

## ST. MARY OF MT. CARMEL CHURCH, FANCHER'S BEAUTIFUL LANDMARK

BOZE ZBAW POLSKE—"God Save Poland" is an indicative reminder of the troubled times in the homeland during the building of St. Mary of Mt. Carmel church. The message, in an iron grille, is over the entrance to the spacious premises on top of a rising slope west of Amherst, called Fancher. The name originated from Orson Fancher, who was a postmaster in the area before the turn of the century.

The postoffice was discontinued in 1913. Although there are no more Fanchers living in the area, it is still called the "Fancher Church". It has also been called the "Smokey Spur Church". This name derived from a spur created by the Green Bay and Western Railroad for loading potatoes. The spur has been removed but the name remains.

### Chapel Built In 1885

A chapel, 20 by 30 feet, was built in 1885 on five acres of land purchased the previous year, and located in a colony of Polish immigrants. Jacob Werachowski was the first Polish resident. Construction was done under the leadership of Father Anthony Lex, who was pastor of St. Peters in Stevens Point. He had been conducting services occasionally in the John Somers home.

The parish was legally incorporated in 1886. Father A.J. Maczynski was the first pastor, Anton Cyra, treasurer and Albert Kubisiak, secretary. Others serving on the first committees were August Dulek, Joseph Pehoski, Matt Mathowski, Joseph Jablonski, and Werachowski.

The first baptism recorded was Francis Golka, son of John and Josephine Lemanizyk, by Rev. L.M. Maczynski. The first baptism after the parish was legally incorporated was Juliana Zblewski, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Zblewski, in 1886. The first wedding, Anthony Tempski to Anastasia Lubecki, June 30, 1886. The first funeral was that of Suzanna Klototka in 1888.

### Fire Precedes Present Building

A larger church was needed so in 1893, a structure of 104 by 40 feet was built. This was destroyed by fire about 11 years later. Construction was then started on the current edifice,



St. Mary of Mt. Carmel Church, Fancher.

made of brick and stone, and Gothic style architecture. This magnificent building seats 900. Its tall steeple, a familiar landmark, is visible from many miles.

A separate building was constructed for a school and convent in 1912. It

was staffed by Sisters of St. Joseph, Stevens Point, and had an enrollment of 150 pupils. This building was destroyed by fire in 1934, and another one, of brick, was started the same year. But in 1970 the school was closed for the teaching of graded

The altar in St. Mary of Mt. Carmel Church, Fancher.

education. The building is still used to the fullest extent for CCD classes. 182 students attend the weekly classes in religion.

The present church was redecorated in 1949, and a magnificent pipe organ was purchased about six years ago from a Chicago theater.

**"I Enjoy Serving St. Marys Of Fancher"**

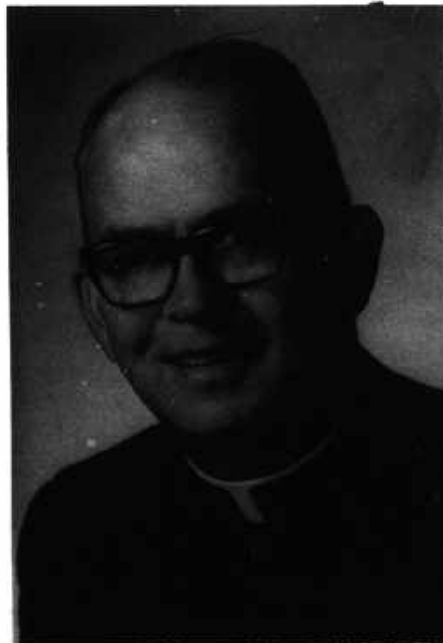
Dominic Eichman is currently the pastor of the church. He was born in Trempeleau County, a son of Joseph and Stella Eichman, and the youngest of ten boys and two girls. He attended Centerville Public School and Sacred Heart Parish, Polonia; then Christian Brothers School in Winona, St. Bonaventures Prep school in Sturtevant. He then attended St. Mary's College in Winona, and St. Francis Seminary, Milwaukee. He was ordained to the priesthood at St. John's Cathedral in Milwaukee. He served parishes in Sauk City, Whitehall, St. Lawrence, Wisconsin Rapids, Torun, Port Edwards, Genoa, Junction City, and at St. Peters, Stevens Point.

During his college years and after, he spent much of his extra time as a recreational director, especially with young people, organizing and coaching Junior League, and adult softball league, coaching golf, and while in Stevens Point, was Regional Diocesan Director for displaced persons as they arrived in Portage County from foreign countries.

However, he says, his greatest enjoyment is the spiritual work in the parish, celebration of the Mass, Eucharistic Prayer, Rite of Reconciliation and the Sacraments, visit the sick to serve, spiritually people of all classes, all ages. In 1968, he traveled through the Holy Land, Rome, Turkey, Egypt, Greece, Cyprus.

"I enjoy serving St. Mary's of Fancher...the people here continue to hold bright the flame of faith and will continue to produce much spiritual fruit. It is important that they recall the deep faith of the pioneers of this fine country."

Former pastors in the church are Rev. A.J. Maczynski, 1886; Rev. Ae Geth, 1889; Rev. Victor Lebecki, 1889; Rev. Henry Cicheski, 1891; Rev. Marcellus Sikorski, 1891; Rev. Victor Lebecki, 1892; Rev. F. Lengowski,



Rev. Dominic Eichman, pastor of St. Mary of Mt. Carmel Church, Fancher.

1892; Rev. Nicholas Kolisinski, 1893; Rev. Roman Wawrzynskowski, 1896; Rev. L. Starestzick, 1898; Rev.

Stanislaus Kubiszewski, 1900; Rev. Leon Jankowski, 1908; Rev. S.A. Elbert, 1909; Rev. L.J. Pescinski, 1910; Rev. A. Malkowski, 1916; Rev. Julis Chylinski, 1916; Rev. Stanislaus Kubiszewski, 1929; Rev. Peter Borowski, 1934; Rev. Anthony Krausa, 1939; Rev. Stanislaus Lapinski, 1939; Rev. Max Kliczykowski, 1948; Rev. Steve Mieczkowski, 1951; Rev. Ted Szczerbicki, 1959; Rev. Dominic Eichman, 1974. Priests that are native sons are Rt. Rev. A. Trzebiatowski, Rt. Rev. Ch. Ropella, Rev. V. Hoffa, Rev. Frank Disher, and Rev. John Pavelski, and 45 sisters.

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