

Greybull, Sacred Heart Bishop McGovern

[95] Sacred Heart parish, Greybull, is young as a parish center. In 1915 the Catholic church had made but little progress in Big Horn county. The one Catholic church was located at Basin, where it had been erected in 1910 through the efforts of Rev. N.J. Endres, who was in charge of the territory at the time.

Greybull was the next community in Big Horn county to make plans for the erection of a church. In 1915 it was a very small town which owed its existence to the fact that it was a railroad division point. Until 1918 there were few Catholic families and their spiritual needs were cared for by Fr. Endres, who visited Greybull about once a month on week days and celebrated Mass in private homes.

The discovery of oil in 1918 changed the little town of Greybull into a thriving, active business center. The building of a refinery brought in many workers and the increased population included a number of Catholics.

The increase in church membership added further impetus to the demand for a house of worship and in 1919 plans were drawn for its erection.

One lot was purchased from the Lincoln Land Co., which donated a second lot. In October the contract [96] for building the church was let at a cost of \$1,600.00. The Catholic Church Extension Society donated \$800.00 and the remainder of the sum was raised by the parishioners and their friends. The Extension Society was granted the privilege of naming the church. It was called the church of the Sacred Heart. The building was finished and the first Mass offered in it December 26, 1919.

Neither the church building nor the location was attractive. The building was poorly constructed, as is usual during boom days, and the value of property was so inflated that it was impossible to secure a suitable

location at a reasonable price. However, the church building was considered as temporary and it was planned to erect a better one later on, providing the growth of the town made it advisable.

Unfortunately that was not destined to be soon. The production of oil ceased in a couple of years and during 1921-22 the population of Greybull dwindled steadily, and the little town slipped quietly back into its cocoon.

From the date of its erection until 1926 Mass was said once a month in the Sacred Heart church, with Fr. Endres in charge.

Prior to the year 1918 there was little need for a Catholic church in Lovell, as that was a solid Mormon community. In 1918 a sugar factory was built there [97] and among the workers brought in was a number of Catholics. Fr. Endres visited the place several times a year and said Mass wherever he could. In 1919 the number of Catholics increased and work was started at the end of the year on a substantial brick church building. The Extension Society donated the sum of \$1,000.00 toward the building and was granted the privilege of naming the church St. Joseph's. The building of the church was begun during Fr. Endres' regime. He had charge of all the territory within the Big Horn basin until the beginning of 1920, when the territory was divided. A new parish was formed at Powell, and Lovell was added to it as a mission. Basin and Greybull remained under Fr. Endres' jurisdiction. Rev. Bernard Schneiders was appointed pastor at Powell and he had the church at Lovell completed. The congregation at Lovell had Mass once a month. In 1922 Fr. Schneiders was transferred, and was succeeded by Rev. John Spillane, who observed the same schedule at Lovell. Some debt still remained on the church when Fr. Spillane took charge, but it was paid off within a couple of years.

October 1, 1926, a new parish was formed with headquarters at Greybull. Rev. John Marley was appointed the first pastor. The newly

organized parish included all of Big Horn county with Lovell and Basin as missions. Since the establishment of the [98] parish services have been held at Basin and Greybull on three Sundays of the month and at Lovell on the fourth Sunday.

In March, 1928, arrangements were completed for the purchase of a pastor's residence in Greybull. He had been living in a three-room apartment prior to this. The residence was to cost \$3,750.00 and the purchase of furniture would raise the total to an approximate \$5,000.00. A benefactor donated \$1,000.00 toward the purchase of the rectory and \$2,500.00 was borrowed from The Diocese of Cheyenne. From the date of the establishment of the parish until October, 1928, the Extension Society gave a subsidy of \$30.00 a month to the parish.

From 1929 to 1933 Greybull and missions were attended by the pastor of Thermopolis with Mass once a month.

In 1933 Rev. Martin Kennedy was appointed resident pastor at Greybull with Basin and Lovell as missions. He served until his death on Good Friday, 1936 (April 10th). Mass was said in the missions every other Sunday. Rev. Leo B. Morgan, the present pastor, succeeded Fr. Kennedy. In 1937 an assistant, Rev. Paul Foster, was appointed. The parishioners were able to enjoy the privilege of Mass every Sunday and the increased attendance was very noticeable.

[99] A class of twenty-eight was confirmed May 11, 1938, in the church of the Sacred Heart, Greybull. In the church of St. Philip, Basin, a class of thirty-one was confirmed May 12, 1938, and in the church of St. Joseph, Lovell, thirty-five were confirmed May 12, 1938. There were forty-two baptisms and ten marriages in 1938. One mission has been given since the inauguration of the parish.

The much desired new church came in 1940. A different and more suitable location was purchased, and on this site a very attractive brick

structure, with a seating capacity of 200, has been erected at a cost of \$18,000.00, with a debt of only \$8,000.00. A generous donation of \$2,000.00 was received through the Catholic Church Extension Society, and another substantial gift through the ordinary of the diocese. Both pastor and parishioners have reason to be proud of their new house of worship, which, though in use at present, will not be formally dedicated until May 28th (1941). The old church has been remodeled to serve as a parish hall.

Greybull 1940 to 1950

During the year 1940 the new Church of Sacred Heart was built at a cost of \$18,000.00. It was dedicated on May 28th, 1941, by the Most Rev. P.A. McGovern. The debt on the new Church when completed was \$8,000.00 and on June 4th, 1944, the last of the indebtedness was paid. In July the Pastor Rev. Leo B. Morgan was transferred to St. Joseph's Orphanage as Superintendent.

The present pastor, Rev. James McBride, took charge of the parish in October 1944.

The Most Rev. P.A. McGovern, D.D., bishop of Cheyenne, administered confirmation in Greybull in 1942 to a class of 48, and again in 1947 to a class of 38.

A lot was purchased in 1946 next to the rectory and in 1950 four more lots were purchased. A \$2300.00 Hammond electric organ was installed in the church in 1949.

In 1948 the Standard Oil Refinery closed, and a large number of Catholic families moved from the parish.

From 1940 to 1950 the following assistants were assigned to the Parish:

Rev. Paul Foster to October 1942

Rev. John Meyer, October 1942 to January 1944

Rev. Michael McBrien, January 1944 to June 1947

Rev. George A. Stoll, June 1947 to February 1948

Rev. John Brady, 1948 to the present time

Rev. John J. Corrigan was in the parish for three months in 1944

Rev. James J. Ruddy was in the parish for five months in 1946

There was a new maple floor placed in the church in Lovell in the year 1944, and the following year new pews were obtained for the church. In

January 1945 the parish purchased a residence next to the church for \$7100.00. This residence was purchased through a substantial donation from the ordinary of the Diocese and the indebtedness against the parish was cleared in 1950.

In 1945 an additional lot was purchased next to the church in Basin and in the year 1948 substantial repairs were made on the inside of the church there.

{signed} James McBride

Sacred Heart Church, Greybull, Wyoming 1950-1960

In June 1944, the Rev. Leo B. Morgan, who was Pastor from April 1936, was transferred to be Superintendent of St. Joseph's Orphanage at Torrington, Wyoming. When Fr. Morgan was transferred the Parish was completely free of debt.

After Fr. Morgan's departure the Parish was taken care of by Rev. Michael McBrien with the assistance of Rev. John Corrigan. In October 1944 Rev. James McBride was appointed Pastor and had as assistant Rev. Michael McBrien.

In December 1944 the Pastor acquired a house in Lovell next to the Church, to be used as a future Rectory, at a cost of \$7,200.00

In June Rev. Michael McBrien was transferred and Rev. George Stoll took his place and he remained in Greybull till February 1948 and he was succeeded by Rev. John Brady.

In February 1953, Lovell was made a separate Parish, with Rev. John Brady as the first Pastor.

In 1950 several lots were purchased next to the Parish house for future development of the Parish.

In 1952 the basement of the church was remodeled so as to provide a hall for the parish, and the men of the parish donated their time and labour to this worthwhile project.

In the fall of 1953 some repairs were carried out on the Parish house.

In 1951 considerable repairs were carried out on the mission Church, Basin. A new Altar and Altar rail, new windows and a new entrance, and

on the outside new siding was put on, much of this work was donated by members of the parish.

**Greybull
History of Parish
1960-1970**

1960 New double garage built at a cost of \$3,000.00

1962 Interior of Church painted

1965 Pastors investiture as a Domestic Prelate on February 21st, 1965

1965 Property next to church bought at a cost of \$7,000.00

1968 Remodeled kitchen at a cost of over \$2,000.00

1969 Painted the roofs of church and house

Basin

1960 to 1970

1960 Painted church, both interior and exterior

1962 Purchased two lots and house for \$3,000.00

1962 Mrs. Frances S. Hyde, one of the old timers died

1964 Joseph Hayob, a trustee of the church of St. Philip for many years, died

1968 House in Basin removed as it would cost too much to repair it

1970 A building committee formed to see what could be done to build a new church, also an architect hired to draw plans for same

1960-1970

Baptisms 180 and 19 of these were converts

Confirmations 145

Marriages 47, 50 Catholic and 17 Mixed

Deaths 84

1st Communions 147

Greybull 1970-1980 Sacred Heart Church

The decade of 1970 to 1980 saw quite a number of changes in clergy compared to the previous twenty years, during which the pastor was never changed. Msgr. James McBride, who had been pastor for twenty-nine years, retired in March 1973. Fr. Terence McGovern came as pastor in March of 1973 to serve for one year. In March of 1974, Fr. John Flannigan, S.J., arrived to serve as interim pastor for six months. Fr. Thomas Cleary arrived in our parish in September 1974, and served as pastor until November 1976. Fr. John Hoodak, S.J., came to serve as interim pastor until June 1977. Fr. Ronald A. Stolcis became pastor on June 6, 1977, and continues to serve as pastor through the present time.

Fr. Anthony J. Eiardi, S.J., from New York, provided the summer replacement supply for the years 1970 through 1976, and Fr. Gerard J. Boucher, C.S.S.R, was the supply priest from 1977 to 1980.

During the decade of 1980, Jack Williams and Howard Flitner served as trustees to the parish from 1970 until September 1979, at which time Bill Shelledy and Ann Mazur were elected trustees of the parish.

The trustees for the Mission of St. Philip's have been Henry A. Batenhorst and Reginald J. O'Neill from 1970 to 1980.

Other significant activities in Sacred Heart Parish are as follows:

1970: A building committee was formed to see what could be done to build a new church in Basin. An architect from Worland was hired to draw plans for the new church. The parishioners met with Bishop Newell and Fr. Penny, of the diocesan building committee on May 17, 1970, and the plans were dropped.

1971: The Greybull Council of Catholic Women organized a group of young people (age 15-18) in the community called the Sunshine Girls.

These girls visited our local Wyoming Sanatorium, located in Basin, on weekends. They helped feed the elderly patients, ran errands, wrote letters or just visited lonely patients. The GCCW made each girl a “yellow sunshine” apron, complete with the “smile motif” applied on the front. They also provided transportation to and from the Sanatorium for the Sunshine Girls.

1973: New carpeting was laid in Sacred Heart Church. Wrought iron shelves were installed in back of the altar. The back of the rectory was remodeled.

1976: New pews were installed in St. Philip’s Church, Basin, which came from the old church in Green River. The interior of St. Philip’s Church was painted; Ed Schmeltzer of Worland was the contractor.

Jim Whaley donated the new statue in front of the Sacred Heart Church. This replaced the broken statue, which was donated by his parents in 1940 just after the new church was built. On October 24, Sacred Heart Church celebrated its Golden Jubilee. Fr. Thomas Cleary was the pastor at this time. Bishop Joseph Hart was the Homilist. The church was filled to capacity for this occasion.

1977: The Greybull church was air conditioned with the installation of a refrigeration unit in September. The rectory and church trim and roofs were painted in September. In October, the parish house in which Msgr. McBride lived was re-roofed and a garage was built in the rear.

Work began on the new expansion program at St. Philip’s Church in Basin under the direction of the Batenhorst brothers. The electrical wiring work was done by Larry Martin. The BCCW had carpet laid in the Sacristy and a runner down the center aisle of St. Philip’s Church. A new set of stairs to the organ loft were installed. A crucifix; a memorial for Ray Williams was donated. A lectern; a memorial for Mr. and Mrs. Fenlon, the parents of Genie Faure was also donated.

1978: February 19, 1978, Dorothy Balo, a parishioner of Sacred Heart Church, was nominated President elect of the Thermopolis Deanery Council of Catholic Women. Genie Faure, a parishioner of St. Philip's Church, was appointed Deanery Chairman of the Organization and Service Committee of the DCCW.

On July 30, 1978, the parish held a reception to celebrate Msgr. McBride's 80th birthday from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm in the Sacred Heart parish hall. A shrine to the Sacred Heart was built in the back of the church. A window, which was a gift of the John Hart family, was donated by Marie Hart for the shrine. Also a special room was built in the back of the church for a Reconciliation Room and also a Cry Room. This was specially set up so that the penitents could go to confession in either the old form or the new. In September 1978, Msgr. McBride's house and garage were sided with steel siding. In October 1978, we are happy, excited and pleased to have our new crucifix installed in the sanctuary after many months of waiting. Our thanks go to Lenny Yenny for making the gold drape for us; and to Jerry Kurtz for the beautiful walnut cross, which he designed and built. He has donated the cross to the church in memory of his father, Jerome G. Kurtz. Of course, a million thanks to the anonymous person who donated the hand carved corpus (Body of Christ). The corpus was purchased in Ortesei, Italy, by Fr. Stolcis when he was in Europe on vacation. What a beautiful improvement to our church.

The parish office was updated with the installation of modern equipment. In November 1978, \$4,000 in improvements were made in the Sacred Heart Parish hall, which included carpeting the floor, new tables and chairs, and a new gas range. Storm windows were installed at Sacred Heart to help lower the cost of heating the church during the winter. Insulation was installed in the ceiling for the same purpose.

In December 1978, the new South Big Horn Council Knights of Columbus was initiated. A tea for the ladies was held from 2:00 to 4:00

pm at the Elks hall. There was a special Mass and knighting ceremony at 5:00 pm at St. Philip's Church, after which the Knights and their ladies attended a banquet in Harris hall. The evening concluded with a dance. A new organ was donated to St. Philip's Church by the Batenhorst Brothers in memory of their mother.

1979: April 1979, the Knights of Columbus began Thursday night Bingo. In July, the Reconciliation room was moved so that stairs could be built from the church foyer to the basement in order to conform with safety regulations that there must be two exits from the basement.

On September 2, 1979, Msgr. Daniel Carroll from Thermopolis retired and he and his sisters established residency in Greybull. September 12, Msgr. James McBride celebrated the 56th anniversary of his ordination.

In December 1979, Bishop Joseph Hart dedicated the new facilities in St. Philip's Church, Basin. This occasion culminated two years of work by the parishioners, under the direction of the Batenhorst brothers, to build up the parish plant to where it is so much more attractive and useable. A sacristy, reconciliation room, meeting hall and rest room were added.

1980: February 28, 1980, a second hand van was purchased by the parish to be used for all parish activities. On March 26, 1980, Sheridan church donated a bell to Sacred Heart Church and it is the first church in Greybull to have a bell. At present, it is mounted on a temporary bell tower, but plans for a permanent tower for the bell are being drawn up at the present time.

The Jim Goton family donated to the church 1.87 acres of land located three miles east of Shell for the purpose of building a shrine. The statue of the Sacred Heart for the shrine was donated to the church by the Jim Goton family. Work on this shrine is expected to begin soon.

On July 1, 1980, the Church purchased 17.5 acres of land across from the hospital. This is to be the future sight of a new church. Five acres of the land is to be sold to the Knights of Columbus for the future Knights of Columbus hall.

On September 17, Msgr. James McBride, retired pastor of Sacred Heart Church, died of pneumonia in the South Big Horn County Hospital. Two nephews and a niece flew in from Ireland to attend the services. On Monday, September 22, at noon a Mass of the Resurrection was concelebrated by Bishop Joseph Hart, Bishop Hubert Newell, and thirty-one priests from the diocese. The funeral was attended by such a large number of people that chairs and a sound system were set up downstairs in the Parish hall to accommodate the crowd. Msgr. McBride was a very well known and popular priest, and was loved by all. Burial was in the priest's section of Olivet Cemetery in Cheyenne.

On September 25, Phyllis Anderson, representing the Basin Council of Catholic Women presented Pat Yeager, of the South Big Horn County Hospital with a check of \$1,000 to help purchase a birthing bed for the new birthing room.

In October, the Basin Council of Catholic Women purchased a new baptismal font for St. Philip's Church in Basin.

In October, the parish house, which had been occupied by Msgr. McBride, underwent some changes. Fr. Stolcis built a second bedroom and additional storm windows were installed. The parish women undertook the project of giving the house a good fall cleaning, and the men of the parish moved Msgr. Daniel Carroll and his sisters to the parish house. In November, a stainless steel hood and fan were installed in the church kitchen over the stove in Sacred Heart Church hall.

In our consciousness as a parish, and our responsibility to serve the needs of our sister parishes in our diocese, a number of loans were made to support building projects during this ten-year period as follows:

St. Lawrence O'Toole parish in Laramie, September, 1975
Immaculate Conception Parish, Green River, December, 1975
St. Paul's Chapel, Newman Center at Laramie, January, 1978
Our Lady of Peace Church, Pinedale, September, 1979
Holy Rosary Church, Lander, September, 1979
St. Joseph's Church, Hanna, May, 1980

During this decade, the books were audited twice; once by Leo Riley Co., Casper, for the period of January 1 to December 31, 1978. This audit was in May of 1979. The books were audited again in November 1980, for the period January 1 through June 30, 1980, by Bruce Bergstrom Accounting Firm, Greybull. The humorous conclusion to this whole thing is: Msgr. McBride was known as a saver, and Fr. Stolcis is known as a spender.

Greybull Women 1970s

GREYBULL COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

GCCW is in charge of all funeral dinners. Individual members bring food with the main dish furnished by the GCCW. The dinners are serviced in the home of the deceased or the church basement. Wedding receptions are also an activity of the parish ladies. They clean the hall, decorate, furnish table cloths, punch bowl, silver service, and serve at the receptions.

A graduation breakfast for Catholic students and their parents is given each year. First Communion children are guests at a reception. These events are in conjunction with the BCCW. The GCCW has an annual St. Patrick's Card Party which is always a success. It is for the public.

Bridge, canasta, and pinochle is played with prizes of baked goods. A luncheon is served and a craft box of homemade items raffled off.

The GCCW has hosted and participated in the World Day of Prayer each year. In 1976, we participated in the Diocesan Bi-Centennial celebration held at Casper.

The GCCW is in charge of all the parish dinners that are held throughout the year. An annual candy sale is held in November of each year as a money raising project. The GCCW has donated monies from this project to the Throat Culture Program at the school. The Throat Culture Program has been provided to the children of the public schools for 8 years now.

BASIN COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

The functions of the Basin Council of Catholic Women is primarily the same as the Greybull Council of Catholic Women.

For many years, the Basin Council of Catholic Women paid the utility bills at St. Philip's Church, until 1977. The annual money raising project for the Basin Council of Catholic Women is a boutique that is held in December. It has been a very successful money raiser. The BCCW edited a cookbook that is used as a year round money raising project.