

History of St. Louis Church in Glenrock 1920-1979

In 1920 the original mission church of St. Louis was built in Glenrock, a booming little oil town with a good number of Catholic families. The mission's earliest trustees included Frank Popp, Simon McMahan, and the Cavanaugh's, John, Maxine and Joe (Bus). In those days the pioneer Catholics in Glenrock, besides the families of the trustees, were the Hawkes, Lee, McCarthy, DeClue, Bartshe, Philbrick, Duncan families, as well as Anna Lee, Mrs. Charles Irwin, Mrs. Art Jeffries, Mrs. Tipton, Mrs. Myron Spencer, Mrs. J.O. Pierce, Julia Bruns, Paddy Burke, Ernest and Louis Jones, Annie Nelms, and Lila Todd. These Catholic pioneers sat on the first wood benches and their hearts helped the coal stove warm the church and each other. They donated work and time to the mission church and held uncounted card parties and bake sales to support the church. Simon and Anna McMahan were the only known donors of a stained glass window in the church.

The Franciscan Order of Friars Minor Conventual (O.F.M.Conv., later O.M.C.) were established at St. James in Douglas after 1909 with about six priests caring for the vast mission field in eastern Wyoming which included as many as twelve mission churches. Thus the Franciscans were only able to visit many churches once or twice a month. The first recorded priest to visit Glenrock was Father Adolph Bernhloz, O.F.M.Conv., who commuted from Douglas to hold Mass in the old hotel.

In 1956, eight lots were purchased west of the church for future building expansion.

Bishop Hubert M. Newell canonically established St. Louis as a diocesan parish on September 5/8, 1959, with Rev. Joseph Moroney as its first pastor. During Fr. Moroney's tenure as pastor, the living quarters, which was an apartment in back of the church, were re-furnished and

repainted. The parish hall was enlarged and a kitchen added to better serve the needs of the parish. Fr. Moroney immediately sought to find better living quarters and finally on March 14, 1962, a parish house on property adjacent to the church was purchased for the sum of ^{^^^}\$11,000.00 from Mr. P.C. Norman. This house, which was long needed, was a great addition to the parish plant. Fr. Moroney, well loved by members of the community, served as pastor for three years and was transferred in September, 1962, to become pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Lovell.

Fr Moroney's successor in Glenrock was Rev. Thomas O'Flannigan, a native of Wyoming. During the tenure of Fr. O'Flannigan, the debt of \$18,000.00 on the parish house was paid making the parish free of debt. Fr. O'Flannigan served two years as pastor of St. Louis parish and was transferred in September of 1964 to Our Lady of Peace parish in Pinedale. His successor in Glenrock was F.J. Kimmett who had been pastor of St. Mary's Cathedral in Cheyenne.

During Msgr. Kimmett's tenure the sacristy was enlarged and rooms to teach religion classes were remodeled out of the apartment in back of the church. The church received a complete paint and cleaning job also at this time. Msgr. Kimmett served as pastor for 1 1/2 years and was transferred in July, 1966, to St. Edmund's parish in Ranchester, Wyoming. During the remainder of the summer months the parish was in charge of Rev. John Cody.

The 1960s saw much growth in membership. Construction projects to better serve the pastor and parish were carried out. The church enjoyed a general re-furbishing with the building of a new altar facing the congregation.

Rev. Paul Hellrung became pastor of St. Louis in October, 1966. Prior to coming to Glenrock Fr. Hellrung served twenty-seven years as pastor of

St. Rose in Torrington. Fr. Hellrung served only one year as pastor in Glenrock; he died in October, 1967.

Due to the shortage of priests after the death of Fr. Hellrung, Glenrock had no resident priest. Rev. Michael McBrien, pastor of St. James parish, Douglas, took care of the spiritual needs of the parish. Mass was held each Saturday evening for the next year.

In August of 1968, the Rev. James Doudican was appointed pastor. During Fr. Doudican's tenure, the rectory was remodeled and repainted. Fr. Doudican served as pastor for little over a year and made many friends in the community. October 17, 1969, Fr. Doudican was transferred to St. Joseph's in Lovell, Wyoming. Replacing Fr. Doudican was Rev. Thomas O'Flannigan who returned to Glenrock after an absence of five years.

Active organizations within the parish were Altar and Rosary Society, C.Y.O, Cana Club and the Knights of Columbus.

The seventies looked very bright for the parish with renewed oil and uranium activity in the area.

In the 1970s parish community growth was substantial. Financial struggles continued, but necessary repairs such as paneling and carpeting were done in the church. Additional exterior and interior repairs were made late in the 1970s.

Due to lack of growth in the parish, a number of parishioners requested a parish council and Father Terence McGovern helped them realize this goal in 1977. The first elected council included Hugh MacKay Duncan, Cliff Hunt, Claude Christian, Maxine Cavanaugh, Joe Popp, Shelly Bingham, Paul Sherwood and Frank Popp.

Another major contribution was the hiring of a parish secretary in 1979, who performed normal parish office activities, as well as assisting Father Tom Ogg with his vocational ministry.

The building of the new parish center was the focus of attention in the church for the last four years and the addition of a pastoral assistant, Sister Julianne Koch, has provided new inspiration for growth. It was hoped that a parish center would prove a major factor in the continued growth of the parish community.

CHURCH OF SAINT LOUIS
Glenrock, Wyoming.
1950-1960

Saint Louis Church, Glenrock, a mission of the Conventual Franciscan Fathers of St. James Parish, Douglas, for nearly half a century was returned to the Diocese on September the eighth, nineteen hundred and fifty-nine, at which time, it was canonically established as a parish with Father Joseph E. Moroney as its first pastor.

The history of Saint Louis Mission, Glenrock, during the past decade is very brief. The priests in charge of the Glenrock congregation were:
from

1950 to 1955, Fr. Boniface Bianco, O.F.M.Conv.

1955 to 1956, Fr. Aloysius Jacoby, O.F.M.Conv.

1956 (for a short time) Fr. William Bader, O.F.M.Conv.

1956 to 1957, Fr. Denis Herbst, O.F.M.Conv.

1957 to 1959, Fr. Thomas Aeschbacher, O.F.M.Conv.

During the month of February, 1955, new pews were purchased for the church. In 1956 the church acquired eight lots west of the church and hall for future building needs. In November of 1959 the work of enlarging the facilities of the hall was begun. The wall between the small schoolroom and the garage was removed. Limited kitchen facilities and a rest room were installed. The work of remodeling the hall was completed on December 19, 1959.

Respectfully submitted,
Fr. Joseph E. Moroney
[signature]

Glenrock 1959-1970

The Mission Church of St. Louis was erected a parish by most Rev. Hubert M. Newell, D.D., on September 5, 1959, with the Rev. Joseph Moroney as the first pastor. During Fr. Moroney's tenure as pastor, the living quarters which was an apartment in back of the church, was refurnished and repainted. The parish hall was enlarged and a kitchen added to better serve the needs of the parish. Fr. Moroney immediately sought to find better living quarters and finally on March 14, 1962 a parish house was purchased for the sum of \$11,000.00 from Mr. P.C. Norman on property adjacent to the church. This house was long needed and is a great addition to the parish plant.

Fr. Moroney served as pastor for three years and was well loved by members of the community. Fr. Moroney was transferred in September of 1962 to become pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Lovell, Wyo.

His successor in Glenrock was Rev. Thomas O'Flannigan, a native of Wyoming. During the tenure of Fr. O'Flannigan, the debt of \$8,000.00 on the parish house was paid and the parish was free of debt. Fr. O'Flannigan served two years as pastor of St. Louis parish and was transferred in September of 1964 to Our Lady of Peace parish in Pinedale.

His successor in Glenrock was Rev. F.J. Kimmett who was pastor of St. Mary's Cathedral in Cheyenne.

During Msgr. Kimmett's tenure the sacristy was enlarged and rooms to teach religion classes were made over from the apartment in back of the church. The Church received a complete paint and cleaning job, also at this time. Msgr. Kimmett served as pastor for 11/2 years and was transferred in July of 1966 to St. Edmund's parish in Ranchester, Wyo.

During the remainder of the summer months the parish was in charge of Rev. John Cody.

Rev. Paul Hellrung became pastor of St. Louis parish in October of 1966. Prior to coming to Glenrock, Fr. Hellrung served twenty-seven years as pastor of St. Rose parish, in Torrington, Wyo. Fr. Hellrung served only one year as pastor in Glenrock. Fr. Hellrung died in October of 1967. Funeral Mass was said for Father in St. Louis Church and also the parish Church in Torrington.

Due to the shortage of priests after the death of Fr. Hellrung, Glenrock had no resident priest. The spiritual needs of the parish were taken care of by Rev. Michael McBrien, pastor of St. James parish in Douglas. Mass was held each Saturday evening for the next year.

In August of 1968, the Rev. James Doudican was appointed pastor. During Fr. Doudican's tenure, the rectory was remodeled and repainted. Fr. Doudican served as pastor a little over a year and made many friends in the community. In October 1969 on the seventeenth, Fr. Doudican was transferred to St. Joseph's parish in Lovell, Wyo. Replacing Fr. Doudican was Rev. Thomas O'Flannigan who transferred back to Glenrock after an absence of five years.

Future plans call for renovation of the church and hall. The next ten years look very bright for the parish with renewed oil and uranium activity in the area.

St. Louis
The parish history for St. Louis Catholic Church of Glenrock
for the years 1970–1980 inclusive follows:

St. Louis Parish began the decade with Rev. Thomas O’Flannigan as pastor. In the spring of 1970, interior work on the church included paneling the sanctuary, painting and carpeting the aisle and sanctuary.

Rev. Gerald Sullivan became pastor in the summer of 1971. The need for a new parish hall was becoming apparent by the spring of 1972. In January 1973, a building committee was formed to discuss possibilities. New storm windows were installed on the church and rectory. In early 1974, tentative plans for a church and hall were being discussed.

In August of 1974, Rev. Sullivan was transferred and Rev. Terrence McGovern was appointed as our new pastor, serving until August of 1978. During Rev. McGovern’s tenure, the parish council was established in January of 1977, wiring in the church and hall were replaced, the foundation repaired, the roof resingled, and brickwork repaired. Due to the town street–paving program, we had paved streets in the fall of 1977. In 1978, cracks in the church ceiling were repaired, the interior painted, the sacristy and classroom area carpeted. Plans were being formulated for a parish census.

Rev. Vincent Bauer was appointed to St. Louis in August of 1978, at which time Rev. McGovern retired and returned to Ireland. In the fall of 1978, the parish census was taken. In early 1979, the parish council was actively seeking information on a building program. An encroachment problem developed in the summer of 1979, which would affect building.

Rev. Bauer was transferred to St. Francis in Thermopolis in August of 1979. Rev. Thomas Ogg was appointed to serve at St. Louis, in addition to being the diocesan vocation director. The rectory interior was painted and some new carpet installed. For the first time, the parish employed a

secretary. The parish council was reactivated and negotiations began on the land encroachment problem.

The community is continuing to grow and facing impact problems. The parish faces an increasingly pressing need for a new church, hall and classroom facilities due primarily to the numbers of new parishioners but also because of greater activity of the parish organizations and CCD program. The parishioners are becoming eager to initiate definite action on a building program.

Glenrock 1980-1992
Saint Louis Parish
Rev. Michael P. Hellman

1. Names of clergy & religious serving during the decade and dates of service:

Aug. 1979 – Oct. 1986 – Rev. Thomas G. Ogg.

Aug. 1981 – June 1987 – Sr. Julianne Koch, O.S.F.

Nov. 1986 – Feb. 1987 – Rev. William Caspers.

March 1987 – May 1989 – Rev. Robert G. Lynch, S.J., Administrator.

May 1989 – to present – Rev. Michael P. Hellman.

2. Notable accomplishments by lay leaders and parishioners (give dates)

1982–1983 – Conducted major building fund campaign and building program for the Parish Center. Through the pledge campaign and sponsoring the ‘200’ Club fundraiser, the original building debt of \$365,000 was reduced to \$35,000 by the end of 1989.

Many volunteer hours were given to the building project, renovating the rectory interior and the church interior.

Much time and effort was also given by volunteers serving as CCD instructors and coordinating education programs.

The number of those serving as liturgical ministers increased.

3. Notable accomplishments by the clergy and religious during the decade: (give dates)

Continued reorganization and strengthening of Parish Council.

Promoted greater Youth Group activity.

Sr. Julianne introduced the R.C.I.A. process and built up the parish Education Programs as well as working with Liturgy Planning and Music.

Fr. Ogg provided continued guidance and support during major building program. Also strongly promoted the building of the parish community.

Due to the dual roles of serving as pastor and diocesan vocation director of both Fr. Ogg and Fr. Hellman, parishioners were encouraged to take more ownership for parish needs. Eucharistic Ministers conduct Communion services when needed.

4. Construction – new or remodeling: (give dates)

Parish Center – Began in 1982 and completed in March 1983.

Rectory – fall of 1989. Interior painting, new carpet, curtains, some furnishings, kitchen cabinetry, and repairs.

Church – 1989 – Painting of Nave and Vestibule, lighting fixtures and ceiling fans.

5. Land acquisitions: (give dates) None.

6. Lay Trustees and term of service for each:

January 1981 – Frank Popp.

March 1976 – July 1994 – Paul Sherwood.

January 1981 – July 1994 – Maxine Cavanaugh.

7. Pastor's overview of the decade:

I came at the end of the decade, but through observation have come to realize and experience that the people are very supportive of the community especially seen with the support of the building program.

The people have willingly responded to special requests for assistance with special projects.

8. Significant Parish events and programs: (give dates)

In continuing to build community, the people come together at the following social events to share time with each other:

February – Mardi Gras party.

Palm Sunday – Living Stations of the Cross followed by dessert sharing.

Holy Thursday – Potluck dinner.

August – Parish picnic and outdoor Mass to celebrate Feast of St. Louis.
Fall – Work together on ‘200’ Club with drawing party in November.
November – Glenrock Community Thanksgiving Dinner.
December – Parish Christmas Dinner.

During Advent and Lent – Special penance services are scheduled.

Receptions are given in honor of those being confirmed, making their First Communion and on Holy Saturday for those completing the R.C.I.A. process and entering the church.

A Liturgy Commission was formed in the late 1980’s, which is attentive to a broader aspect of our liturgy through environment, preparation and planning.

Workshop was given by Fr. Gary Ruzicka as education for liturgical ministers.

A Mass of the Anointing for the elderly is done annually.

Glenrock 1980-1992 Additional Notes

Decade began with Fr. Thomas Ogg as Pastor and also serving as the diocesan Vocation Director. This was a boom time with population increasing and the parish experiencing inadequate space for CCD and parish gatherings. The parish office was located on the lower level of the rectory.

In 1982, Sr. Julianne Koch, OSF, was hired to serve primarily with Education Programs and Liturgy for the parish as a pastoral associate. She also served as Associate Vocation Director. Sr. Julie introduced the RCIA process for those interested in the church.

In the Spring of 1982 and Building Fund Pledge Campaign was conducted. Construction began in September after removing the apartment and sacristy on the rear of the church and also removing the old hall which had been built of cinderblock. The Parish Center Building was completed in March 1983. Included in this facility on the lower level was a parish hall, kitchen, pantry, table storage, sacristy, bathrooms and janitor's closet. On the upper level were three offices, five classrooms, a meeting room, furnace room with showers, bathrooms and janitor's closet. The lower parking was paved a short time later. Cost for the building, furnishings and pavement was \$542,000. Our debt in interparish loans was \$365,000.

1984 - Began the first '200' Club which netted \$10,000 annually and was applied to debt reduction.

Population peaked in 1985 with the number of parish families listed at 210. Population decrease began and steadily continued until the decade ended with about 140 families.

Fr. Ogg was transferred in October of 1986, Fr. William Caspers came in November and was transferred in February of 1987. Fr. Robert Lynch, SJ, became the parish administrator in March 1987.

In 1987, new lights and ceiling fans were installed in the church.

In 1988-89, the walls of the vestibule and nave were repaired and painted. The confessional was relocated to the area by the rear door.

May of 1989, Fr. Michael Hellman was assigned to St. Louis as pastor and also served as Diocesan Vocation Director.

Fall of 1989, the rectory interior was renovated with repair, painting, new carpet, refinishing of hardwood floor in living room, kitchen cabinet, kitchen table set, daybed for guest room, some kitchen utensils, dishes, etc.

1990 - Purchase of New Organ for Church

Church - Sanctuary renovation - paneling removed, walls repaired and painted, two stained glass windows were exposed, new car-pet and tile. Old confessional was remodeled and tabernacle placed there. New confessional was remodeled.

Fall 1991 - Church Furnishings built by Dale Overstreet and Irvin Hottell New Oak Altar, Ambo, Presider's Chair, Statue and Tabernacle supports, music storage tables and gift table, bulletin table, table for confessional. Stained glass windows in Sanctuary were framed in oak and an arched shadowbox piece for behind the altar.

1991-1992 Experiencing serious need for a religious women to work with educational programs and in-service for volunteer instructors.

**Saint Louis Parish
Glenrock
1990-2000
Thelma Mollman
May 2000**

1. Names of clergy and religious serving during the decade and dates of service.

May 1989-January 1994 Rev. Michael Hellman serving as Parish Pastor and Diocesan Vocation Director.

August 1993-May 1994 Sr. Sue Torgersen - Pastoral Associate and Vocation Office Associate

February 1994-June 1994 No resident priest, parish taken care of by Msgr. James O'Neill of St. Anthony's in Casper.

June 1994-July 1996 Rev. George Reynolds, Parish Administrator

July 1996-June 1997 Deacon John Aloisio

September 1997-Present Rev. Ralph H. Talkin, S.J.

2. Notable accomplishments by lay leaders and parishioners.

A new church organ was purchased through the donations of a generous parishioner.

Parishioner cooperation and continued ministries within the parish during periods of not having a resident priest or administrator was commendable particularly during spring of 1994 and also during the necessary absences of the Vocation Director.

A part-time salaried CCD Coordinator and dedicated catechists has resulted in a good catechetical program for the children.

Work done on the church interior, furniture built and a significant amount of the work at the rectory was accomplished by parishioners using their abilities and talents and giving of their time.

The Pastoral Council has continued to sponsor the annual major fund raiser, the '200' Club, which generally nets about \$10,000 each year.

3. Notable accomplishments by the clergy and religious. (Give dates)
Established initial classes for high school education during 1989-1990 term.

Emphasis given to church environment during the different liturgical seasons by Father Michael Hellman - 1990-1994.

Initiated hiring of a part time CCD coordinator - 1996.

Established monthly parish potlucks which builds community- 1998-1999.

Increased mass attendance and parish participation - 1997-1999.

4. Construction - new or remodeling. (Give dates)

1990 - Upgrading maintenance in the church included removal of paneling on sanctuary walls reintroducing two stained glass windows there, drywalling and painting, installation of new carpet and tile.

1991-Repair of 3 ventilation windows (stained glass), lexan covering for protection of two large stained glass sanctuary windows and 3 smaller ones. Confessional was redone. The sanctuary windows were framed in oak, new sanctuary furnishings done in oak by two parishioners included a new altar, presider's bench, altar server bench, ambo, support shelves for the tabernacle and statutes, gift table, bulletin table.

1992 - Outside window frames were painted on the church and gutters replaced.

1993 - Fire and smoke alarms were purchased and installed in the Parish Center.

1994 - The rectory exterior was painted and a chainlink fence installed in part of the back yard.

Purchased a used computer system for the office.

1995 - Rectory renovation project included new garage door with opener, skylight over stairwell, bay window, shutters, bathroom upgrade, deck with skylight and adding a storage shed.

1996 - Church pews refinished. Lawn sprinkler system installed. New

roof on church.

1997-1998 - Church stained glass repair project done.

1998 - Replaced rectory refrigerator. Purchased Ricoh copier for the office. Trees at the church were professionally trimmed.

1999 - A storage area was built in the north end of the double classroom upstairs in the Parish Center building. Wooden latticework on the rectory deck was replaced with white plastic lattice. Purchased an updated computer system from Gateway. New front doors for the church were purchased.

5. Land acquisitions. (Give dates) None. Consideration was given to purchasing property immediately west of the parish center building but decided against it.

6. Lay Trustees and term of service for each.

Maxine Cavanaugh 1981-2000

Paul Sherwood 1976-2000

7. Pastor's overview of the decade

8. Significant parish events and programs. (Give dates)

Final payment made of the building loan principal on our Parish Center Building-January 1992

Parish celebration and Mass of Thanksgiving after paying final debt.

February 1993, St. Louis Parish hosted the first diocesan Search in our Parish Center Building and continued to host this event in February until 1997.

August 1993 - 28 of our youth attended World Youth Day in Denver.

Parish 75th Anniversary - 1995

1997 - Miscellaneous - Sold 1986 15-Passenger Dodge van.

The parish population at the beginning of the decade was about 140 households including active and inactive with about 340 people and at the end of the decade had decreased to 118 households with 265 people.