / A man most remarkable for his / apostolic virtues, talent, learning / and eloquence. His brothers, priests of the Congregation of the Mission transferred his mortal remains to this place / on September 23, 1837. Remember your leaders: / consider how their lives ended, / and imitate their faith.

In the letter of Father Odin, quoted several pages back, he mentions that Bishop Rosati would return for the “exhibition.” At that time the school year at St. Mary’s College began on [45] November 2nd and continued to September 26th.<sup>172</sup> The closing exercises took place after the school term and included the reading of papers, bestowing of awards, etc. The date for this year’s exhibition was September 27th. Unfortunately, Bishop Rosati was sick for several days and so was unable to attend the exhibition.<sup>173</sup> After a few years, the school year was changed when it began on the first Monday in October and ended on the last Thursday in August.<sup>174</sup> After the uncertainties of the mid-thirties, the college enrollment was again on the rise: in the Directory for 1838, there were eighty students:<sup>175</sup> the following year there were ninety seven.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> [Note 42] Raffaele Ricciardelli, *Vita del Servo di Dio, Felice DeAndreis* (Roma: Industria Typografica Romana, 1923), p. 505.

<sup>171</sup> [Note 43] *Sketches*, p. 174. *Life of Felix DeAndreis*, p. 230.

<sup>172</sup> [Note 44] *The Metropolitan Catholic Almanac and Laity's Guide for the Year of Our Lord, 1838* (Baltimore: Lucas, 1837), p. 111.

<sup>173</sup> [Note 45] Rosati, *Diary*, September 26, 1837. SMSA.

<sup>174</sup> [Note 46] *The Catholic Directory* (Baltimore: Lucas, 1841), p. 145.

<sup>175</sup> [Note 47] *The Metropolitan Catholic Almanac... for the Year 1838*, p. 111.

<sup>176</sup> [Note 48] *The Metropolitan Catholic Almanac... for the Year 1839*, p. 141.

Among the students attending the college at this time there were two of whom there is some personal history – William Clark Kennerly and Jefferson Clark, son of General William Clark, the first territorial governor of Missouri and a co-leader of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Many years later in his memoirs, the then Major Kennerly writes: “Our education had been carried on by a tutor since coming to the country, but it was now decided that we should be sent off to school, our parents’ choice being a college called the Barrens...” He adds that “It was kept by the Jesuit Fathers and attended by boys from many states, as well as from Cuba.” Of the education they received, he remembers it to be not so much of books but “much of nature and kindly companionship combined with a certain manliness, which was to stand us in good stead, when battling with the rough frontier life of earlier days.” The discipline was not very strict: for instance, the students were permitted to smoke cigars. He recalls also that “The brothers being so congenial made frequent trips with us to all places of note in the vicinity....” On a number of occasions they visited a cave infested with bats. Sometimes they would catch some bats, bring them home in a bag and then turn them loose in the dormitory to give a new boy “a little excitement and causing him to forget his homesickness.” Their Christmas and Easter vacations were spent with Colonel Menard of Kaskaskia, former Lieutenant Governor of Illinois, who extended to the two students a warm welcome “as well as the good things of the table which were in strong contrast to the frugal fare of the college.” Several years later, their days at the Barrens ended with they were recalled to St. Louis by the death of General Clark on September 1, 1838.<sup>177</sup>

Though it covers a period well beyond the limits of this study, Campbell’s Gazetteer, published in 1874, does include a number of graduates of the college and seminary who were students during the period covered here. All the alumni mentioned are listed to show the continued success of both institutions and so may be of interest to the reader. Among the graduates of the college are such individuals as Senator Morrison of Mississippi County, General Rozier of Ste. Genevieve, Rudolf Rozier of New Orleans, Drs. Brennen and Hogan of St. Louis, Dr. Shelby of Perryville and Jules Valle of St. Louis. The seminary also had an impressive list of alumni including such prominent churchmen as Archbishop Odin of New Orleans, Bishop Timon of Buffalo, Bishop Lynch of Montreal, Bishop [Thaddeus] Amat of Los Angeles, Bishop [Stephen Vincent] Ryan of Buffalo, Bishop [Michael] Domenec of Pittsburgh and the poet-priest of the South, Father Abram Ryan.<sup>178</sup> Strangely enough, the list does not include Bishop DeNeckere of New Orleans and Bishop Peter Lefevre, coadjutor bishop of Detroit, the first two graduates of the seminary to be consecrated bishops.

The mention of Bishop Timon in the above paragraph calls to mind a story told about him while he was still stationed at the Barrens. The old log church had to be propped up on all sides, many of the window panes were broken and the roof leaked so badly that on rainy days both clergy and laity had to use umbrellas during services in the church. The amusing incident involving Father Timon took place on Holy Saturday in 1837, at which service he was the officiating priest. While he was performing the rite of blessing the font, the rain was pouring down on him. Forgetting that many of the windows were broken, he requested the assistant [46] clergy to please close the windows. Naturally this “occasioned a suppressed smile and two or three of the clergy endeavored

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<sup>177</sup> [Note 49] William Clark Kennerly, "Early Days in St. Louis from the Memoirs of an Old Citizen," edited by his daughter, Mrs. Daniel R. Russell, *Missouri Historical Society Collections*, III ( 1911), 413–414.

<sup>178</sup> [Note 50] Robert A. Campbell, *Campbell's Gazetteer of Missouri* (St. Louis: R.A. Campbell, 1874), pp. 424–425.

to protect him from the rain by raising the sleeves of their surplices.”<sup>179</sup> Fortunately the new church would be complete before the winter. The last service in the old church, on October 22, 1837, is briefly described by Bishop Rosati in his diary: “I was present for the Solemn Mass and preached to the people for the last time in this church.”<sup>180</sup> The old church, built in 1814, and having been twice enlarged, had served its usefulness for the parish and now gave way to the new church.

A day of great joy and excitement for the parishioners was October 29, 1837, because on that day their new church was to be dedicated and consecrated. Of the ceremony itself and those participating in the service Bishop Rosati has given an official and somewhat detailed account, the substance of which will be given later. A brief physical description of the church and of the ceremonies from an observer’s viewpoint are rather well summarized in the following excerpts from a contemporary newspaper account:

The building is of stone and is 124 feet long and 64 wide. The front is of dressed stone, as well as the two towers at the corners. Over the door is an inscription in letters of gold. ‘The Lord is in His Holy Temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him.’ The whole front is a lasting memorial of the devotedness and perseverance of the venerable Angelo Oliva, one of the Brothers of the Congregation of the Mission, who died about two years ago.

The interior of the church is of the Tuscan Order. The grand altar at the extremity is of stone, elegantly painted in representation of green marble, the mouldings and front being beautifully gilt. At each side of the nave are three altars, one larger in the centre chapel and two smaller ones adjoining it. The sanctuary is 30 feet square under a dome 45 feet in height: there is a small gallery on each side of the sanctuary, in one of which is the organ, and a large one over the principal entrance of the church. Two capacious sacristies are entered from the sanctuary by lateral doors. The consecration commenced at 7 o’clock in the morning. After the blessing of the exterior, the Bishop and his numerous clergy entered the church and, the doors being closed and the people excluded during a considerable portion of the ceremony, one of the Reverend Gentlemen (Father Wiseman) explained the ceremonies before the grand entrance. He entered into a minute detail of the rites they had assembled to witness, and concluded by vindicating the use of ceremonies, in general, and proving the antiquity of those by which churches are dedicated to Almighty God.

The Bishop and clergy then proceeded from the church to the chapel of the Seminary, to transport the relics which were to be placed in the great altar. These relics were placed in a shrine under a richly decorated canopy, and were borne upon the shoulders of four priests clad in chasubles. On returning to the church the procession with the relics passed around the Church and then entering the main door proceeded to the altar near which the relics were deposited. The venerable Bishop of Vincennes (Simon Brute), who, at the Invitation of the Superior, had come to assist at the ceremony, accompanied the procession. His delicate state of health did not permit him to be present at the commencement of the ceremony. The aged and pious, Mr. Olivier, one of the devoted pioneers of the West, and now in his 91st year, was also present, and contributed by his very appearance to inspire the assembled multitude with devotion and recollection.

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<sup>179</sup> [Note 51] *Sketches*, pp. 261–262

<sup>180</sup> [Note 52] Rosati, *Diary*, October 22, 1837. SMSA.

After the great altar was consecrated, by our Right Rev. Bishop with all the dignity and fidelity to the Roman Pontifical for which he is distinguished, the Pontifical Mass was celebrated, and the whole concluded at about half past two. At half past four the same Right Rev. Prelate celebrated the Pontifical Vespers.

It is not in the language of exaggeration we speak when we say that with the exception of the consecration of the [47] Cathedral of St. Louis, a more imposing and truly religious spectacle has not been witnessed in the Western Country. The church itself may compare with, in point of architecture, if it does not surpass, any other religious edifice in the United States: and a visitor from our Eastern cities, if suddenly transported to it, could scarcely believe that he was in the Barrens of Missouri.<sup>181</sup>

Father Tornatore adds a note to this description, that of singing, when he writes: “Some 40 Ecclesiastics were present; during all the time of the function, which is beautiful and devotion-inspiring, there was singing.”<sup>182</sup>

A remark or two about the church itself and a question may be apropos at this time. In the sacristy of the present church there are the two sacraria bearing the date 1830, already described earlier in this chapter. Father Odin writes that the church is 120 feet in length and 70 feet in width, and, in his enthusiasm, he further states that it is the most beautiful church in the United States – “beautiful in its simplicity and even in its poverty: for we do not even have a bell yet to summon the faithful to the liturgical services.”<sup>183</sup> Another interesting aspect of the church was pointed out by a reporter giving a description of the church and remarking that “the arches are of hand-hewn oak, held secure by tenon and mortise.” They are covered with canvas strips.<sup>184</sup>

The question to be answered is: what were the names of the six side altars? When the remains of Father DeAndreis were buried in the new church, the center altar on the south side was referred to as St. Vincent’s altar. Quite probably there are contemporary records for the names of the other side altars as well, but the present author has found these names only in later documents. The semi-official diary of the Seminary records that on Holy Thursday of 1859, the “repository, which as usual, was at the altar of St. Francis of Sales.”<sup>185</sup> On the same feast of the following year, it is recorded that “the repository was very pretty. It was in its old place, St. Aloysius altar.”<sup>186</sup> These altars were located near the south and north towers respectively, as will be seen shortly.

In his diary describing the renovation of the church about 1890, Father Weldon names the altar opposite St. Vincent’s as the Passion altar.<sup>187</sup> He calls the two front side altars the Immaculate

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<sup>181</sup> [Note 53] Catholic Telegraph of Cincinnati for November 30, 1837. Quoted in: Rothensteiner, *History of the Archdiocese of St. Louis* (St. Louis: Blackwell Wielandy), v. I, pp. 383–385.

<sup>182</sup> [Note 54] Tornatore to Ugo. Quoted in Rothensteiner, *op. cit.*, p. 385.

<sup>183</sup> [Note 55] Odin to Etienne, April 24, 1838. SMSA.

<sup>184</sup> [Note 56] Dorothy O. Moore, "Old Perryville Catholic Church Gave Beauty of Rome to Frontier," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Wednesday, January 3, 1951. p. 7A.

<sup>185</sup> [Note 57] Record of Principal Events, 1859–1864, April 21, 1859. SMSA.

<sup>186</sup> [Note 58] *Ibid.*, April 5, 1860. SMSA.

<sup>187</sup> [Note 59] Weldon, *Diary*, October 13, 1888. SMSA.

Conception and St. Joseph's altars.<sup>188</sup> Later he mentions that the altar next to the north tower as now being Blessed John Gabriel Perboyre's altar and adds: "this was formerly St. Aloysius altar."<sup>189</sup>

The official Latin account of the consecration, written in the third person by Bishop Rosati himself, fills almost three legal sized pages with another page and a half of signatures. Rather than giving a strict literal translation of the longer complex sentences found in the text, it would seem to be more convenient and meaningful if the contents of this document were translated in a series of short passages following, as closely as possible, the thought and wording of the original. This latter procedure will now be followed in the formal description of the consecration ceremonies.

The Most Illustrious and Reverend Joseph Rosati, of the Congregation of the Mission and Bishop of St. Louis, referring to the church in the place commonly called the Barrens in the County of Perry and State of Missouri, writes that when he was Bishop of Tenagra and exercising the office of Coadjutor Bishop of New Orleans, he blessed and laid the cornerstone of the church on January 6, 1827. Parenthetically it might be remarked that it appears that the number 1 has been superimposed on the 6, by Bishop Rosati or by someone else, thus giving the correct date for the laying of the cornerstone, January 1st.

After ten years, despite many great difficulties, the church was finished. This was accomplished by the endeavors of Bishop Rosati and of the priests of the Congregation, especially Fathers John Odin, John Baptist Tornatore, and John Timon, superiors of the house of the Congregation and of the Seminary; also by the persevering and indefatigable labor of Angelo Oliva, sent from Italy to America for this purpose by Father [48] Anthony Baccari, Vicar General of the Congregation of the Mission; and also with the cooperation of the parishioners both in their collection of funds and by their manual labor.

A great number of people, almost all of whom were parishioners of St. Mary's with some from neighboring parishes, and the Sisters of Loretto with the pupils of their school, attended the celebration but were excluded from the church during the actual consecration ceremonies. Father Wiseman clearly explained to the waiting congregation outside the nature of the ancient rites of consecration taking place within the church at that time and indicated their use against any criticisms the people may have heard.

In the presence of the Most Illustrious and Reverend Simon Brute, Bishop of Vincennes, the priests, clerics, and brothers of the Congregation of the Mission, the priests and clerics of the St. Louis diocese and of other dioceses. Bishop Rosati dedicated and consecrated this church to God in honor of, and under the invocation of, the Blessed Virgin Mary Assumed into Heaven. He also consecrated the main altar in which he, with due reverence, placed the relics of the Apostles Peter and Paul. He solemnly performed all the sacred ceremonies prescribed in the Roman Pontifical and the ecclesiastical rites used for consecrating churches according to the ancient custom. The Assistant Priest was Father Cellini, the Deacon was Lewis Tucker, the Subdeacon was Joseph Giustiniani, and the

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<sup>188</sup> [Note 60] *Ibid.*, October 27, 1888. SMSA.

<sup>189</sup> [Note 61] *Ibid.*, January 22, 1890. SMSA.



Master of Ceremonies was Father [Bartholomew] Rolando [Rollando] assisted by Hector Figari.

When the congregation was permitted to enter the church, the Sisters of Loretto with their pupils were permitted to use the gallery above the doors of the church for fear that the children might be lost in the crowd. At the Solemn Mass there were two Assistant Deacons, two priests in copes, ten others in chasubles and ten others in dalmatics. Performing as minor officers of the Mass were eight seminarians. (In the original text all these ministers of the Mass are named.)

In order that the memory of this most auspicious event be preserved and handed down to posterity, the acts of the aforesaid consecration recorded in the register of this parish on October 30, 1837, the above mentioned Most Illustrious and Reverend Bishops, priests, deacons, subdeacons, clerics, and brother coadjutors have personally signed this document at St. Mary's Seminary.

Joseph, Bishop of St. Louis  
Simon, Bishop of Vincennes  
J.M. Odin, C.M.

The Anniversary of the Dedication is to be observed on the last Sunday of October. (There follows a page and a half of signatures, 39 in all.)<sup>190</sup>

One can only surmise what sentiments prevailed among many of the congregation gathered on that festive occasion. There were survivors of those who, in 1806, had signed the petition asking Father Badin to help them in obtaining the occasional services of a priest. There were those who, at the suggestion of Father Dunand less than twenty years ago in 1818, had made sacrifices of money, land and manual labor to persuade Bishop DuBourg to bring the Vincentian Fathers to their community. They remembered their small log cabin church which had to be enlarged twice and was still too small for their growing congregation. Doubtless they recalled that since the coming of the Vincentians they had been blessed by the continuous service of a priest. They had been honored to have had a bishop for their pastor who, with his energy and foresight, had urged them to work for the good of their parish by his exhortation, physical labor and even an occasional threat.

Among those who were still alive to enjoy this day were some who had figured prominently in the beginning and development of the parish. Aquila Hagan, Wilfred Layton and John Layton, Jr., had been the trustees sent to Bishop DuBourg early in 1818 to ask him to build his seminary in their area. Ignatius Layton had permitted the old log cabin church to be built on his property in 1814 and eventually his land grant of 640 acres had become the seminary property. Joseph Manning had [49] welcomed into his home Bishop DuBourg on his early visits to the Barrens and had become a trusted advisor: Manning's present wife, the former Sarah Hayden, had provided a house for the weary missionaries when they first arrived at the Barrens back in October of 1818. Still alive also was Zachariah Layton whom Bishop DuBourg had placed in charge of the parish workers in the early stages of construction of the seminary building. Mention might also be made

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<sup>190</sup> [Note 62] *Liber Baptismorum in Ecclesia Parochiali Sanctae Mariae ad Silvam Crematam ab Anno Domini 1822*, text follows Baptism number 1375. SVPR.

of Isidore Moore, the first settler in the Barrens area, whose political expertise had proved to be of useful service to the seminary. These are but a few of the many parishioners who had worked to build, and later to add to, the old church, and to assist in the construction of the seminary, the convent and, most recently, the new church. Missing, though from the list of survivors for this occasion were many others, especially Brother Oliva who had spent years working in the quarry and directing the construction of the new church, and Father Baccari in Rome whence he had sent ecclesiastical furnishings for the church and altar as well as whatever financial assistance he could afford when it was needed the most. Both of these had died in 1835.

As they looked around that day, there must have been a justifiable pride on the part of the congregation in what their sacrifices had accomplished. Up the road to the north there was a convent school conducted by the Sisters of Loretto. To the rear of their church was the seminary and beyond that, a college. Now they were in possession of a church far beyond their dreams of a generation ago, and just consecrated in a solemn ceremony the like of which most of them had never witnessed. From time to time there had been obstacles standing in the way but the energetic nature of Bishop Rosati had been equal to the task of continuing the work he had set out to do. Looking back at what he and his fellow Vincentians had accomplished, most of the parishioners very probably would have agreed with a statement made two years later by a priest from Cincinnati that Bishop Rosati of St. Louis was generally recognized as the most energetic, prudent and wise prelate in the United States.<sup>191</sup>

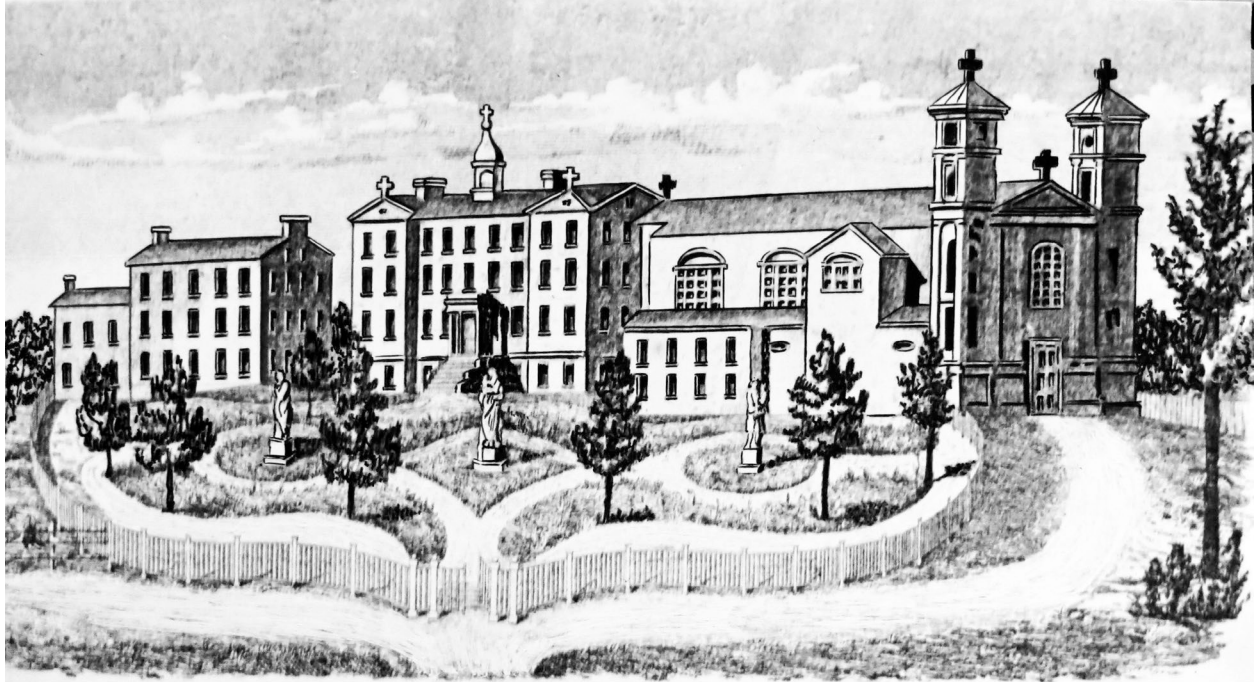
This concludes what might be considered as the beginnings of St. Mary's of the Barrens parish



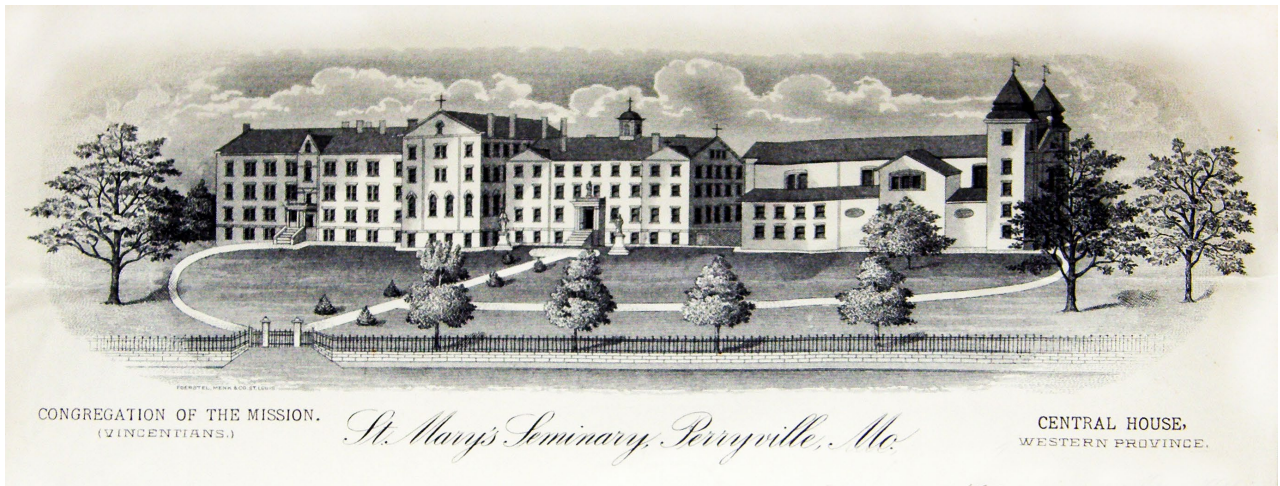
*Early photograph of the Barrens after 1850, looking toward the east*

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<sup>191</sup> [Note 63] Pisbach to Propaganda, June 13, 1839. From a summary of this letter as given by Trisco. *op. cit.* p. 55.

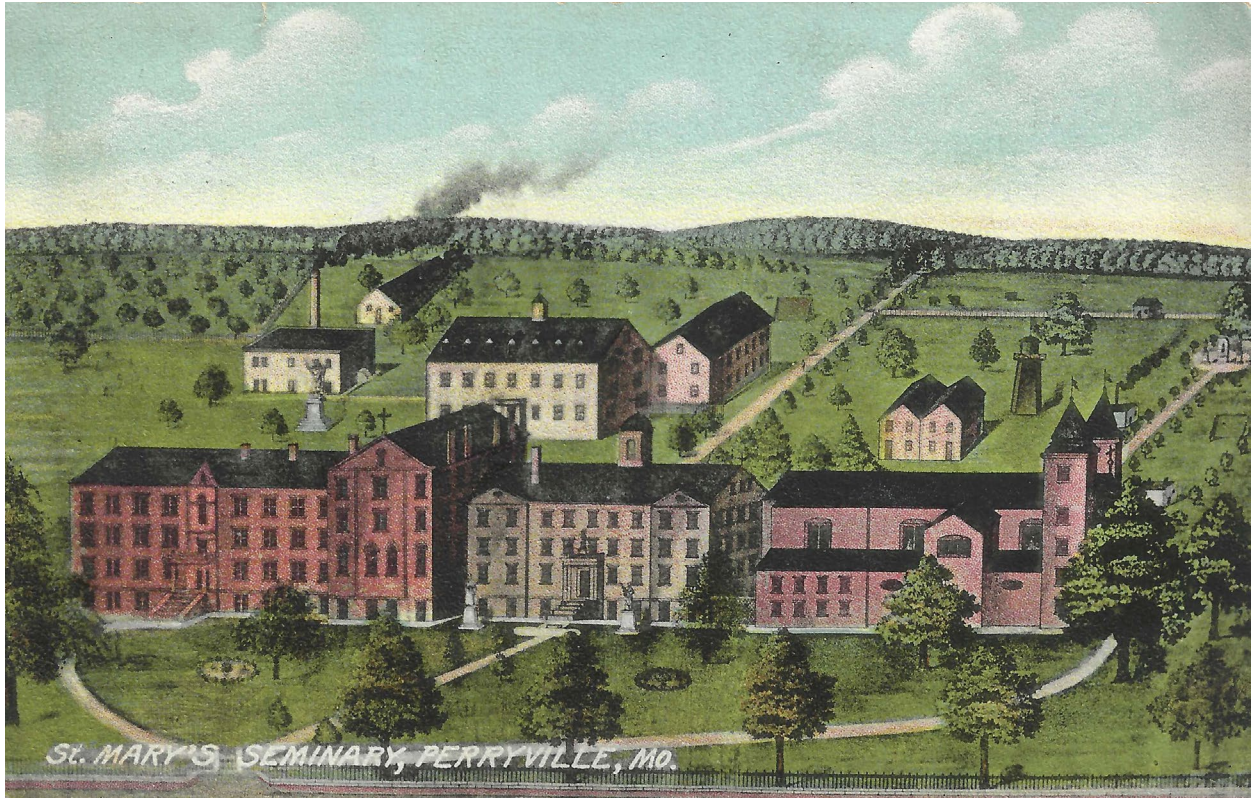


*From right to left: Early drawing of the Church of the Assumption, the Administration building, and two other residence halls*



*Engraving of St. Mary's Seminary, about 1885  
Used for letterhead stationery*





*Colored post card, with postmark of July 19, 1915 from Perryville  
Identified: "Made in Germany. Morton's Drug Store, Perryville, Mo."  
(Black and white version, see p. 50)*



**CONGREGATION**  
*of the* **MISSION**

THE VINCENTIANS  
WESTERN PROVINCE



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