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THE HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN COSHOCOTON COUNTY, OHIO

By Sister Monica Kiefer, O.S.D.

(Editor's note: Presented here is an excerpt from "The History of the Catholic Church in Coshocton County, Ohio," by Sister Monica Kiefer, O.S.D. It makes clear that within the present territory of the Diocese of Columbus Mass was celebrated in Coshocton County before Father Bonnecamps, S.J., made his journey down the Ohio River in 1749. Cf. "Bulletin", Nov. 1975.)

Chapter I

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the territory which we call Ohio was an unbroken wilderness. On the scene of its forests, plains and rivers, Christianity and civilization had yet to smile. As a brave but unfortunate people, its so-called Indian inhabitants, a thinly scattered and uncultured race, command our warm sympathy. Catholicity, at the time, was their only protector and the missionary -- the "Blackgown" -- their only true friend.

The territory with which this work is concerned lies in the center of the eastern Ohio valley, at the confluence of the Tuscarawas and Walhonding Rivers, where they form the Muskingum. A short portage separates the source of the Tuscarawas from the Cuyahoga. This chain of waterways, even in early days, was a much-traveled route, connecting as it does, Lake Erie with the Ohio River; Canada with the Mississippi Valley.

To trace the growth of Catholicity at the forks of the Muskingum, which was a pivotal point in travel, migration, wars, and trade, is the purpose of the present study. The history of the Church in such a favored locality might be expected to be one of rapid and unusual development; events of two hundred years, however, do not substantiate this theory. The hostility, bigotry, and intolerance that retarded the progress of Catholicity have waned only in recent years. That the Church has emerged victorious from the struggle to establish missions throughout Coshocton County is another fulfillment of Christ's words, "Behold, I am with you all days".

Chapter II

Catholicity among the Native Indians

Delaware Indians. Although the records of Indian history are fragmentary, accounts prove that the Shawnees were the first to dwell in the valleys of Coshocton County. Threatened with extermination by the fierce Iroquois, the greater part of the tribe began a migration to the southwestern part of the State at the opening of the eighteenth century. Father Marquette's report mentions this conquest of the Shawnees:

The Waboukigou (the Ohio) river flows from the lands of the West, where dwell the people called Chaouanons in so great numbers that in one district there are as many as 23 villages, and 15 in another, quite near one another. They are not at all warlike, and are nations whom the Iroquois go so far to seek, and war against without any reason; and because these poor people cannot defend themselves, they allow themselves to be captured and taken like flocks of sheep, and innocent though they are, they nevertheless sometimes experience the barbarity of the Iroquois, who cruelly burn them. (1)

These fertile plains, in a short time thereafter, were dotted with the long bark houses of the Delawares, one of the greatest tribes of the Algonquin nation. Their Indian name meaning, "People from the Sunrise", is an indication of their imaginative character. Driven west by the White settlers from their native habitat which extended northward from Maryland through New Jersey and Pennsylvania into the lower Hudson Valley, they sought refuge in the Muskingum valley. The Delawares were in turn subjugated by the Five Nations and were deprived of the right to engage in warfare or to change their habitation. (2) Part of the conquered tribe, together with bands of Christian Wyandots and Munseys, settled in five towns in what is now called Coshocton County. Their great council house was located in Goshachgunk, or "Black Bear Town". (3)

This fact accounts for the sedentary habits of the Delawares. As they were forced to depend chiefly upon agriculture, rather than upon hunting for a livelihood, large quantities of corn, beans, squashes and tobacco were cultivated. Their houses, each accomodating several families, consisted of a framework of poles covered with bark or mats of woven rushes. Speaking of the character of the Delawares, Colonel Bouquet, an English officer, has left this account in his journal for the king:

These qualities in savages challenge our just esteem. When they come to give way to the native dictates of humanity, they exercise virtues which Christians need not blush to imitate. When they once determine to give life, they give everything with it, which in their apprehension belongs to it. From every enquiry that has been made, it appears that no woman thus saved is preserved from base motives, nor need fear the violation of her honor. No child is otherwise treated by the persons adopting it than the children of their own body. The perpetual slavery of those captivated in war, is a notion which even their barbarity has not yet suggested to them. Every captive whom their affection, their caprice, or whatever else, leads them to save, is soon incorporated with them and shares alike with them. (4)

An aged Indian, who for many years had spent much time with the Jesuit Fathers at Detroit, in speaking of marriage, told one of the missionaries, that the Delawares took a wife on trial. The man built a house and furnished provisions; the wife on her part agreed to cook, to raise corn and vegetables while her husband hunted and fished. If both performed these duties, they were man and wife; if not, they separated. The missionary said he never heard of a wife complaining of her life, for she felt that the husband must avoid hard work and stiffening of the muscles to be an expert hunter. The Delaware brave loved to see his wife well clothed, hence all the furs he took were given to her. The more he did for her, the more was he esteemed by the community.

The Jesuit says:

I have known a man to go 40 or 50 miles for cranberries to satisfy his wife's longing. I was witness to a remarkable instance of the disposition of the Indians to indulge their wives. There was a famine in the land and a sick Indian woman expressed a great desire for some corn. Her husband having heard that a trader (near the present site of Lower Sandusky) had a little, set off on horseback for that place, one hundred miles distant, and returned with as much corn as filled the crown of his hat, for which he gave his horse in exchange and came back on foot, bringing his saddle with him. (5)

French traders pushed through this wilderness to deal with the Indians, whom they found contented and prosperous so far as their demands on life went. These tribes, who had been taught lessons of peace in their former home by the Jesuits, soon learned to love the French traders. The coureurs de bois made no attempts to form settlements among the Indians, or to deprive them of their lands; they simply carried on a fur trade that was as profitable to the Indians as to themselves. (6) The French furnished them arms and ammunition in exchange for the rich furs from the animals of the forests. French traders intermarried with the Indians and, in a measure, became part of them. The ties of kindness and mutual interests between the French trader and the Indian warrior cemented the friendship that had already grown up between them. (7) The Indians looked with jealous eye upon the English settlers who were slowly moving westward and depriving them of their hunting grounds. Subsequent history shows that the Indians of this section were slow to exchange the French trader for the English exterminator. (8)

Jesuit Labors. With the trader came the dauntless Jesuit missionaries from their stations along the Great Lakes. (9) The priests came on expeditions either through the unbroken forests, or they followed the course of the rivers, carrying their baggage and canoes across the portages. In this fashion some of the Fathers came down the Cuyahoga River to the Portage Country and the source of the Tuscarawas and down this stream to the Delaware towns. Father Bernadine de Gannes in 1734, Peter Verquaille in 1736, Alexis du Buron in 1743, Bonaventure Carpentier and Hypolite Collet in 1747, Didacus Cliche in 1754, and Anthony Desperet in 1758, braved the hardships and dangers of this route to bring the knowledge and consolations of the faith to this mighty tribe. (10) The Jesuits found the Indians disposed to receive them, for many of the Delawares and Wyandots had been converted to the Christian faith before their removal to the West. Although deprived in their new home of constant priestly ministrations such as they had previously enjoyed, they did not allow the spark of faith to be extinguished. (11) Life, however, among the savages was so strenuous that the missionary activities of each priest were necessarily of short duration.

The methods pursued by the Jesuit missionaries, together with their endless journeys and difficulties in gaining over to Christianity the eccentric intellect of the Indian, may well be regarded as forming one of the most striking and important features of early Ohio history. "While laboring", writes the Protestant Parkman, "at the work of conversion with an energy never surpassed, and battling against the powers of darkness with mettle of Paladians, the Jesuits never had the folly to assume towards the Indians a dictatorial or overbearing tone." (12) Gentleness, kindness, and patience were the rule of their intercourse. The apostolic work of those who thus

traveled the narrow and thorny way of Delaware missions was soon to be deterred by the struggle between France and England for the control of the Ohio Valley.

- (1) Thwaites, Reuben Gold, "The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents"; Cleveland, Ohio. Burrows Bros. Co. vol. 65, p. 359.
- (2) Randall and Ryan, "History of Ohio"; vol. I. New York, Century History Company. 1912. p. 165.
- (3) W. E. Hunt, "Coshocton Historical Collections"; Cincinnati, Ohio. Robert Clark and Company. 1876. pp. 160-161.
J. W. Taylor, "History of the State of Ohio"; Sandusky, Ohio. H. W. Derby and Company. 1854. p. 102.
- (4) Henry Bouquet Esq., "Colonel Bouquet's Journal, a Historical Account of the Expedition against the Ohio Indians"; London, England. T. Jeffries, Geographer to His Majesty. 1766. p. 78.
- (5) C. H. Mitchner, "Ohio Annals"; Dayton, Ohio. 1876. p. 215.
F. C. Hicks, "Thomas Hutchins Topographical Description"; Cleveland, Ohio. Arthur H. Clark Co. 1904. p. 18.
- (6) C. H. Mitchner, op. cit. pp. 216-217.
- (7) Randall and Ryan, op. cit. p. 165.
John Gilmary Shea, "Catholic Church in Colonial Days"; New York. Mershon Company. 1886. p. 657.
- (8) J. P. Lawyer, "History of Ohio"; Columbus, Ohio. Union Publishing Company. 1905. p. 64.
- (9) Reuben Gold Thwaites, op. cit. vol. 47. pp. 315-316. vol. 45. p. 289.
George Bancroft, "History of the United States"; vol. 47. Boston, Mass. Little, Brown and Company, 1868. p. 12.
- (10) John Gilmary Shea, "History of the Catholic Church in the United States"; New York. Mershon Company. 1890. p. 613.
- (11) Thomas W. Lewis, "Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi and the Great Lakes Region"; vol. I. Chicago, Ill. G. J. Clarke Company. 1928. p. 364.
- (12) Francis Parkman, "The Jesuits in North America"; Boston, Mass. Little Brown and Company. 1878. p. 319.

(To be continued)

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ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

(Note: The following are excerpts from the daily journal written in 1875 by Joseph F. Mattingly, of Zanesville, Ohio.)

October

4. Monday. Went to town in the forenoon with corn. Sold at 65 cts per bushel. Hauled a load of coal in the afternoon. Weather fine.
9. Saturday. Emmet had his sale. Amt of property purchased by me: All of the corn (average piece) \$1.11; hay rake, \$2.00; feed kettle, \$12.00; steel plow, \$5.00; one calf, \$5.50; cross-cut saw, \$7.00; one hog, \$10.00; sausage grinder and stuffer, \$3.00; spring wagon, \$115.00. Weather cool.
11. Monday. Went to C. Mattingly's; borrowed one thousand dollars. Came back, went to town. Made J. E. McKinney a payment of \$2755.55 1/2. Got my Deed and returned home. Weather cool.
12. Tuesday. Went over to election. Came home and hauled up our pumpkins and some potatoes. Went over home in evening. Stayed all night. Weather cool.

22. Friday. Went to town. Brought home a set of chairs (price \$5.00). Weather fine.
23. Saturday. Husking and hauling corn. Cribed 100 bushels. Weather clear and very warm.
24. Sunday. Went to church. Weather very fine and warm.

November

5. Friday. Went to town in forenoon. Hauled corn in afternoon. Burkhardt was out hunting. Weather fine.
7. Sunday. Went over to country church. Stopped at Uncle Mike's for dinner. Weather fine.
8. Monday. Husking and hauling in corn. Weather fine.
11. Thursday. Wm Mattingly came to pay a note for J. E. McKinney. Went to town. Father crossed the river and left on train. Weather fine.
15. Monday. Butchered two hogs. Weather cloudy and cool.
17. Wednesday. Cleaning wheat, taking care of turnips, cabbage, etc. Weather coldest of season.
18. Thursday. Went after coal. Came back and went over home. Stopped at Lynn's and seen the farm sell. Weather cool.
28. Sunday. Went to Church. Thomas came home with me; stayed til evening. Weather cloudy and raining in evening.

December

5. Sunday. Home all day; not feeling well. Weather threatening rain.
6. Monday. Went over and helped Ann butcher hogs. Weather cloudy and threatening rain.
7. Raining pretty much all day. Feeling bad and suffering with ear ache.
8. Wednesday. Sent after Dr. Reamy. He came and left some medicine. Weather cloudy.
9. Thursday. Not any better; suffering fearfully with neuralgia. Weather pleasant.
10. Friday. Went to town to see Dr. Holden. Got some medicine. Still suffering. Weather fine.
11. Saturday. Not any better; suffering at night fearfully. Sorrel mare sick with colic. Weather fine.
13. Monday. No better, suffering fearfully. Weather fine.
14. Tuesday. Sent Mr. Buntin after Dr. Holden. Came up on train. Rested better at night. Weather fine.
16. Thursday. Dr. came again. Feel about the same. Weather cool.
17. Friday. Not any better. Weather very cold. River closed up.
19. Sunday. Feeling about the same. Weather moderating; slight fall of snow.
20. Monday. Sent after Dr. Got medicine. Dr. did not come out; felt worse in morning, better in evening. My father came over and stayed all night. Emmet also came from Jersey. Sold my feed kettle to E. Wilkinson for \$25.00. Weather fine.

(The end.)

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Congratulations! St. Nicholas Church, Zanesville, Ohio, has been entered in the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior.

EARLY BAPTISM RECORDS OF ST. JOSEPH'S
SOMERSET, OHIO
(Continued)

1829

Jan. 6: Sarah Patten, of John Patten and Mary Ward; sponsors, Hugh McGonagle and Mary Quinn (alias McGonagle).

Jan. 11: Francis Laurent, of Peter Francis and Mary Vautier; sponsors, Francis Sabourin and Mary Bouquet. -- J.B.V. DeRaymaeker, O.P.

Jan. 13: Henry Thomson, b. July 1828, of ----- and Mary (Catechumen); sponsor, Elizabeth Rouschner. -- J.B.V. DeRaymaeker, O.P.

Feb. 7: John McNaull, b. Aug. 30, 1828, of John McNaull and Rose Downey; sponsors, James Downey and Mary Beall. -- J.B.V. DeRaymaeker, O.P., Miss.

Mar. 12: Grace, b. Jan. 16, 1829, of Joseph Kirk and Susanna Carr; sponsors, James McFadden and Anna McFadden. -- F. T. Martin, Missionarius, O.P.

May 17: Charles and Mary Daily, children of Charles and Elizabeth; sponsors, ----- McMullan, with his daughter, Anne. -- Joh. Mart. Henny.

May 20: Michael Joseph, of Levi Lisch and Susanna; sponsors, Paul Geary and Catherine Geary.

May 20: Julia, of George Bergin and Mary; sponsors, Anthony Gosman and Anastasia Bergin.

May 20: Mary, of Thomas Fail and Louisa; sponsors, James Goho and Mary Bergin. -- Joh. Mart. Henny.

June 10: Jam Connolly, of Michael and Pheba; sponsors, Robert and Cecilia Bennet. -- N. D. Young.

June 10: Elizabeth Connolly, of Michael and Phebie Connolly; sponsors, Robert and Cecilia Bennet. -- N. D. Young.

----- : Richard McGinagle, of Richard McGonagle and Johanna McGonagle (alias Quinn); sponsors, Owen Martin and Grace McGonagle.

June 21: Henry James, of John and Mary McCannon; sponsors, Henry McGough and Patience McGough.

July 19: Elizabeth Bennet, of Robert and -----; sponsors, Manuel Crosson and Elizabeth Hynes. -- S. L. Montgomery.

Aug. 30: James McCluskey, of Charles McCluskey and Catherine Doherty; sponsors, James Doherty and Ann Doherty.

Aug. 30: G. R. Suite baptized Joseph Etienne, of Jose Etienne; sponsors, Franc Moulin and Barbara Moulin.

Sept. 2: Catherine Pierson, of Joseph Schelle and Mary Fribourg. -- G.R. Suite.

Sept. 6: Anna McFagen, of Charles and Margaret; sponsors, Joseph E. Delong and Mary McGangle. -- S.L. Montgomery.

Sept. 10: Alexis Verrier, of Antoine Verrier and Marie Meunies(?); sponsors, Marie ----- and Alexis Pezron. -- G. Suite.

Sept. 10: James Dupre, of Maurice Dupre and Mary Bouquet; sponsors, Jacque Bedot and Marie Cath. Perron.

Sept. 27: James Welsh, of James and Elizabeth; sponsor, Fanny Crosson. -- S.L. Montgomery.

Sept. 27: Mary Ring, of Matthew and Mary Ring; sponsor, Margaret O'Hara. -- S.L. Montgomery.

Oct. 2: Eugene Freele, of Francis Freele and Grace Doherty; sponsors, Daniel Calahan and Anna Devine -- in the congregation of St. Patrick (Maclooney). -- D. Josh. O'Leary, O.P.

Oct. 8: Carolina Berdoone, of John Louis and Catherine, sponsor, Mary McCune.

Oct. 16: Franz Hartman; sponsors, Jose(?) Hartman and Cath. Trout. -- G. Suite.

1829 (Cont.)

Oct. 16: John Hartman; sponsor, Sarah Patterson.
----- : Francis Marchand, of Francis and Marie -----; sponsors, Joseph Shelle and Frances Shelle. -- G. R. Suite.
Oct. 16: Ann McCue, of John and Mary O'Hara; sponsor, Felix McAnn.
Oct. 18: Mary, of Peter and Anna Patridge; sponsors, John Clark and Margaret Patridge.
Nov. 1: Catherine McCann, of Daniel McCann and Ann Casily; sponsors, James Clark and Ann Clark. -- D. J. O'Leary, O.P.
Nov. 2: Sylvester Keohoe, of James Keohoe and Susanna Burgoon; sponsors, James Barry and Mary Barry.
Dec. 3: Elizabeth McGahan, of James McGahan and Frances Brown; sponsors, Owen Doherty and Elizabeth McGreavy. -- Fr Dl. Josh. O'Leary, O.P.
Dec. 17: John William Shercliff, of Louis Shercliff and Mary Connolly; sponsors, Edward Connolly, Guta(?) Cancel. -- Frater D. O'Leary, O. Prae.
Dec. 20: Mary, of James McDonnell and Mary Ann Stine; sponsors, Edward Haven and Bridget Haven. -- F D. J. O'Leary, O.P.
Dec. 25: Mary Ann Wilson, of James Wilson and Anna Prebble (Walnut Creek); sponsors, John Kense and Mary Kense. -- D. J. O'L., O. Prae.

1830

Jan. 4: John, of Henry Gules and Sophia Scofield; sponsors, Samuel Dean and Ann McIntire in congregation of St. Patrick, Maclooney.
Jan. 6: Margaret Gainer, of Philip and Anna Gainer; sponsors, Henry and Ellen D. McDermott. -- S. L. Montgomery.
Mar. 7: Elizabeth McDermott, of Henry McDermott and Susanna Maclevane; sponsors, Robert McDonnell and Elizabeth Campbell.
Mar. 7: Received into the Church and baptized Daniel Berry; sponsor, John Doyle. -----
----- : Catherine Messer; sponsor, Margaret Messer. -- S. L. Montgomery.
Mar. 12: Catherine, of Peter Carning and Bridget McGovern; sponsors, Patrick Finigan and Helen Riely in Brownsville, Ohio. -- J. D. O'Leary.
Apr. 25: Simon and Elenor Garden, children of James and Sarah; sponsors, John Clark and Elinor Clark. -- S. L. Montgomery.
May 3: Daniel McGreavy, of James and Elizabeth; sponsor, Margaret Conely. -- S. L. Montgomery.
May 16: Franklin May, b. 1812(?), son of John May. -- Fr. D. J. O'Leary, O. Prae.
May 25: John Largey, of Patrick Largey. -- N. D. Young.
May 30: Catherine Stuckey, of David Stuckey and Martina Plum; sponsors, Mathias Flowers and Mary Flowers. -- Fr. D. J. O'Leary.
June 6: John, of John Redmord and Bridget Jordan; sponsors, George Redmond and Mary Redmond. -- D. J. O'Leary.
June 13: David, of Joseph and Margaret Finck. -- N. D. Young.
June 18: Sarah, of Johanna McCormick; sponsor, Mary Lynch. -- D. J. O'Leary.
June 20: John Largey, of Patrick and Jane Largey; sponsors, James and Rosa Cain. (see May 25 above). -- S. L. Montgomery.
Aug. 1: Laurence Rien, of William and Elizabeth Rien. -- N. D. Young.
Aug. 1: Elizabeth Anna, of David and Elena Clark. -- N. D. Young.
Aug. 5: Rosanna Clark, of John Clark and Helena Robinson, Sponsors, Helena Clark and James Gordon. -- Frater J. D. O'Leary.
Aug. 15: Magdalen Bernard, of Leo Bernard and Catherine Kilk; sponsors, Morehand Burkshaw and Mary Burkshaw. -- Frater D. J. O'Leary.

(To be continued.)

Acknowledgments

The History of Old Saint Peter's (Lawrence Township, Tuscarawas County, Ohio) by the Very Rev. John M. Lenhart, O.F.M. Cap. 1952. Gift of the Rev. Raymond Totten.

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Hope of Life, by Sister Monica, O.S.U., Ph.D. New York. P. J. Kenedy & Sons. 1942. Gift of Sister M. Bernardine, O.S.U., Ursuline Center, St. Martin's, Ohio.

The Synoptic, by the Rev. Bernard M. O'Boylan, Newark, Ohio. November 1904 to August 1907. Gift of the Rev. Msgr. William J. Kappes.

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Encyclopedia of Preaching, by Rev. Clement H. Crock. Joseph F. Wagner, New York. 1955. Gift of the Rev. Joseph Reitz, Prudenville, Michigan.

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Ellen Ewing, Wife of General Sherman, by Anna McAllister, Benziger Brothers, New York. 1936. Gift of St. Charles Preparatory School.

Flame in the Wilderness, Life and Letters of Mother Angela Gillespie, C.S.C., 1824-1887, by Anna Shannon McAllister. St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N.J., 1944. Gift of St. Charles Preparatory School.

In Winter We Flourish, Life and Letters of Sarah Worthington King Peter, 1800-1877, by Anna Shannon McAllister, Longmans, Green and Co., New York. 1939. Gift of St. Charles Preparatory School.

Three Generations, by Katherine Burton. Longmans, Green and Co., New York. 1947. Gift of St. Charles Preparatory School.

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Historical Sketch of the Catholic Church in Chillicothe, Ohio, by Monsignor Ernest Windthorst. Josephinum Press, Columbus, Ohio. 1896.

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The Catholic Record Society has on loan from Mr. Jack Prior, Newark, Ohio, volumes VII (1838) and VIII (1839) of the Catholic Telegraph, Cincinnati.