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The Bishop James J. Hartley Years: A Remembrance

by Rev. Monsignor Robert L. Noon
(Presented to the Catholic Record Society on December 21, 2014)

I remember Bishop Hartley from my Confirmation in 1934 and then from my brother's Confirmation in 1937. I don't remember what he looked like or what he said. I have heard of him over the years, partly from many of the older priests, now with him up in heaven. These are some of the things that I would like to share with you this afternoon from priests of former days.

Bishop Hartley was not a Buckeye; he was a Hawkeye.[1] He was born in Davenport, Iowa. He was baptized in St. Anthony Church in Davenport. Apparently the family moved to Columbus very shortly after that. His parents were married in Columbus before they moved to Iowa. He studied for the priesthood in the seminary that Bishop Sylvester H. Rosecrans founded, St. Aloysius, a place where now the diocesan Jubilee Museum is located. Holy Family School was built on the spot, some many years later. He was ordained by Bishop John A. Watterson on July 10, 1882 and was assigned as Associate Pastor at St. Peter Church in Steubenville. That, however, didn't last very long because three years later, he became pastor of a new parish in Steubenville in 1885 that took on the name of Holy Name Parish which later became the Cathedral for the new Diocese of Steubenville, seventy years ago. He stayed at Holy Name from 1885 until 1903 when he was named Bishop of Columbus. Bishop Hartley seemed to have great interest in parochial schools for Catholic education. He was in the process of building a new school at Holy Name when he received his appointment as Bishop of Columbus.



Bishop Hartley

Maybe he became Bishop by accident. At that time, 1903, the United States was under the Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith in Rome because until 1908 our country was still considered mission territory and the Propagation of the Faith

appointed the Bishops for those areas. It seems that a *terna*, a three-name list, was sent to the Propagation of the Faith recommending three priests to be bishop. One of them was Bishop Hartley. One of the others was Father Lawrence Francis Kearney, a Dominican living at St. Thomas in Zanesville. The third one I have never been able to find out, so he is Anonymous. Well, some people did not like Fr. Kearney and what they did was they sent to *Propaganda* pictures of Father Kearney out hunting, carrying a gun and all, which is perfectly all right. But *Propaganda* misinterpreted that and thought that Father Kearney was on The Hunt, that British game where the dogs chase the foxes around for a while and that was forbidden by Canon Law to priests so Father Kearney lost out on that one. Maybe the other Anonymous priest was also on the Hunt.

Anyway, Bishop Hartley got the nomination, he came to Columbus and was consecrated Bishop on February 25, 1904. One of his first acts as Bishop was to go back to Holy Name Parish in Steubenville in April of that year to dedicate the school that he had been putting up all these years.

As author of *Diocese of Columbus: The History of Fifty Years, 1868-1918* and the 1943 edition, both were pretty much his own words. The priests were supposed to send in histories of their parishes and many said later that they found very little of their history in the book. It all came from what Bishop Hartley himself wanted to write or remember. He has what I think is a very famous passage here about the dedication of the Holy Name Parish School in Steubenville. We've got to remember that he had been Pastor there up until a couple of months before. So here's what he wrote: "As the school building was about completed, preparations were at once made for its dedication. On Low Sunday, April 10, after the Solemn High Mass, Bishop Hartley for the first time administered the Sacrament of Confirmation — to the children he had himself helped to prepare. In the afternoon of the same day, after Solemn Vespers, Bishop Hartley preached an eloquent sermon on Christian education."[2] It is marvelous that he thought of his own sermon as "eloquent" and he has it in print so he can't deny it!

I mention again about education, he was so much a man of education that the Catholics in the Diocese had to send their children to a parochial school if there was one available and, unless there wasn't one, the Bishop's permission had to be obtained to go to a public school.[3]

I started out in 1929 in the first grade at St. Thomas School in Zanesville with the good Dominican Sisters. In the second grade, I had some medical problems and so my father thought that it would be easier for me if I went to the public school that was a block from our house. St. Thomas School was two miles away. He had to go to the pastor, Fr. John P. Roach at that time. Father Roach had to write to the Chancery and get permission for me to change schools. Permission was granted. At the first half of the second grade, I had Sister Francis Xavier Mooney and she was a wonderful teacher. It was an odd type of second grade because the second and the fifth grade in the schools were divided. The boys of the second grade and the whole of the third grade were in the same room so Sister had a double class to teach all the time.

I went to the public school for a couple of years and then I went back to St. Thomas. I didn't need a letter from the Bishop to go back. But also, rather interestingly, at that time, I remember that this was during the Depression years and there was no tuition for my ten and a half years in the Catholic school. I don't know what pastors would think of that today. But if they had tuition in those days, then nobody would have gone to a parochial school because nobody had money for tuition.

I know, being a server at the church, the various ways the pastor tried to save money so he could pay the few expenses there were. I think the Sisters got a dollar a day and part of that they had to send to St. Mary of the Springs to pay off the debt for Erskine and Sansbury Halls which had just been opened before the October Crash in 1929.

Bishop Hartley was also a great advocate of the Catholic press. He wanted the diocesan paper in every home. I don't know how much he instigated

this, but in 1912 he had the national convention of the Catholic newspaper editors and officials meet in Columbus.

Minus a few weeks, Bishop Hartley was Bishop for forty years. We don't hear of such things today. The Bishops' retirement is normally at 75. He missed the Fortieth Anniversary by forty-four days. He died on January 12, 1944. He was 85 years and 5 months old and is buried in a cemetery that he himself established, St. Joseph Cemetery, south of Columbus.

Bishop Hartley was apparently very keen on purchasing real estate – for many of the churches he put up (about 48) and many of the replacements. He would go in disguise into a town and look around at the property he wanted and then come back to Columbus and have a friend buy the property and a few months later the diocese would buy it from the friend and a church would go up. If he had gone in and said that he wanted to build a Catholic church here, there would have been difficulties, as there was in one city.

In his real estate purchases, he had trouble in one town, Cadiz. It is half-way between Cambridge and Steubenville along Route 22. He wanted to put a church up there very early in the 1920s, just after World War I was over. He and Fr. Leo R. Brehm drove into town and looked around at property and found something they liked but somebody recognized Bishop Hartley, even though he was in disguise, not wearing his Roman collar and all that, and when the Bishop's friend went to buy the property, the price was sky high so he lost that deal but still bought land and put up St. Teresa of Avila Parish in Cadiz.

He went around in an automobile in the last twenty years of his reign with Father Leo Brehm, the founder of Christ the King Parish. Father Brehm was sort of, well, his driver. The speed limit in those days on two-lane roads was 55 mph. and the Bishop would be sitting in the back seat and look over at the speedometer and ask Father Brehm, "What are you trying to do? Kill the Bishop? Slow down." Father Brehm would slow down to about 40 mph. and then the Bishop would say, "Hurry up, Father. We're going to be late for Confirmation!" The Bishop never seemed to make the connection that he'd just asked Father to slow down.

Previous to that, during the first twenty or so years of his episcopal reign, Bishop Hartley would go around by train and in those days there were trains into practically every little town in the diocese. My father often visited his grandmother in Corning and I remember him saying that she told him that twelve passenger trains stopped each day in Corning. It must have been great being a railroader in those days. Bishop Hartley would get off a train just to visit, talk with the pastor a bit, then catch the next train to travel to someplace else. It didn't take long for the priests to catch on to this and after his first arrival in a parish and when he was ready to leave to catch a train, the priest would ask if he was going back to Columbus and he would say, "Oh, no, I'm going on to" (whatever the next town was). The pastor would rush back to the telephone and call the pastor of the next town and tell him, "The Bishop is on his way over." If Bishop Hartley ever realized what was going on, he never said a word to anybody about it. He may have enjoyed the fact that they were now playing a game about his arrival.

On his journeys around the diocese on the railroad, he had a very interesting experience in Cadiz much later. The pastor at the time was Father John Priest. He was very hard of hearing. Father Priest liked to stop between Columbus and Cadiz, so he would go to St. Thomas in Zanesville and stay overnight with the Dominicans then, the next morning, have Mass and go on to Cadiz. A few times, I ended up serving Mass for him. First of all, it was the Roman Rite, not the Dominican Rite, and he would always tell us in the sacristy what he was going to do differently which amounted to great confusion on our part.

But anyway, Father Priest got the call that the Bishop was on his way over to Cadiz and he thought to himself, "I'm supposed to be having Forty Hours but nobody ever comes." He rushed over to the sacristy, put on his cassock, his alb, his stole, lit the candles at the altar, exposed the Blessed Sacrament and was kneeling there before the Blessed Sacrament when Bishop Hartley walked in the back door. The



St. Francis de Sales, Newcomerstown



St. Paul, Westerville



Corpus Christi, Belle Valley

Bishop went up and called him into the sacristy for a couple of moments to talk. And the first thing he said was, "I am so edified that even if no one comes, the pastor is always before the Blessed Sacrament."

After their conversation, the Bishop left to go down to the railroad station to go to the next town, Fr. Priest put the Blessed Sacrament away, put the candles out and Forty Hours was over. He was pastor at Cadiz until about 1967, but by then, he was a priest of the Steubenville Diocese.

Bishop Hartley with his real estate knowledge and interest decided somewhere near the end of the 1920s that a lot of the small parishes in the diocese needed new churches and he knew that this would be a big expense for any parish to undertake; so, he approached an architect who had already built five or six churches in the diocese, Robert J. Kraus of Akron, and talking with him he said he wanted him to come up with a general architectural plan for a church in smaller towns and Robert Kraus did so. A number of churches built in the diocese in the 1930s and the early 1940s all looked alike because they were all made from this one model plan of Robert Kraus with changes necessary because of the location.

They are some interesting churches and if you've seen one of them, and approach it from the front, you know immediately that it is a Robert Kraus church because they all have the same style. Robert Kraus did not like Gothic architecture so all of his churches are Romanesque with round arches instead of the pointed ones. One can see that in all the churches he designed.

The biggest examples around Columbus might be the chapel at St. Charles Preparatory School and the Retreat Center Chapel of St. Thérèse on East Broad Street. Here are some of the churches that Bishop Hartley built from this model: the new church at Blessed Sacrament in Newark; St. Peter in Chains at Wheelersburg; St. Francis DeSales in Newcomerstown; Corpus Christi in Belle Valley, between Cambridge and Caldwell along Route 79; the chapel at St. Joseph Cemetery. The façade was recognizable in almost every church that Robert Kraus designed. They all have the same design.

Most of these are in small towns around the diocese; but two were in Columbus, the old St. Agatha and the present Immaculate Conception churches.

He also opened St. Joseph Cemetery in Columbus about 1907, 195 acres, and there have been some more acres added since then with enough room for people for the next couple of centuries.

When Bishop Michael J. Ready came in 1945 and was looking around to establish some new parishes, he began to wonder what in the world Bishop Hartley was thinking when he bought these parish lands. Bishop Ready came out of Washington, D.C. where he had the position of Executive Secretary to the National Council of Catholic Bishops and he couldn't figure out why Bishop Hartley had, for the most part, put these churches on side streets where they can't be seen.

Look where Holy Name Church in Columbus is. Who knows where Patterson Avenue is? Immaculate Conception is another one because, when it was built, E. N. Broadway was just a minor street, and it didn't gain prominence until Interstate 71 was open. St. Mary Magdalene is one block off Mound Street. And you can't even drive straight to it. You have to make turns. Corpus Christi is on Stewart Avenue but they owned property out to Lockbourne Road, a more frequented thoroughfare.

I think the most outstanding was the old St. Peter Church in the Milo-Grogan area along Fifth Avenue. The Bishop owned property along Fifth Avenue which went back to New York Avenue. When Father Anthony J. Schlernitzauer built St. Peter's in 1926 at the Bishop's request, the church faced New York Avenue, a street that is one block long and ends into two alleys. Right behind it is the big thoroughfare, Fifth Avenue, a busy road even then because it was one of the few streets that crossed Columbus east and west. I was at St. Peter Church for three years and we had to tell people how to find the church. Nobody knew where New York Avenue was. Bishop Ready could not figure out why that happened because he thought that the churches should be out on the main streets, to be seen, in places where everybody knows what that building is when they go by.

Look at the first three churches that Bishop Ready established: St. Michael in Worthington, right on High Street; Our Lady of Peace, on High Street; and Christ the King, on Livingston Avenue. Bishop Hartley would have had Christ the King Church turned around, facing Dover Road. So this was one of the quirks the Bishop apparently had, to his own enjoyment.

Bishop Hartley loved the eastern part of the Diocese. After twenty years at Holy Name in Steubenville, he was well acquainted with all those little towns in Jefferson County and Belmont County and what he planned to do as Bishop, because he knew the towns, he knew the families, he knew the seminarians from the area. He assigned new priests from there to big parishes in Columbus and the Columbus priests were sent to towns all along the Ohio River. That happened to a number of them. Quite a few knew that if they were from Columbus, they would end up along the Ohio River somewhere, over in "the Valley," as they liked to call it.

One time, in 1936, Father Harry A. Estadt from Caldwell was recently ordained and needed an assignment. The Bishop needed somebody to take care of St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Columbus. The story is that the Bishop called Father Estadt into the office and said, "Boy, go out there until I can send a man." Father Estadt left the parish in 1975, 39 years later. I guess the Bishop never did find a man in all those years for St. Thomas Parish but a man sure did work there.

Bishop Hartley loved St. Charles. It was his greatest accomplishment in the diocese. And there is a legend in the diocese that every time he was free he would walk out from the Bishop's house at the cathedral to St. Charles to watch the construction back in 1923-1925.

His other interest was his Shrine to St. Thérèse. He had great devotion to the Little Flower and he wanted to try to have the first church in the world, if he could, dedicated to her. When she was canonized in 1925, I guess a few other places got ahead of him but the next building put up in the diocese was dedicated to the Little Flower and that is the Retreat House on Broad Street, in 1929.

When he purchased all the land for the Retreat Center, it was a lot of land on the south side of Broad Street, farmland of various types. He also purchased all the land possible on the north side of Broad Street, from the freeway today all the way down to Big Walnut Creek. I remember as a seminarian back in the middle 1940s, we would go out there for retreats, just for the day, and we would have to go back at night to St. Charles Seminary because there was not enough room in the set up at the Retreat House. We would go out in the afternoon and walk across Broad Street through the beautiful land on the north side of Broad Street.

The reason I heard why the Bishop bought the land on the north side of Broad Street is that he wanted to be able to control what would be built across from his Shrine and Retreat House. It was during prohibition so it couldn't have been that. He wanted to be very careful about what went in. He didn't want filling stations. Of course, one of the first things that Bishop Ready did was sell that land and, fortunately, today, there are condominiums and various houses so at least Bishop Hartley's wish was carried out that something worthwhile to him was built there.

Ohio State University was *anathema* to Bishop Hartley. He thought it was the den of iniquity in this Methodist town of Columbus, Ohio which had about 300,000 people during most of his later years. I think he sent only one or two priests to study there. The story is related that when Bishop Ready came, at his installation, he had invited various officials from around the city to the installation. Sitting up in the front row at the cathedral was President Novice G. Fawcett of Ohio State and there were others, most of them Protestants, including Fawcett. Afterwards, somebody asked President Fawcett how he knew what to do and he said, "Every time I stood up, everybody else stood up and when I sat down, everybody else sat down." Of course, at the installation of a Bishop back in those days, nobody knew what to do anyway. Ceremonies were very complicated.

The last class that Bishop Hartley ordained to the priesthood was that of April of 1943 and it contained a group of men many of you have heard of over the years – Lawrence J. Corcoran, Herman A. Crock, Thomas F. Duffy, Peter Grabaskas, Paul Metzger, Michael Andrew Nugent, Phillip B. Remark, Robert R. Schmidt, and August Winkler. And of that group, Paul Metzger died in April, 2014, two days shy of being 97. We are told that during that ceremony, Auxiliary Bishop Edward G. Hettinger was in the east sacristy of the Cathedral, unknown to Bishop Hartley, because Bishop Hartley was not in good health and nobody knew what might happen. Bishop Hettinger was there to go out to finish the Ordination if something happened to Bishop Hartley. As far as anybody ever realized, Bishop Hartley never knew that Bishop Hettinger was in the sacristy. He would not have liked that at all, as much as he liked Bishop Hettinger. There was to be another Ordination class in December of 1943 because this was during the war and the classes were accelerated. So the class of May of 1944 was ordained in December of 1943, one month before Bishop Hartley died. He did have Bishop Hettinger do that Ordination and that consisted of Fathers Frank Brown, George Buchmann, Edward F. Healey, Edgar A. Hoffman, Louis E. Hoffman, and John Yonk.

So, with that, those are my tales of Bishop Hartley. May they and the good Bishop rest in peace.

NOTES

The Society thanks Patricia Hardesty for transcribing this talk and Msgr. GeorgeSchlegel for providing the church photographs.

1) A fact first pointed out in our *Bulletin* of March, 1990.
2) page 248.
3) This stance had been established for the country by the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884.

St. Dominic Parish, Beaver, Noble County
Baptisms 1832-1852

(Continued, from Vol. XXXXI No. 3)

1840, continued

Sept. 23 James and Mary Ann children of Robert Dougherty and Julia Ann Kildow his wife; spons. Patrick Timeny and Hana Ryan. William Murphy

Oct. 7 Albert Gallitzin and Caroline Emily children of Michael Benett & Caroline Ann Benesse his wife; spons. Francis Tanner, Mary Bennett, John Bennett, and Eleanor Tanner. William Murphy

Oct. 8 James, son of John McGin and Bridget Cunningham his wife; spons. John Cunningham and Rosanna Turner. WM

Oct. 11 Lizetta Mary daughter of Carl Dorr[?] and Euphemia Benninghouse his wife; spons. Theodore Beninghouse and Mary Dorr.

same day Mariann daughter of Adam Burgatt & Barbara Burgate his wife; spons. Frederick Jacob Burgatt & Mary Howiler. WM

Oct. 13 Catherine daughter of John McConeghey & Elizabetrh M'Coff his wife; spons. Ann Hackett. WM

Oct. 15 George son of Thomas Wier and Elizabetrh Cooney; spons. John Conyn and his mother. WM

Oct. 25 Isaac son of Robert Archer and Rhoda Sweny his wife; spons. Michael Archer and Rhoda Archer. WM

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Oct. 25 Lucinda and Ruth daughters of John Tittle and Mary Stackhouse his wife; spons. Henry and Rachel Tittle. WM

Nov. 7 Joseph son of Joseph Baughman & Mary Spangler his wife; spons. Joseph & Magdalen Spangler. WM

Nov. 10 William son of George Morgan & Ann Delong his wife; spons. Sara Delong. WM

Nov. 12 Joseph Leander son of James Carolan and Ann Hamerly his wife; spons. Florance & Mary Ann Cornyn. WM

Nov. 23 Caroline daughter of Michael Blake and Catherine Homan; spons. Caroline Cealing. WM

Nov. 29 William son of Hugh McMinune & Susan Haran his wife; spons. William & Ann Dougherty. WM

Dec. 27 John son of Augustine Temiring? and Elizabeth Homan; spons. John ——. WM

same day Anama daughter of James Archer and Rachael Davis; spons. Hana Archer. WM

1841

Jan. 1 Elizabeth daughter of Adam Oblinger and Emily Slusher; spons. Conrad Wall and Mary Howiler. WM

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Feb. 2 Michael and Catherine Ann children of John Keener and Bridget Brady; spons. Elizabeth Brady and Bridget Ann McD—. WM

Feb. 21 William son of Ambrose Jeffries and Margaret Rineheart his wife; spons. John McDaniel and his wife. WM

Feb. 22 Mary Ann daughter of Stephen Dilleghey and Catherine Brady his sife; spons. Mary Brady. WM

Mar. 3 Ann daughter of Henry Low and Ann Dileghey his wife; spons. Ann McClusky. WM

Mar. 28 Elizabeth daughter of George Miller and Barbara Sheaf his wife; spons. Elizabeth Snyder. WM

Apr. 11 John Theodore son of Simon Dorr and Eleanor McCammon; spons. Jacob Dorr and his wife. WM

same day Barbara daughter of Philip Brown and Mary Welch; spons. George Muske— and Catherine Brown. WM

Apr. 18 Sara Jane daughter of William Delong and Catherine Ensley; spons. John Delong & his wife. WM

Apr 19 Catherine daugher of Nathaniel Delong and Elizabeth Ensley; spons. Catherine D—. WM

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Apr. 25 Abraham son of Simon Archer and Mary Ann Hupp his wife; spons. Mary Archer. WM

May 9 Catherine daughter of Conrad Wall and Margaret Grener his wife; spons. Jacob Grener & Mar Howiler. [WM]

May 23 Eve daugher of John Chasht and Catherine Hall his wife; spons. Andrew Grass and Eve his wife. WM

May 24 I supplied was was omitted in the baptism of Philip son of Josue Bond and Catherine Harkins; spons. Sabina McCune.

same day Benjamin son of Josue Bond and Catherine Harkins; spons. Terence McCune and his wife.

same day Francis son of Terence McCune and Sabina his wife; spons. Philip Harkins & [blank] WM

May 31 Anna Virginia daughter of William Truax and Emily Leek; spons. Jacob Leek and Mary Leek. WM

June 1 Thomas son of William Dougherty and Ann Drum; spons. Levi Wilson and Rebecca Heron WM

June 6 Ann daughter of Simon Rhineheart and Alice Mulrine; spons. Dennis Comiskey and Ann Gallagher. WM

June 7 Mary Fordice, convert, about 16 years old; spons. Mary Gallagher. WM

June 8 Elizabeth daughter of James Misler and Mary Dileghey; spons. Ann Low. WM

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June 27 at St. Joseph, Joseph Francis son of Nicholas Hand and Eva Heimbacher; spons. Joseph Biederbet and Rosina Biederbet. Matth. Oelig??

June 20 Sara daughter of Peter Timmony and Elizabeth Ward; spons. Thomas Delong and Catherine his wife. WM

July 4 Isabel daughter of John Hughs and Margaret ODonnel; spons. Peter Mon— and Isabel Hughs. WM

July 7 Elizabeth daughter of Richard Pool and Ruth Judge; spons. John Heron. WM

July 22 Joan daughter of Charles McCloskey and Mary Temple; spons. Elizabeth Temple. WM

Sept. 13 at St. Dominic's, Daniel "filiam" or daughter of John McDaniel and Sarah Ann Maning; spons. John Poulton and Elizabeth Poulton. G. A. J. Wilson [O.P.]

same day Elizabeth daughter of John McConeughy and Elizabeth Weycuf; spons. Hugh McConeughy and Sarah Cummiskay. G. A. J. Wilson

same day Elizabeth daughter of Christopher Galigher and Mary Delong; spons. John Delong and Elizabeth Delong. G. A. J. Wilson

Nov. 24 Theresa, born Nov 15, daughter of James Sharkey and Margaret Dunbar; spons. Jeremy Hannon and Matha Hannon. Fr. Joseph S. Alemany, O.P.

Nov. 26 Margaret, born Apr 10, 1836, and Luthesia Ann, born Aug. 27, 1838, children of James Sharkey and Margaret [page 63] Dunbar; spons. Hugh Sharkey and his sister. Fr. Joseph S. Alemany, O.P.

same day James Louis, born Nov. 17, 1835, son of Philip Nicolason and Elizabeth Reiney; spons. James Sharkey and Jane Nichoalson. Fr. Joseph S. Alemany.

Nov. 28 John Alexander, born Feb. 12, 1839, and David, born Oct. 28, 1840, sons of John Summers and Rosanna Turner; spons. Windel Shart and Juliana Turner. Fr. Joseph S. Alemany, O.P.

1842

May 1 Austin son of John & Mary A. Gallagher; spons. Peter Moran & Juliana Turner.

same day John son of Ambrose & Margaret Geffers; spons. Simon & Alice Reienheart.

same day Thomas son of John & Elizabeth Delong; spons. Patrick Hughes & Mary Gallagher.

(To be continued)

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