

**OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL CATHOLIC CHURCH
OF
CHOJNICE / CHOYNICE / POLANDER / PAPLIN
HOWARD COUNTY, NEBRASKA**

**A COMPILATION OF NEWSPAPER RESEARCH
BY
RUSS CZAPLEWSKI**

February 2019

Phonograph June 1, 1883

B. F. Manuel has taken the contract for building the Polish Catholic church, near Tynerville. He is making plans for the one to be erected at this place, and they will be subjected to the Bishop for inspection. The Tynerville church will be 46 x 80 feet.

Phonograph July 27, 1883

A Polish Catholic church is to be built at Tynerville, Sherman county, to cost \$4,000.

Saint Paul Phonograph January 6, 1899:

PAPLIN AND VICINITY

The Catholic church was crowded Xmas night in our village. The first mass was at five o'clock. Our band deserves credit for the pretty hymns they played.

The True Voice (Omaha, NE) June 7, 1907:

CHOYNICE, NEB.

A beautiful and edifying celebration was held here on May 16th to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the organization of our Young People's Sodality. At 10 o'clock a.m. our zealous young pastor, Rev. Irenaus Jorka [sic—Jarka], preceded by cross bearer and acolytes accompanied the seventy-eight members of the society to Our Lady's Chapel, where May devotions were held. Then followed High Mass at which all the members received Holy Communion, and were favored with two sermons, one in English and one in the Polish language.

After this Benediction was given and then the Sodality filed out of the church and returned to the school house.

An entertainment was given by the young folks and some of the school children in the school hall on May 25th, in commemoration of the same anniversary.

The following very interesting program was rendered by the members, in a masterly manner:

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Music | Band |
| Address | By August and Jos Zocholl |
| Wista | Chorus |
| Ogolili go bez mydta | Dialog |
| Zither | Solo |
| Jubilee Bell Drill | By 12 Girls |
| Running an Exhibition | Dialog |
| Zither | Solo |
| Ciezka ranny | Chorus |

206 young ladies have been enrolled since the organization of the Sodality. Of these about 110 were members of near-by congregations, Ashton, Loup City and Arcadia.

Many of the earlier members have entered the Holy State of Matrimony and a goodly number of these have taken Our Lady Queen of the Most Holy Rosary as their patron in this new state of life.

Three members have been called to sit nearer Mary's throne and we cannot doubt that her intercession has been the realization of their hopes, as it is the cause of ours. They are never forgotten by their companions on earth, and daily prayers for the departed ones is a continual duty.

While the main and superexcelling [sic] object in the establishment of this sodality was the more frequent reception of the Holy Sacraments and the financial duties were to be only secondary, it has often lent a helping hand doing what it could in a small way, by means of nickels, and dimes, to adorn God's temple, Mary's altar or other necessities.

In 1905 a chapel was built and adorned to Our Lady Immaculate at a cost of \$150. Liberal assistance was given at the time when the new High Altar was purchased, also when the new parsonage was built. A banner of Our Queen was purchased in 1899.

In conclusion we wish to express our appreciation of the kindly interest which our Sodality has received from parents and friends.

"We wish to offer our sincerest thanks to our good pastors, Rev. Jos. Augustyn, who organized our society Rev. B. Radka, who always took a lively interest in [word illegible] spiritual welfare, and our present pastor, Rev. I. Jorka, who so generously planned a special celebration for our tenth anniversary, and whose kindly disposition towards us is an assurance of his continued interest in the future of our society.

The signing and music were especially attractive and the stage most artistically decorated.

Among the guests were the Rev. Pastor, Ireanaus Jorka and Rev. Anthony Alberts of Ashton.

The Feast of Corpus Christi in our parish was observed with all its solemnity on the 30th day of May. The altars were clad in selected fresh and living flowers, and the high altar, especially, could not have been adorned any better. At the close of the High Mass, procession of the Blessed Sacrament took place. First to a chapel near by, built in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, then to a by-way monument reared to the honor of our suffering Savior, then to the cemetery, where a suitable altar was also erected for the occasion. From here the procession proceeded back to the church where the devotion was brought to a close by the Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament.

The True Voice (Omaha, NE) June 28, 1907:

CHOYNICE, NEB.

For the past two weeks workmen have been busy putting a metal lining in our church. This work is now completed in a satisfactory manner through the zealous attention of our pastor, Rev. I. Jarka. The work was in charge of Mr. Anthony Kaminski, through whose patience and untiring efforts it has been accomplished. The sincerest thanks are tendered to this generous parishioner by the pastor and the congregation, as his work was all done gratis, besides which he donated the nice sum of \$50 to help defray the expenses of the material. Artists have already begun to decorate the metal ceiling and walls with a harmonious blending of blue, white and gold enamel. When completed, we shall no doubt have reason to be proud of our church.

On Monday, June 17, Rev. I. Jarka went to call on his friend, Rev. Jos. Rose of St. Paul.

On Wednesday and Thursday, June 20 and 21, he went to oversee the work which is being done on the new church in Sargent.

St. Isadore's Society, the most progressive and enterprising society of our congregation, is making plans for a grand picnic to be given the first part of next week. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

July 7 has been named as the day for the reception of the First Holy Communion by the class of Mt. Carmel school.

A beneficent rain fell in this vicinity during the past week and all crops including flower gardens and poultry yards are in a most promising condition.

Rev. Anthony Alberts, who for the past four months has been assistant to Rev. B. Radka at Ashton, spent the last few days prior to his departure for Norfolk with his friend, Rev. I. Jarka, at Choynice, where he sang a High Mass in honor of his patron, St. Anthony, June 13, and was then most agreeably surprised by a nice

little celebration of his namesday. The following morning, June 14, he bade farewell to his friends and departed for his new field of labor. The good wishes and fervent prayers of his sincere friends go with him, for the blessings and joy of success in this new portion of the Lord's vineyard.

The True Voice August 2, 1907:

CHOYNICE, NEB.

July 7, 1907, will always be remembered by the twenty-two of our First Holy Communion class as the happiest and holiest day of their lives. Their names are as follows:

Michael Roy,

Stanislaus Tesmer,

Frank Kwiatkowski,

Joseph Kosmicki,

Stanislaus Kusiak,

Paul Kettle,

John Paluch,

Angelina Topolski,

Margaret Berry,

Salome Mendyk,

Mary Bogus,

Clara Ackerman,

Sofia Prenczke,

Mary Grabowski,

Valentina Schroll,

Anna Badura,

Hedwig Polski,

Rosa Wojtalewicz,

Paulina Wardyn,

Eleanora Jarzynka and Euphronsina [sic] Kamincki.

The weather was most suitable and if, as we believe be true, that the joys of children are those of their parents, it was a joyous crowd that filled the church this bright morning. The pastor with acolytes and cross-bearer led the happy class from the school hall to the church, while the accompanying procession of the adults sang songs of joy and unfurled their banners. At 10:30 o'clock High Mass was sung, at which the children offered their candles, renewed their baptismal vows and received for the first time the Precious Sacrament—our loving Savior.

Two sermons, Polish and English, were delivered; then the class returned to the school where a banquet had been prepared for them by loving hands. After this they were enrolled in the brown scapular of Mt. Carmel and joined the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The ceremonies closed with Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament.

July 16, being the feast of our Lady of Mt. Carmel and the patronal feast of our church, was most appropriately celebrated by a solemn High Mass. Three sermons—Polish, English and German, were delivered, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Five reverend guests assisted the pastor, namely: Rev. Jos. Augustyn, Rev. B. Radka, Rev. Jos. Rose, Rev. S. Jaszczynski and Rev. Paul Knappeck, who has lately taken charge of Krakow, and who preached the Polish and German sermons of the feast.

The weather was ideal and besides a large number of the parishoners, many strangers from neighboring congregations approached the Holy Sacraments.

A Gregorian Mass, "Missae De Angelis," was rendered by the choir. The Offertory was Conrad's "Tota Pulchra Es."

Saint Paul Republican April 10, 1913:

PAPLIN AND VICINITY

The present Franciscan Sisters will leave Paplin at the end of the school year, some time in June, and the Felician Sisters of Milwaukee will take their place in the school room and at the organ in church.

A meeting was held of the Paplin parish Sunday for the purpose of repairing the Sisters' residence. A committee of five was selected to secure a contractor and examine the building and see what is needed. The stone and brick are in bad shape as the ground story of this building was built nearly thirty years ago. It is proposed to rebuild it of cement blocks.

Saint Paul Republican June 12, 1913:

PAPLIN AND VICINITY

Sunday was a glad day for many of the Paplin parish as 35 children, 18 boys and 17 girls, received their First Holy Communion. These children were prepared by our Franciscan Sisters. Our two Sister teachers, Sister Cashmier and Sister Wladislawa prepared these children for this occasion. It must be remembered that these two Sisters also had about 75 other children in school until two weeks ago. One can plainly see that the life of a Catholic Sister is all labor and sunshine.

The present Franciscan Sisters left for their home in Manitowoc, Wis. This must be very sad for our Sister Cashmier as her parents reside in this community and she has labored in this parish for nearly 15 years. They will be replaced by Felician Sisters from Milwaukee at the beginning of the school year this fall. . .

Many people from Elba, Farwell, Ashton and Loup City attended the services at Paplin church Sunday. The church was filled to its full capacity and standing room was at a premium. Paplin has the largest Catholic church in Howard county.

Saint Paul Republican September 4, 1913:

PAPLIN AND VICINITY

The Felician sisters arrived here to take charge of the Paplin Parocial [sic] school, but on account of the residence not yet being finished will remain in Ashton until all is complete here.

The ladies of the Paplin parish held a meeting Sunday to arrange for furniture, clothing, etc., in the sisters' residence.

Saint Paul Republican November 6, 1913:

PAPLIN AND VICINITY

Monday was observed as All Soul's day. The Paplin parish people gathered at the church and after mass a procession was formed and went to the cemetery to decorate the graves of their loved ones.

Saint Paul Republican January 1, 1914:

PAPLIN AND VICINITY

A mid-night mass was held in the Paplin church Christmas eve and the attendance was quite large although it was very cold outside. . .

A very interesting parochial meeting was held at the Paplin Parochial school Sunday, Dec. 28. Stanislaus Krijeski was appointed treasurer and Peter Gappa secretary for the parish for the ensuing year and Stanley Blazey and Paul Levandoski church marshals. The former committee John Sawicki and Leo Klien were thanked for the excellent service they have rendered the parish. Father Jarzowski thanked them in behalf of the parish and then all who were present thanked them also.

Saint Paul Republican June 25, 1914:

A class of six girls and three boys received their First Holy Communion on Sunday. After the services the children were taken to the Sisters' residence, where a feast of good things to eat awaited them. After dinner the children called Father Jarzowski to the school room, where a short program was held thanking him and the Sisters for their care.

The Phonograph March 1, 1922:

BAD FIRE IN PAPLIN

Saturday evening about 6 o'clock it was noticed the Sisters' residence was on fire. An alarm was spread. Many immediately responded, but the fire could not be located. Dense clouds of smoke came from the roof. When a hole was chopped in the roof it was discovered the fire had gained such headway that the bucket brigade could not control it. The supply of water in the well was soon exhausted so to save the building was impossible. Then all turned in to save the contents, which they did. They carried out everything but the furnace and the chapel alter [sic], but the building was a total loss. It was a three story structure. The first story was of pressed brick, and the upper two stories of frame. The parish carried \$3,000.00 insurance on the building, but the loss is much greater, as a building of its kind at present would cost upwards of \$8,000.00.

A building committee was elected Sunday, composed of John Sawicki, Jos. Pokorski and Stanley Krijeski, and a modern building will be erected as soon as possible. About a thousand dollars in personal checks was left at once with Father Wiese. The building committee will meet Tuesday evening in order to draw up plans and give out bids. It will then be decided if a Sisters residence and school will be combined. The style of St. Libory or Ashton, or a residence for the Sisters alone.

Gwiazda Zachodu [Polish language newspaper; Omaha, NE] May 26, 1922:

Z NEBRASKI

Contributions to the General Haller's Army Invalid Fund by the St. Isidore Society of Chojnice, Nebraska:

Jan Gorecki \$1

Jozef Mendyk \$1

And. Bogus \$1

Ignacy Kosmicki \$1

Jan Kwiatkowski \$1

Wiktor Prencek 50 cents

Wlad. Blazej \$1

Stan. Tesmer \$1

Stan. Jonak \$1

Wojciech Kuszak \$1

Jan Sawicki \$1

Stan. Krajewski \$1

Pawel Lewandowski \$1

Jozef Szywinski \$1

Stefan Ignowski \$1

Teodore Mendyk \$1

Jozef Micek 50 cents

Jozef Jolkowski \$1

Jan Ignowski \$1

Kazimierz Kosmicki \$1

Andrzej Skurniak 50 cents

Total \$19.50

Jan Sawicki, Collector

The Phonograph November 8, 1922:

PAPLIN PIES BRING CONSIDERABLE MONEY

The members of the Paplin congregation held a pie social last Sunday evening and it was a success in several ways. Everybody had enough pie and considerable money was turned into the treasury as a result of the pie social.

Leo Skarupa had the satisfaction of eating the highest priced pie that ever was disposed of in this county, as far as we can learn. The pie that he secured netted the total sum of \$42. He had the satisfaction of eating the pie with the young lady who made it, Miss Nellie Krance, on the stage. The rest of the crowd were on the lower floor. A total of \$102.00 was taken in at the pie social. Father Bogatzik [sic—Bogaczyk], the new pastor of Paplin, desires to go on record as saying that he has the best bunch of sports in this section of the state. We are inclined to agree with him. When a bunch of fellows will get \$42.00 for one pie we are willing to say they are some goers. The crowd spent an enjoyable evening and of course had a pie of a time. The ladies of Paplin must be good pie makers. Miss Krance is in a class by herself. It is doubtful if any other lady in this county ever made a pie that brought that big sum of money at a social.

The Phonograph August 27, 1924:

Rev. Joseph Bogaczyk, pastor of the Paplin church, was in this city, Tuesday, and while here was a very pleasant caller at The Phonograph office. He left us an order for some bills advertising their annual picnic which will be held on the beautiful grounds near the church on next Sunday afternoon and evening. They are going to have a big time and everybody is invited to attend. On the program is a ball game, races of all kinds, contests of all kinds, with prizes for both ladies and gentlemen, young and old, a tug of war, Paplin against the world. Lunch and refreshments will be served. The Ashton orchestra will furnish the music and a fine time is assured all who attend the picnic. Those of our readers who can attend this picnic should do so, as it means a big time for everybody who are present. And everybody is invited to attend.

The Phonograph March 16, 1927:

Rev. Raczynski and Rev. Bogaczyk of Paplin visited Rev. Hinzmann on Tuesday. Father Raczynski is now permanently stationed at Paplin and Father Bogaczyk goes to Sargent.

Register October 4, 1931:

Interior Decorating of Church in Mount Carmel Nears Completion

Mount Carmel, Ashton P. O.—The interior decorating of Mount Carmel church is nearing completion. The entire ceiling is gloss ivory with gold outlines, especially heavy on the sanctuary ceiling. The side walls work down gradually from ivory to a light buff. The twelve pillars are done in onyx glaze. At present, the decorators are repainting the three altars, the pulpit and the Communion rail. Peter Christensen of St. Paul is the contractor.

On Tuesday, Sept. 22, Frank Ciemnoczowski of Elba and Martha Grudzinski, were united in marriage in Mount Carmel church, Father Albel officiating. Flower girl, ring-bearer and maid of honor headed the bridal procession down the aisle. The bride was dressed in white satin with long flowing veil. Sallie Grudzinski and Clara Synowski were maids of honor and were dressed in blue and gold respectively. Edwin Ciemnoczowski was best man, with Clarence Grudzinski as attendant. Miss Evelyn Marshalek, organist and soloist of Holy Ghost church in Omaha, played and sang the High Mass for the marriage. Later, a wedding breakfast was served to about twenty families of friends and relatives.

Register September 3, 1933:

CHOYNICE PARISH WILL OBSERVE GOLDEN JUBILEE

BISHOP BONA WILL ATTEND CELEBRATION

Father Jarka, Pastor When 25th Anniversary

Was Marked, Again in Charge of Church;

Rites to Be Held Sept. 12

Choynice.—In a few weeks the congregation of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel here will celebrate its golden jubilee. The date has been set for September 12, and

everybody is busily engaged in making the necessary preparation for the occasion. The church will be painted by the parishioners in the next two weeks and the interior suitably decorated. The ladies are making preparations for a huge banquet to be served at 12 o'clock to all those who will share in the joys of the day. All surrounding parishes and friends from far and near are cordially invited to attend the golden jubilee.

His Excellency, the Most. Rev. Bishop Stanislaus V. Bona, has consented to be in the sanctuary at the Solemn Mass which will begin at 10 o'clock in the morning. He will also address the congregation in Polish and English following the Mass. Father Paul Wiese, former pastor, will give the Polish sermon at the Mass.

Father Aloysius Jarzowski of Ashton will sing the High Mass, assisted by Father Leonard Ziolkowski of Elyria as deacon and Father John Czajka of Loup City as subdeacon. The Very Rev. August Heimes, Vicar General of the diocese, will be the archpriest and Father Bean the master of ceremonies of the Mass. Father Charles Kaufmann of St. Libory, master organist of the diocese, has consented to play the organ. Other priests invited will take their places in the sanctuary. The solemn celebration will conclude with the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and procession around the church.

Fifty years have gone by since the Church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel has been built. It was, indeed, a hard task in those days to build a church in this locality. There were no railroad facilities, no trucks to haul the necessary material in those days and the old settlers had to haul lumber from as far as Grand Island over forty miles away. Faith then was a living thing full of action. Stanislaus Badura, one of the earliest settlers from Chicago, was leading the building operation and it was mostly his money that made the erection of the present building possible. The edifice stands on three acres of ground which he generously donated for the cause of religion.

Stanislaus Badura and most of the founders of this congregation have already received their reward. The younger generation is doing its very best in keeping the buildings in good repair, and is following in the footsteps of its forefathers.

The Church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel was built in the year 1883 and the congregation was organized in the same year. Father Stuer, S. J., was its first pastor. A small rectory was built to house him and Father Sebastianski, S. J., pastor of St. Anthony's of Posen, Nebr. From this point, both zealous Jesuit Fathers labored and spread the Gospel in all directions. They established missions in Warsaw, St. Paul, St. Libory, Loup City, Arcadia, Elba, Boleszyn and other places. To their credit churches have been built at Elba, Warsaw, St. Paul, Boleszyn, Posen and Loup City. Recorded church history says that Choynice parish is really the mother church and, as such, Choynice is calling all those parishes named to come and participate in festivities.

Father Stuer saw the need of a school and in the year of 1887 he established the first Polish parochial school. Its first teachers were Brothers Chmielewski and Kraemer of the Society of Jesus. Later on they were replaced by Sisters of St. Francis. Father Stuer was recalled by his superior to Poland in June, 1896, where a few years later he died.

Father Stuer was succeeded by Father Alexander Mathaushek, S. J., for only a few months when Father Joseph Augustyn was appointed pastor, also for a short time, from October, 1896, to December, 1897. At present Father Augustyn is chaplain in one of the hospitals in Poland and is still very active although 71 years of age.

Father Boleslaw Radka, then a young priest, was appointed pastor in January, 1898. Full of priestly zeal he labored among his parishioners for nine years. He was much esteemed by all and the parochial school flourished during his time. He built a new rectory, and organized a congregation at Ashton, where he built a spacious church and a necessary rectory. It is only a short time ago that he was called by his Maker to accept his reward.

Father Radka was succeeded in January, 1907, by the present pastor, the Rev. Irenaeus Jarka. He followed in the footsteps of his predecessors and, being young, was likewise filled with sacerdotal zeal. He remodeled the interior of the church and replaced the plain windows with stained glass windows. At first he went out to Arcadia and Sargent and said Mass there in private homes. In a short time he built churches in both places.

In June, 1910, Father Jarka was succeeded by Father John S. Palubicki, his assistant as pastor of this historical parish. He was soon recalled to other fields of labors and Father Aloysius Jarzowski succeeded him in September, 1912. Father Jarzowski took great interest in the parish and did much as to the progress of the school.

After Father Jarzowski left in January, 1915, Fathers Francis Szczepukowski and J. J. Herek in succession made their stay as pastors until October, 1915.

Bishop Scannell of Omaha appointed Father Paul Wiese, now chancellor of the Grand Island diocese, as pastor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel parish in October, 1915. For seven years he was the beloved pastor and made many improvements on the grounds of the parish property. He took an intensive interest in his parochial school. The new sisterhouse was planned and built by him. The congregation grew in numbers so that, when he had to resign on account of his ill health, the congregation counted over 125 families. During his pastorate the parish prospered. His memory here, in the minds of parishioners, time can never efface.

Father Wiese was succeeded by the Rev. Joseph Bogaczyk, October, 1922, and Father Bogaczyk was followed by the Rev. A. Raczynski, February, 1927. In July 30, 1930, Mt. Carmel parish became a mission until Father Albert Albel was appointed pastor by Bishop James A. Duffy in January, 1931. During his pastorate, the interior of the church was given a new coat of paint.

But the congregation of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel is a Polish parish and so His Excellency, the Most Rev. Bishop. S. V. Bona, appointed Father Albel as pastor of

Crawford, Nebr., and sent Father Ireneus Jarka, pastor of Elba for the past twelve years, back to Choynice in July, 1932.

Father Jarka celebrated with the parish 25 years ago its silver jubilee and now again as the pastor he will celebrate with his parish the golden jubilee. The parochial school went into oblivion five years ago and the parish feels that the loss of such an institution very deeply, but the past few years and the present time make it impossible to recall the good sisters to take up the good work of nursing children in their religious growth and moral education. The people of Choynice should pray to God that He may speed the day for better times and the reopening of a flourishing parochial school.

The congregation has given to the Church, one priest, Father Krance of the Jesuit order; two brothers and 23 sisters. It should be the wish and prayer of every father and mother that one of their children be chosen by God to serve Him in a special manner by offering up Masses at the altar and saving souls, or teaching children as sisters or doing other works of mercy in the services of Christ. Such children chosen by God for holy vocations are a blessing to their parents not only in their lifetime, but also after their parents are called to give an account to God; those children will not cease to pray until they themselves will be called into eternity.

[Note: Similar articles appeared as "Paplin Parish to Celebrate Golden Jubilee Sept. 12" in The Phonograph of September 6, 1933; and "Golden Jubilee Paplin Sept 18" in Howard County Herald of September 20, 1933]

The Register September 5, 1937:

CHOYNICE

Choynice.—Nestling in a wooded valley three miles east and two miles north of the town of Ashton lies the beautiful Parish of Mt. Carmel. Fifty years ago it was thought that the railroad would cut through this territory, and a townsite was accordingly laid out and named Choynice. This name is remembered by the old-timers only and has gone into desuetude. This townsite was also named Paplin, and as such appears on old maps of Howard county. The name, Paplin, still designates the country around Mt. Carmel. The railroad went elsewhere, and no town ever existed in this territory, and the names of Choynice and Paplin have no official standing.

In the early years a post office by the name of Paplin existed, and a general store serviced the people in the vicinity. Both [of] these institutions have disappeared and not even the buildings are in existence any more. Close to the site once laid out as a town, Stanislaus Badura, a Polish pioneer, donated two acres of ground for a church. This was in 1883. The Catholic farmers hauled the rough stone for the foundation from Davis creek, a distance of ten miles. Lumber was hauled all the way from Grand Island by teams of oxen. Joseph Grudzinski, still living in the parish, helped haul the building material from Grand Island. A very large and beautiful structure was erected that summer. The church is now 48 years old, and its massive beams and solid structure still weather the Nebraska winds. It is told humorously that a violent wind once took the church off its foundation, but that a counter wind placed it right back. In 1896, however, a wind really pushed the church slightly off its foundation, and since then the church has been imbedded in concrete. The twin spires of the church still loom high into the sky and show to passers-by the beautiful and rugged accomplishment of Polish pioneers for their faith.

Later, six acres more were purchased, and at one extremity of these grounds a cemetery was laid out, in a vault of which Stanislaus Badura lies entombed. The

cemetery is a choice parcel of ground overlooking all the surrounding territory, its Crucifixion group is placed in the very center, with a grotto effect and with the gray and red granite grave stones shaded by evergreen trees. A shrine showing Christ with His cross marks the private entrance to the church grounds proper at the county road.

Father Steuer [sic], S. J., was the first pastor and remained longer than any later pastor. Mt. Carmel was dedicated in 1883 by Bishop O'Connor of Omaha.

The first Baptism recorded in the parish record is that of Martha Zohota [sic]. The first marriage and the first death occurred the following year. The first marriage was that of Anna Matulewicz to Vincent Lowokinas, and the first funeral was that of Constance Lamprecht, a child.

The first secular priest residing at Mt. Carmel was Father Augustyn, now living in Poland. Father Radka followed the next year and remained until 1906, when Father Irenaeus Jarka, now pastor for the second time, was placed in charge of the parish. Father J. S. Palubicki, now pastor of Blessed Sacrament parish in Omaha, followed Father Jarka and remained for two years.

Father Aloysius Jarzowski, the present pastor of Ashton, followed and remained for two years. Fathers Szczpuchowski and Heref [sic—Herek] were here for a few months' durations, and then came Father Wiese, who remained as pastor for seven years. Father Bogaczyk, at present residing in New York remained until 1927. Father Raczynski followed him for a few years, after which Fathers Stakemeir and Hinzmann had charge of Mt. Carmel from their neighboring parishes until Father Albert Albel was made pastor by the Most Rev. Bishop J. A. Duffy in January, 1931.

A parish is not complete without a school, and very early in the history of the parish the Polish people built a parochial school, whose first teachers were of the Franciscan order and came in the year 1888. Prior to the coming of the sisters, a Jesuit brother taught the children. Two others orders of sisters taught at Mt. Carmel, the Felicians and the Resurrectionists, the latter leaving in 1927. Since

that time, the school has been abandoned and the building turned into a recreational hall and meeting place for parish affairs. The parish still cherishes the hope that with better times the school will be reopened. The old sisters' convent having burned down, Father Wiese built a new building, which, at present, is occupied by the pastor.

Under Father Albel, this building was modernized and equipped with a hot and cold water system and an electric water pump has been installed. This same year (1931) the interior of Mt. Carmel church was redecorated by skilled painters, the main contributors being Mrs. Zoholl [sic] and the parish choir.

With the growth of the country, other parishes were forced to care for the growth of the population. The parishes of Ashton, Rockville, Elba, and Loup City were erected after Mt. Carmel and were taken from this parish; the parishes of Ashton and Loup City are now much larger than Mt. Carmel.

In spite of the fact that Mt. Carmel is small as compared with surrounding parishes, all of them in towns, it still possesses an individuality all its own. Built in the country and surrounded by farms, it pursues its way peacefully, proud of its long life and tradition, with no envy of the other growing parishes in the towns. Its parishioners are very loyal and they keep the parish vibrant with life and energy. Its people are peaceful, steady, devoted to Holy Mother, the Church, and obedient in all ways. It is content to live and allow other neighboring parishes to live and thrive, because it possesses a soul all its own. It is neither afraid nor worried at its own long life and looks ahead to a continued existence, well able to care for itself. And as its twin spires remain beacon lights of faith to the people, so, too, the people look trustfully to Mt. Carmel, there to be baptized, to be shriven, to receive Holy Communion, to be married, and to lie buried in the hallowed cemetery on the hill, Mt. Carmel.

In July, 1932, Father I. Jarka, pastor of St. Joseph's church at Elba for 12 years, was sent to Choynice to succeed Father Albel as pastor. He had hoped to restore and

reopen the parochial school, but failures of crops in the past four years have made this impossible up to now.

The Phonograph June 17, 1942:

Rev. Anthony Figlerski of Mt. Carmel church in Paplin was in this city Monday looking for a man who would be available to repair a church steeple. He said that the devastating [sic] hail storm of Thursday evening had ruined the steeple on the church and had blown one of the stained glass windows of the church in with a total loss. He was afraid that this could not be replaced at the present time because of the war. He said that the farmers of his parish had suffered a terrible loss from hail, all their crops being ruined and may [sic] small buildings blown down by the seventy mile wind which accompanied the hail storm.

Howard County Herald August 25, 1948:

REVIEW OF 1896 FLOOD

A/ W. Christensen Narrates His Experience of the Destructive Waters of Over 50 Years Ago

[Flood of June 5, 1896]

The water rushed down the Turkey Creek valley, Munson Creek past our place, Oak Creek through Ashton, and down Davis Creek into the North Loup River near Greeley County line. The downpour of rain was so excessively heavy and the rise of Turkey Creek so rapid it flooded the valley at Paplin and the water, assisted by the high wind, twisted the church at Paplin upon the foundation to an angle of 25 or 30 degrees. An interesting sidelight to the damage to this church is the fact that a few weeks later and before the arrival of the contractor, who was to restore the building to its foundation, another big storm came from the East and pushed the building back upon the foundation. Strange as it seems, this incident is absolutely true and it is recorded in Ripley's Believe It or Not.

Grand Island Daily Independent November 5, 1954

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church About All That Remains of Once Flourishing Village

By Jack Bailey

PAPLIN—Sitting on a hill five miles northeast of Ashton is the church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. It is located on the site where the town of Paplin once stood. All that remains are the church, the parish house, and a rural school house across the road.

At one time the town of Paplin boasted a postoffice, grocery store, blacksmith shop, several homes, and other business buildings.

The town was laid out in the early days by the pioneers when they thought the railroad would go by the town which they had plotted. They failed to take into consideration the thoughts in the minds of some of the pioneers.

When the railroad went to purchase land, the pioneers thought the land was worth much more than the railroad was going to pay. As a result, the railroad moved south and left Paplin high and dry on the top of a hill. That is where the church stands today.

The church, one of the oldest buildings in central Nebraska, was built 73 years ago. It was the only church at that time west of Grand Island in central Nebraska.

The priest at Paplin went out by horse and buggy and visited the towns of what are now Ashton, Loup City, Arcadia, Ord, and Sargent. They were not towns then, just small communities, and the priest at Paplin served their spiritual needs.

As early as 1880 [sic], a parochial school was opened in the little town of Paplin and the sisters who taught these children lived and boarded the children in their home, also located on the church grounds. The school continued to run until 1923 when it was decided it was too much of a hardship for the children to come and attend school. The church at that time covered a radius of 12 miles.

The original parish house still stands. The church is in good repair and is being used the same as it was a year after it was built in 1875 [sic]. Just the past summer two steeples which rose 65 feet above the ground were lowered because the beams were rotting. The spires were cut down a total of eleven feet until now they only stand 54 feet above the ground, instead of 65 feet.

The Rev. Anthony Figlerski is the present pastor. He has been there for the past 17 years. Father figlerski is learning what it is to liv in a house by the side of the road. He was born and raised where he saw millions. Now he sees few more than the parishoners who attend his church.

Father Figlerski was born and raised at Amsterdam, N. Y., on the main line between New York City and Albany.

Many people have wondered why the church was kept open when the town had moved away and it was left along on top of the hill. The answer can best be found on Sundays when the church is packed with parishioners who have driven six, eight, and ten miles to attend services in their favorite church.

The answer can also be found in the collection boxes which are always filled to a point far more than would be expected for a community that size.

“The people want to keep their church. They want their parish priest. They are willing to make sacrifices to see that their church remains the parish church instead of seeing it moved to anothr town,” Father Figlerski explains.

“Throughout the years they have guarded the church very carefully to see that it did not move away. We have only 60 families in the parish, yet those 60 families throughout the years have met their quotas in the way of various contributions and have seen that there was always enough money to keep the parish supplied with funds. I doubt very much whether the parish will ever be closed. I feel confident it won’t so long as the people want it as much as they do today.”

All the lumber for the church came from Grand Island. It was hauled to Paplin by horse and wagon. It usually took two days to bring the lumber after the parishoners once reached Grand Island.

The church was also built by the parishoners with the assistance of about four skilled carpenters.

An almost unbelievable thing happened to the church about 25 [sic] years ago. A wind of tornado proportions struck across that section of the country and blew the church about a foot and a half off the foundation.

The parishoners were worried. They discussed the problem many times. Finally when they decided they were going to have to build a new foundation to support it, a wind that came from the opposite direction blew the church back on the same foundation. That was in 1905. The church remains on the same foundation today.

Ninety-five percent of the people who attend Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church at Paplin are of Polish descent. For years a priest who spoke Polish almost entirely was named pastor. Of late years priests serving the parish have been of Polish descent also but the sermons are delivered in both Polish and English because many of the members of the second and third generations speak English much better than they do Polish. In a few more years it is doubted whether the Polish language will be spoken at all from the pulpit Father Figlerski said.

The present parish house sits on the site where the original home for the sisters stood. It was completely destroyed by fire. The present home was then built for the sisters and they remained in it until 1922 when the school was closed. Since that time the priests have occupied the home as their parish house and the original parish house has remained empty.

In addition to serving the Paplin church, Father Figlerski also has the mission church at Rockville and services are held there each Sunday. If the early service is at Paplin, the late service is at Rockville, and vice versa the following Sunday. On

Christmas and New Year's the priest has a mighty busy time commuting between the two churches.

For years at Christmas there has always been a midnight mass at Paplin. People from miles around attend the services, many of them being non-Catholic.

Because it is impossible for the same priest to be in two places at once usually a visiting priest is called upon to assist and hold the midnight services at the church in Rockville.

Howard County Herald September 3, 1958:

75th Anniversary Of Paplin Church

Parishioners, former parishioners and clergymen assembled at the Mount Carmel Catholic Church Monday to fittingly celebrate the 75th anniversary of its founding and take part in its services.

Solemn Pontifical High Mass was offered by Rev. Rev. John L. Paschang, Bishop of the Grand Island diocese. He also delivered the anniversary sermon paying tribute to the founders.

Assisting at the Mass were Father Anthony Figlerski, St. Paul; Arch Priest; Deacons to the Bishop were Fr. Michael Szczesny, Ashton and Fr. Isidore Swierkowski, Loup City; Deacons of the Mass were, Fr. Stanley Gorak, Ord; and Fr. Carrol Liebig, Burwell; Fr. James Naughtin of Grand Island was Master of Ceremonies, assisted by Fr. Joseph Szynal, Sargent. The other officers of the Mass were: Fr. Robert Foster, thurifer of Ravenna; Frs. James Kremeier, Grand Island and Fr. Thomas Mulloney, O'Connor served as Acolytes. Fr. Joseph Abel, Eddyville, served as Book bearer; Fr. Robert Wiest, Grand Island served as Bugle bearer.

Beside the above clergy mentioned, the following were present at the Pontifical Mass: Fr. Joseph Hinzmann, Farwell; Very Rev. James Fullam, Spalding; Very Rev. Henry Bednarczyk, of Loup City; Rev. Leonard Ziolkowski, Elyria; Rev. Raymond Miles, Kearney; Rev. Vincent Pelster, Greeley; Rev. Bede O. F. M., Broken Bow; Rev. David John, Prairie Center; Rev. Anthony Radziewicz, Farwell; Rev. Bernard Cabanski, Elba and the local pastor, Rev. Milan Kopushar.

The 4th degree Knights of Columbus served as honor guard.

Three Sisters, formerly of the parish were present: Sr. M. Ruperta of Sisters of [St.] Francis, of Grand Island, St. Francis Hospital. She is the oldest and the first Sister of the Parish of Mt. Carmel; also her only living sister, Sister M. Angela, also of Sr. of St. Francis of Grand Island. Sister M. Adelle of the Resurrection Sister of

Chicago, Ill., was also present. In addition, Sisters of St. Francis, Grand Island, the Sisters of St. Joseph, Loup City and The Felician Sisters of Ashton were present.

A banquet was served to about 600 persons in the Parish hall.

The remainder of the day and celebration was spent in games, amusements and refreshments on the Parish grounds. A dance in the evening, with music furnished by the Gappa Bros. orchestra, members of the Mt. Carmel Parish, an orchestra known in Central Nebraska for many years.

The church pictured was built in 1882-1883. It is among the oldest parishes in the Grand Island diocese. Pioneer settlers had Jesuit Fathers from New Posen, (Farwell) parish establish Mt. Carmel Church. Missionary work in this area went as far as Greeley, St. Libory, Loup City and surrounding places. The missionaries travelled by horse and buggy to attend to the religious needs of the residents.

The first pastor was Father Frances X. Stuer. It was through his efforts the church and rectory were erected, combined with the co-operation of the parishioners. Later a parochial school was built that served that area for 35 years. The school was abandoned because of a decrease in population and the drowth [sic—drought] years.

During a three-quarter century of existence there have been 18 priests. The longest tenure is that of Rev. Figlerski now of Sts. Peter & Paul parish here. He served faithfully for 19 years, 7 months and 18 days. He was especially honored at this celebration.

Rev. Milan Kopushar, present pastor was assigned to Mt. Carmel parish when Father Kremeier was transferred from that parish to Grand Island.

The Phonograph August 18, 1958:

Mt. Carmel Parish of Choynice To Observe Diamond Jubilee On Monday,
September 1

The 75th anniversary of the founding of Mt. Carmel Church of Choynice, will be formally observed Monday, Sept. 1 at the church site five miles northeast of Ashton.

Church people planning the jubilee expect a large turnout, because of the Labor Day Holiday. Clergy, former and neighboring parishioners and other friends of the church, as well as members are invited to the celebration. Roads to the church from the south and west are newly graveled.

The celebration will begin at 10 a.m. with a Solemn Pontifical High Mass, offered by Bishop John L. Paschang. Bishop Paschang will deliver the sermon during the Mass. After the Mass a banquet will be held in the parish hall with several speeches by clergy. A short program will conclude the banquet. A dance will be held in the evening.

A week long mission was held last April, conducted by Rev. John Koziol, in preparation for the jubilee.

The Mt. Carmel church was built in 1882-1883. It has the distinction of being one of the oldest churches in the Grand Island Diocese.

The Jesuit Fathers from New Posen-Farwell established the parish. From their center they did all the missionary work in the area, traveling by horse and buggy as far as Greeley, St. Libory and Loup City.

First pastor was Father Frances X. Stuer. He built the church with the parishioners help, erected the rectory and later on built the school. For about 35 years the parish enjoyed a Sisters school, which was closed with population decreases. Eighteen priests have served the parish.

West Nebraska Register October 4, 1974:

Choynice Parish Closes; Becomes Prayer Center

The 92-year-old parish of Mount Carmel, Choynice, will close next week and the parish complex will become a prayer and retreat center.

Bishop John Sullivan made the announcement last Sunday to the rural congregation at the parish Mass.

Earlier, Bishop Sullivan had met with parish leaders and pastors of the surrounding area. He told them of the reasons for the action, and asked their understanding and support for what he called a "very tough decision."

Speaking on Sunday, Bishop Sullivan reiterated the factors compelling the closing of the historic church in the settlement called Paplin.

"We are faced with a severe shortage of priests," the Bishop emphasized. "In a few short years, we have lost eleven priests through death or retirement, with no ordinations in the last five years.

"In addition, the pastors in the area already have either missions or diocesan duties that make demands on their time."

But Bishop Sullivan also dwelt on the positive benefit the establishment of the prayer center would have.

"This can be of great spiritual benefit to this area and to the whole diocese.

He continued, "Just as your fathers made sacrifices to establish the faith here, you can make the sacrifice necessary to see that the faith is deepened through prayer and reflection."

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ryan, a couple active for several years in the prayer and retreat ministry, will be in charge of the center. The Ryans currently live in Wisconsin.

PRIESTS

The True Voice (Omaha, NE) December 15, 1905:

Father Jorka Ordained.

Rev. Irenaeus Jorka was ordained to the priesthood Wednesday morning in the chapel of the Sacred Heart Convent, Park Place. The ceremony took place at 9 o'clock. Assisting Bishop Scannell in the ceremony of ordination were Rt. Rev. Msgr. Colaneri, V. G., Rev. J. W. Stenson, Rev. Charles Mugan, Rev. P. A. Flanagan, Rev. Edward Gleason, Rev. Wm. Kearns, Rev. I. C. Buckley and Rev. B. F. Galvin of Spalding. Father Jorka will celebrate his first mass in Chicago, and after a short vacation will be assigned to work in this diocese. Ad multos annos!

[Note: Article misspelled last name. Correct spelling: "Jarka."]

Howard County Herald December 30, 1926:

Unrestrained Anger Costs Minister a Fine

Joseph Bogacdyk [sic], pastor of the Paplin church, was adjudged a fine of \$50 and costs by Judge McCracken Tuesday, when he pleaded guilty to a charge of assault upon Mary Badura, wife of Peter Badura, residing in that vicinity. The affair leading to this provocation, it seems, had originated some time ago and culminated when the priest refused to give absolution to the woman in question, and indicated that he would refrain in doing so until an obligation to the church regarding some payments was made by the husband of the woman.

According to what Judge McCracken had been able to learn there had been some adverse feeling growing ally [sic] for his stern methods of hand-[sic] against Father Bogaczyk principing the affairs of the parish. The Judge politely informed him that while he is enjoying the blessings of his adopted country, there were

however certain laws of which he must observe, and striking a woman was one of them that was covered by statutes.

Father Bogaczyk, it is said, has a petition pending for naturalization, but there have been objections lodged against the issuing of such that may prevent him from enjoying such emoluments, especially since this recent episode.

The Phonograph January 5, 1927:

PAPLIN PASTOR IN BAD WITH HIS CONGREGATION

For some months many rumors have been in circulation regarding conditions in the Paplin parish, of which Rev. Father Bogaczyk is the resident pastor, and these rumors are given some credence at the present time as a result of recent events which ended in county court last week, when the pastor appeared, and plead guilty to a charge of assault and paid a fine of fifty dollars and costs, which amounted to about thirteen dollars.

From what The Phonograph can learn about this particular instance Father Bogaczyk had some trouble with one of the ladies of the parish, Mrs. Peter Badura, about sending some of the older Badura children to the sisters school rather than send them to the public school nearby. We do not know what all transpired, but the charge is made by Mrs. Badura that Father Bogaczyk forgot himself and that he struck her. That charge must be true, because the priest plead guilty and paid a fine for so doing.

It is too bad that Father Bogaczyk could not control himself and look at things as they are in this country. The greatest contention in Paplin is caused by his refusal to allow parents to send their older children to the public school. He is radically wrong in that view of the situation and if parents desire to send their children to either the public school or the parochial school that is their own business and it ill becomes a minister of the gospel to take the law into his own hands to try and have his own way in such matters. Father Bogaczyk is a nice appearing man and

we could not believe all the stories we heard and when this last one was reported to us about ten days ago we could hardly believe it, but since it reached court and became public property we cannot but believe there is something wrong in Paplin and from appearances it looks like he has served his time there and it is time for him to be placed in other fields where he may be able to conduct his church affairs from a purely church standpoint and allow parents to send their children where they wish to secure their education

Later: Since the above was put in type The Phonograph has discussed the question of the Paplin trouble with a man who resides in that neighborhood and we learn there are two sides to all questions. This man does not uphold the pastor in his fuss with the lady who did not know her place, but he believes a priest is only a human being and he claims that some people go to [sic] far in this world and no one, priest or layman, should be asked to put [up] with what some people resort to. This man believes that had Father Bogaczyk fought the case in court rather than pay a fine and settle it, he would have won easily. As to that, of course, no one knows, as it is a mere matter of opinion.

The contention about the public school and the Catholic school at Paplin should not amount to anything, according to this man that called at The Phonograph office. Every resident of the school district is a Catholic and is of Polish descent. The Catholic school is ran under the direction of the county superintendent, just the same as the public school. The two sisters in charge of the Catholic school must have the same qualifications that the teachers in the public school have. Last year the total cost of running the public school was a trifle over one thousand dollars. They had nine months school, totaling about 177 days. No pupil in the public school attended 100 days. Some of those that did attend the public school went only about 32 days. He says those children who go to the public school there do not attend very regularly. That the pupils at the Catholic school are required to be present regularly and that for this reason some of them remain away and go to the public school. It would save the taxpayers in the district about one thousand dollars if all the children in the district attended the Catholic school,

where they would receive practically the same education, as the Polish language is not taught there at all. This gentleman believes the same results would be obtained in either school.

We are glad to hear this other side of the case. We did not think that Father Bogaczyk was the kind of a man that recent events would lead one to think. Pastors and some members of the congregation have had trouble for ages in many places and they will continue to have their differences. It is only human for us to make mistakes. We hope the differences in Paplin can be patched up and that the members of the parish and the pastor be able to get along in harmony. Only in harmonious co-operation can they hope to grow and prosper.

Howard County Herald July 15, 1959:

Silver Jubilee Observed

Rev. Milan Kopushar celebrated his 25th Jubilee Mass at Mount Carmel Catholic Church, at Choynice (Paplin) Sunday with Rt. Rev. John L. Paschang, the Bishop of Grand Island, clergy from the surrounding area and the parishioners from Choynice and Rockville, where he serves as pastor, joining to make this an eventful occasion. The Mass was celebrated at four o'clock in the afternoon, followed by a picnic-style supper and a program.

Rev. Kopushar has had an eventful quarter of a century in religious pursuit. Born in Lu Ljubljana Slovenija, Yugoslavia he was ordained into the priesthood on July 8, 1934. He remained for ten years in the parish house of his home-town, which is near Treste. He left that country during the Communistic Revolution and came to the United States.

He was assigned to the Loup City Church and remained for four years. He was then transferred to Alliance where he was stationed at St. Joseph's Hospital, remaining for three years. He was then sent to his present pastorate.