



PARISH PROFILE

St. Mary's offers ministries to growing community

By **KATIE LEFEBVRE**
Globe staff reporter

HAWARDEN – The Catholic community in Hawarden began more than 125 years ago and is still going strong.

St. Mary Parish in Hawarden is comprised of about 175 Anglo families and many Hispanic families. According to Father Roger Linnan, pastor at St. Mary's, the Hispanic community continues to grow in the area.

Active parish

The parish offers many ministries and programs including religious education, confirmation program, RCIA, Knights of Columbus, Ladies Guild and Bible studies and adult education programs during Lent and Advent.

Father Linnan said that it is good to offer programs for the parishioners because some are anxious to grow in their faith and to become more active in the parish.

"We have a really active Knights of Columbus. It continues to grow," said the pastor. "The St. Mary's (Ladies) Guild is also pretty active in comparison to other places."

He added that the Knights and the ladies guild are generous in raising money for underprivileged people both in this country and overseas.

Tracy Westcott-Riepma, DRE at St. Mary's, pointed out that the numbers in the religious education program have reversed from being more Anglo students to being more Hispanic students.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and benediction are held the first Saturday of each month in the church.

A Spanish Mass is held the first, third and fifth Sundays of the month at 5 p.m. This began at the parish about seven or eight years ago, said Father Linnan.

"A highlight for the parish was the Our

Lady of Guadalupe Mass," said Father Linnan. "It is a very festive occasion with mariachi singers and dancers. The Hispanic population puts on a very nice dinner for everyone in the parish – Mexicans and Anglos."

Hawarden is clustered with Sioux Center, Rock Valley and Alford. Father Linnan mentioned that the parishes do some liturgy planning together. He goes to Sioux Center and Rock Valley on alternate Sundays to say Mass in English and Father Doug Klein says the Spanish Masses in Hawarden.

History

The beginning of the Catholic community in Hawarden goes back to 1872 when the first Catholic families in Calliope – the original town started in 1860 – were served by Father J. Phalen who served all of western Sioux County. The first Mass known to be celebrated in the city of Hawarden was held in a furniture store in 1882.

In 1885, Father Phalen was appointed resident pastor and plans began for a permanent church building. The first church was dedicated on May 21, 1887, as St. John's Church.

In 1899, under the direction of Father M. J. Quirk, St. Anthony's School was opened. The school was staffed by the Sisters of St. Francis in Clinton. The parish and school patron names were changed to St. Mary's in 1903 during the pastorate of Father Ed Masterson.

On March 30, 1912, a new two-story brick school was dedicated and high school classes were added. The school was closed in 1969, when teaching sisters could no longer staff the school.

Today St. Mary's takes up more than two city blocks of property for buildings, parking and landscaping. The present church



St. Mary Church, Hawarden

was built in 1962 during the pastorate of Father Leander Friedman at a cost of \$150,000.

His successor, Father William L. Carel, directed the building of a new rectory and the bell tower. The parish center and religious education classrooms were built in 1991.

There are plans underway for a new baptismal font to be added to the church at Easter this year.

Priests, religious

In all, 17 pastors and several interim priests have served the Catholics of St. Mary's Church. Two sons of the parish, Father Alexander Lynott (1918) and Father William McCarthy (2003), have been ordained to the diocesan priesthood.

Eight young women from the parish have entered religious communities: Sisters Anna Schiefen, Cecilia McBride, Gertrude McBride, Rose McKeever, Gertrude

McKeever, Loretta Burns, Jeanne Nolan and Margaret Nolan.

On May 24, 1980, Joseph Maher was ordained permanent deacon by Bishop Frank H. Greteman. Deacon Maher was general manager and editor of *The Globe* in Sioux City until losing his battle with cancer in 2001.

The three pastors of St. Mary's prior to Father Linnan were Msgr. Michael Sernett (1994-1996), Father Kevin Richter (1996-1998) and Father LeRoy L. Seuntjens (1998-2007).

Father Linnan has been pastor at St. Mary's since July of 2007. He commented that the lectors and ministers at St. Mary's are well trained. The parish is also "blessed" with several accompanists and cantors.

"I enjoy celebrating the liturgy and teaching," said the pastor. "The people here are very nice to work with – finance board and parish council."

PARISH INFORMATION

Pastor:
Father Roger Linnan

DRE:
Tracy Westcott-Riepma

Mass Times:
Saturday – 5 p.m.;
Sunday – 10:30 a.m. and
9 a.m. (alternating
Sundays in Rock Valley
and Sioux Center);
Weekdays – 8 a.m.;
Spanish Mass – 1st, 3rd
and 5th Sundays at 5
p.m.

Confessions:
Saturday, 4 to 4:45 p.m.;
during Lent and Advent –
after weekend Masses

Address:
1125 Ave. L, PO Box 271
Hawarden, IA 51023

Religious ed program serves Hispanic, Anglo communities

By **KATIE LEFEBVRE**
Globe staff reporter

HAWARDEN – The religious education program at St. Mary's continues to grow, especially with Hispanic students.

Tracy Westcott-Riepma, DRE at St. Mary's, pointed out that the numbers in the religious education program have reversed from being more Anglo to being more Hispanic students.

She said that while some of the Hispanic families are not registered at the parish, they do sign their children up for religious ed classes.

There are 106 students in kindergarten through seventh grade who attend classes on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. All of the information for the program is sent out in English and Spanish. When parent meetings are held, there is a translator present.

Father Roger Linnan, pastor at St. Mary's, mentioned that part of the program that he likes is the parents/students stations that the children participate in when they are preparing for first reconciliation and first Communion. These are done in English and Spanish.

The religious education students also participate in living Stations of the Cross during Lent. A living rosary has become a new tradition and each student holds a bead while the rosary is prayed.

Along with spiritual activities, they are



St. Mary's religious education students present living Stations of the Cross.

involved in service, too.

The religious education students have participated in Kids Against Hunger and have packaged more than 20,000 meals the last couple years to be shipped to Haiti or Honduras.

The 32 confirmation students attend classes twice a month on Sundays from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Students are confirmed every three years at St. Mary's so the students range from eighth graders to juniors in high school.

There are 24 teachers, aides and helpers who assist with the religious education program. Father Linnan teaches the confirmation class.

"I think it is helpful in religious education to have more than one teacher, not only for order but some kids need different help than

other kids," said Father Linnan. "I think our catechists are pretty young. It has been a good way to involve the young couples in our parish. We have some people who aren't so young who have been faithful catechists."

Westcott-Riepma commented that there are several teachers who continue to come back each year. After being confirmed, some of the students come back as teachers.

"We do have several catechists who teach that don't have children in religious ed. They teach because they love it and that is part of their vocation in serving the church," said Westcott-Riepma. "Without them, I don't know what we would do."

She said that more Hispanics are volunteering to help with religious education and four of the classroom aides are Hispanic.

Westcott-Riepma, who has been the DRE for almost three years, said she enjoys working with Father Linnan and the teachers.

"We have awesome teachers who are willing to accept new ideas and changes," she said. "They give me lots of feedback which is huge. What I like the most is working with kids. I actually miss teaching class."

The DRE added that she continues to add new things to the religious education program. She would like to do some activities outside of church as well.

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