

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

PASTORS:

Serving St. Thomas as a Mission Parish:

Rev. Martin Kundig (1846-1851?)

Rev. Patrick Kernan (1851-1852)

Rev. Michael McFaul (1853-1854)

Pastors in residence:

Rev. John W. Norris (1854-1859)

Rev. George B. Riordan (1859)

Rev. T. A. Smith (1859-1862)

Rev. J. H. Harmon (1862-1862)

Rev. Richard F. Sullivan (1866-1883)

Rev. M. J. Ward (1883-1915)

Rev. James F. Ryan (1915-1920)

Rev. Sylvester J. Dowling (1920-1923)

Rev. Charles F. McBride (1923-1928)

Rev. August F. Leist (1928-1932)

Msgr. Thomas A. O'Reilly (1932-1968)

Rev. Albert Schubiger (1968-1994)

Rev. Thomas R. Doheny (1994-2002)

Rev. James G. Kuhn (2002-2005)

Serving St. Thomas and St. Jude as linked parishes:

Rev. Steven J. Kortendick (2005-2010)

Rev. John H. Hedrick (2010 -)

CATHOLIC SCHOOL HISTORY:

- 1864-1878 Catholic "school" held in church basement. Women of the parish taught students the first year. Following years; Sisters of Notre Dame, Sisters of Mercy and Sisters of St. Agnes.
- 1884 Archbishop Heiss called on St. Thomas "to establish a good Catholic school as soon as possible. However, more that sixty years elapsed before St. Thomas could fulfill this admonition. Financing a school was difficult for a congregation whose members were more poor than wealthy. Two World Wars and a Great Depression intervened and imposed severe restraints and burdens.
- 1950 St. Thomas School opened at 1221 Henry Avenue. Sixty seventh and eighth grade students from St. Thomas and grades nine, ten and eleven of St. Jude's Brother Dutton School. Additional elementary grades were added in future years. Sisters of St. Agnes served the new school.
- 1951 St. Thomas added grade nine to the Junior High Program.
- 1952 Beloit Catholic High is new name for the school. St. Thomas 9th grade was combined with 9th, 10th and 11th grades of Brother Dutton. Because of growing high school enrollment and additional grades being added to St. Thomas elementary school, it was decided an elementary school at a separate location was needed.
- 1964 St. Thomas the Apostle Grade School, 916 Bushnell, received students for grades 1-8. Sisters

of St. Bridget served the school and an Adrian Dominican, the final years.

- 1977 St. Thomas the Apostle Grade School was closed due to declining enrollment.
- 2000 Beloit Catholic High closed because of declining number of students and increasing costs. St. Thomas continued to financially support the school and have students there until it closed.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HISTORY for public school children.

- 1882-1914 Fr. Ward chose to teach the children himself.
- 20s & 30s Sisters from Brother Dutton and St. Peter's schools taught children. Sisters of St. Francis came from Milwaukee to establish Summer Schools of Religion. Grace Bennis was in charge at the St. Thomas Grade School on Henry Avenue. Marion Lendhe followed for a brief time.
- 1964-1980 The Trinitarian Sisters directed Religious Education: Sr. Mary Louise, Sr. Mary Terrence, Sr. Grace Francis (only one month; Ruth Kolpack finished year), and Sr. Florence Young.
- 1980-1984 Sr. Corine Gunn, a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration.
- 1983 Ruth Kolpack, parishioner, hired part time to develop a Youth Ministry Program.
- 1984-1986 Mary Matuska, Parishioner, coordinated Religious Education Program.
- 1986-2005 Ruth Kolpack hired full time as Director of Youth Ministry, a comprehensive program serving youth grades 1-12.
- 2005-2007 Charlie Imbert hired part time for youth ministry for middle school and high school youth; elementary grades served by Ruth Kolpack.
- 2007 Erin Olver hired for youth ministry for middle school and high school youth.

PLACES OF WORSHIP:

- 1846 Captain Thomas and Lucy Power's home, where City Hall currently stands.
- 1851 "The first Catholic House of Worship in Beloit" - the Powers' "barn chapel," moved to what is now the south side of St. Paul Avenue at the end of Pleasant Street.
- 1854 The Stone Church was built on land deeded by Lucy Power, the current location, with the reservation that Captain & Lucy Power could be buried in the church.
- 1856 Dedication of the new Stone Church.
- 1884 Fire destroyed the Stone Church.
- 1886 Dedication of new church - St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church.
- 1976 Renovation of the church in celebration of its 125th anniversary.
- 1996 Church is fully handicapped accessible with parish center and office addition.

RECTORIES:

- 1854 No rectory for our first resident pastor; lived at the home of E.D. Murray on Broad Street.
- 1859 Still no rectory. A frame house east of the church was purchased for use as a rectory. Fire of 1884 destroyed it.
- 1864 Frame building "on College Bluff" moved to lot west of church (also deeded by Lucy Power.) Remained rectory until demolished in 1994 to make room for parish center addition.
- 1994 Thomas House, 1821 Emerson Street, purchased for pastor's residence.
- 2005 St. Thomas linked with St. Jude; pastor resides at St. Jude rectory; Thomas House sold.

CONVENTS:

- 1860 Lucy Power deeded land west of church for Sisters or Brothers to serve a parish school.
- 1865 Pastor moves to house west of church, leaving house east of the church, for the sisters.
- 1950 Convent built on Bayliss for sisters to serve new St. Thomas Grade School on Henry Avenue.
- 1963 Trinitarian Sisters lived at 840 E. Grand (currently, Hannah House).
- 1964 Brigidine Sisters lived at 840 E. Grand until 1974. Trinitarian Sisters took temporary residence elsewhere until a new Cenacle was built on Shopiere Road.
- 1967 Bishop O'Donnell blesses the new Father Judge Missionary Cenacle at 2185 Shopiere Road.
- 1979 Cenacle was sold because of decreased number of Trinitarian Sisters working in the area.



**St. Thomas the Apostle
as it is to this day.**