

CASPER Our Lady of Fatima Parish 1960

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For some years, the extensive residential development in the southwest part of Casper had pointed up the need for a new parish in the area. Under the direction of the Rt. Rev. Monsignor Thomas F. O'Reilly, Pastor of St. Anthony's Church in Casper, ground for the new parish was acquired from Harry Yesness. In July 1949 the cost of the ground (\$1,000 per acre) seemed exorbitant to some. Originally, 30 acres was bargained for, then the final 10 acres was all that could be obtained. Even after the purchase an offer was made by Mr. Yesness to buy back the ground from Msgr. because of the building boom then starting.

As a means of providing a church without involving a new parish in a large debt, Msgr. arranged for the purchase of a chapel from the Casper Air Base (now Natrona County Airport). Before the chapel was sold a survey was made of all the local denominations to determine which had the most need for the building. The structure was moved to the parish site, and placed on a full basement, so that meeting hall facilities might be available when the parish was established. Purchase price of the Chapel was \$17,050.00 from the General Service Administration.

In the CASPER TRIBUNE-HERALD newspaper of January 13, 1953 there is a picture and write-up, which goes: "The Chapel from the Casper Air Base is shown in an unusual maneuver as it crossed the Old Fort Casper Bridge. Workmen of the Midwest House Movers Co. had to jack up the structure and place blocks under it in order to clear the bridge side-rails. The structure is the largest ever moved in this area (without a floor; the original floor at the Base was a concrete slab), 80' long, 40' wide and 29' tall. The Chapel will be placed on a foundation on the south side of Highway #220, near CY and Westridge Drive, and to be used as a mission church of St. Anthony's Catholic Church."

On February 2, 1953 the CASPER TRIBUNE-HERALD again shows a picture with details of the church being moved. Saturday, January 13, 1953 was the completion of the moving project. The steeple was taken off to permit transportation to its new site at CY & 20th streets in Westridge. Mr. Fred Trost, contractor, was hoisted in a boatswain's chair by William Moon, to put the finishing touches on the steeple. Interior work and completion of the cross on the steeple was finished January 30, 1953. The estimated cost of moving and completing the church is about \$65,000.

Dedication of Our Lady of Fatima Mission was held March 25, 1953, the Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady, with Msgr. Thomas F. O'Reilly as celebrant of the Solemn High Mass. His Excellency, the Most Rev. Hubert M. Newell, D.D., Bishop of the Diocese of Cheyenne, gave the sermon. Other clergy present were the Monsignori's James A • Hartmann and John McDevitt also the Revs. Francis Penny and Charles Brady.

A priest from St. Anthony's Church said the first Mass, on Easter Sunday, April 5, 1953. Masses that day were 7:00 and 11:15 a.m. On October 2, 1953 Mass time was listed in a local paper as being each Sunday at 11:15 a.m.

The first "boundary lines" were stated thus: "will include that portion of southwest Casper embracing Westridge, Southridge, Fort Casper, Garden Creek, Sunset and Meadow Acres." In the past six years these many "boundaries" have taken in and do include: South Poplar Street from West 13th and West, all of West 13th from South Poplar and South. This specified area includes many areas as yet unnamed, but in the process of being plotted for homes and businesses. The vast expansion of Our Lady of Fatima Parish has been so rapid, that the need for an assistant priest in six short years is almost unbelievable to many, but, nevertheless, is certainly an important parish need at this time. Garden creek area is now expanding to South and West Garden Creek and Shannon Heights; Green Meadows Addition and Valley Hills are parts of the Meadows Acres, as well as a business development known as the Sunrise Shopping area, which at present is in the building process; Fort Casper now is bounded by Westwood, Westwood #2, Fort Casper #2, Riverview Acres, and Meadow Park Addition; from these points we leave the Casper City limits to include Swingle Acres, Jimsville, Paradise Valley, Red Buttes and on into Alcova, Wyoming, and the Goose Egg and Bates Hole areas.

On September 24, 1954 the official announcement came from the Chancery office in Cheyenne that Bishop Newell had made eleven clergy appointments, to be effective October 1, 1954 Among these eleven was the Rev. Alphonsus H. Grannan, then pastor of St. John the Baptist's Parish in Buffalo, Wyoming. Father Grannan would become the first pastor of the new parish of Our Lady of Fatima, Casper, Wyoming.

Father Grannan, the "Hoosier Pastor," was born in Montgomery, Indiana, was ordained in 1940, after making his studies at Our Lady of the Angel's Seminary, Niagara, N.Y. He served for a one month period at St. Mary's Cathedral Parish, Cheyenne, while Father Hartmann was on vacation. He was then appointed assistant pastor at St. Anthony's Parish, Casper. After 2 1/2 years in Casper he was sent to Buffalo as pastor. Under his leadership there, a magnificent stone church was erected and paid for, additional land

was acquired for future parish needs, and a vigorous program of activities arranged for the congregation.

St. Anthony's Parish also purchased the house at 1745 Westridge Drive in September 1954. It was to serve as a rectory until a permanent home for a pastor could be constructed on the attractive 10-acre parish property. Later, in December 1955, due to the demands of the parish, the Ray O'Dell residence at 1732 Westridge Way was purchased as a rectory for \$17,602.10 (the first residence being sold for \$12,000). The, then, seven-year-old home, was a welcome addition to the parish because of its easier access for the pastor to the church and grounds. The house is directly across the highway from the church. It has six rooms, including a spacious living room, dinette, two bedrooms, kitchen, two baths, large office and a reception room with an unattached double garage. Adequate storage space, which the first rectory sorely lacked, is a necessary part of any rectory. The H.J. Clare Agency handled the transaction.

Sunday and Holy Day Masses were set at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. November 7, 1954. Confessions being heard from 4:00-5:00 and 7:00-8:00 p.m. the day before First Fridays, Holy Days and Sundays. They were also heard before all Masses up until five minutes before Mass, but after five years time this was discontinued because of the abuse the people gave the privilege. Daily Mass was offered each weekday at 7:30 a.m. At the present time Masses are scheduled: Winter, 8:00, 10:00 and 12:00 noon; Summer, 7:00, 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.; Daily Mass at 7:00 a.m.; Holy Days are 7:00, 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.; First Fridays, 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Confession times have remained the same.

Lay trustees were appointed on November 11, 1954 Lawrence E. Hussion and Casper Rowse. Both are well-known Casper businessmen who have worked in several fund-raising campaigns for St. Anthony's and Our Lady of Fatima. Mr. Hussion was chairman of the drive in 1952 when funds were raised to purchase the church now serving Our Lady of Fatima Parish.

Incorporation date of the parish is December 6, 1954. Officers: President, Bishop Newell; vice-president, Msgr. O'Reilly; secretary, L.E. Hussion; treasurer, Casper Rowse; Manager, Rev. A.H. Grannan.

The first, and foremost, need of the new parish was to make more comfortable, the seating facilities in the nave of the church. The wooden "2 x 4" benches that came with the building were certainly inadequate in many "small" respects! How many a pastor has tried to give a sermon without having to "out-shout" the small crying infant or misbehaving child in the congregation? When one has not only that to contend with, but the squeaking benches that, on occasion, broke and caused a certain amount of

“distraction” it was certainly a problem to be dealt with as soon as possible. By November 19, 1954 the officers and board of the Corporation had okayed the order for new pews, together with screens for the windows and kneeling pads for the new kneeling benches. Also ordered was a statue of Our Lady of Fatima and one of St. Joseph with the Infant Saviour in his hands, a baptismal font and numerous other items needed for the church.

On January 17 and 18, 1955 a great deal of work was done prior to installing the new pews and communion rail (which Mr. & Mrs. Willard G. McNamara gave in memory of their parents. The McNamaras came from Nebr. over twenty years ago. He and his brother-in-law, Charles Chapin, have an accounting firm.) The old railing and pews were removed and the sanctuary was extended on the Gospel and Epistle sides to accommodate the new rail. The entire floor in the nave of the church was sanded and varnished. On January 23 the pews had not yet arrived and as people came into church, there were various exclamations and expressions! The vestibule became overcrowded because no one was venturing forth into the pew less church (nor on, what they thought, was freshly varnished floors!). Blank expressions were seen on some faces and others showed distinct Surprise. By the middle of the week the pews had arrived and were set up in the nave of the church. They are made of oak and have a blonde finish. They make a beautiful contrast against the dark wood paneling that decorates the sides of the church proper, the sanctuary and the ceiling beams. Original seating capacity was 300. On October 6, 1957 the ushers took count and have been doing so at each Mass since. The first count was 745 in total attendance for the two Masses of the day, with 304 receiving Communion. In June 1960 that count reads: with three Masses, 1,153 attended Mass and 532 received Communion. You can readily see the need, again, for an assistant pastor.

Acknowledgment is here given those who gave to the Mission and Parish of Our Lady of Fatima, from its very beginning to the, now, more comfortable and attractive church that it is. Without the many helping hands and hearts and the material gifts which the people have been so generous with, this parish could not have met the many goals made and many yet to be made. Our Lady and Her Son have indeed been most generous, too, in their blessings of the little five seedling trees (all 1500 of them the first year, and many more since!) that now have grown to grace the grounds about the church, convent, school and that about the 10-acres. Many laughed when the planting was being done! Blessed, too, was the first acre of corn and other vegetables (pumpkin—which were given away by the dozens for the Halloween season); the grasses and flowers that surround the buildings in abundance; all these things have helped to bring many visitors from far and wide, protestant as well as Catholic, to stand in amazement at the unbelievable—that a small army chapel could be such a lovely building in lovely

surroundings in such a few short years. Acknowledgments go to the hearts, hands and generous offerings of many. We will here be unable to mention all those names, but in each ones little "storehouse" in heaven. God has put away many blessings for them.

We quote from Msgr. O'Reilly's "Acknowledgment" in the statement of contributions in 1953, "To the foregoing statement of contributions must be added the equally heartening manifestation of parish loyalty and lively Catholic faith by so many of St. Anthony's parishioners whose herculean efforts made Our Lady of Fatima Church ready for dedication at the date appointed in March of 1953. Under the direction of Mr. Casper Rowse, a diversity of skills was called into service. The ready response by so many workers for Our Lady of Fatima, the long, arduous hours of evening labor lightened by the will to serve the cause of God and Mother Church and brightened by frequent exchanges of good humored banter must have been as pleasing to the Mother of God as it was inspirational to all who gave of their time. Likewise, the ladies of the Altar and Rosary Sanctuary group, with Mrs. C.J. Carter as chairman, whose deft hands provided amongst other items, the magnificent drapes in the sanctuary will look with pride on their blue and gold gift to Our Blessed Lady of Fatima, in whose honor this church is dedicated. To all who, by monetary aide and voluntary labor helped in this project may the Blessed Mother of God be a "Tower of Strength" always.

In this category are those whose prompt generosity provided the electric organ, and also those who made provision for purchase of essential furnishings and appurtenances of a new church, via: Main Altar, Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd N. Hagood; Chalice, Mr. & Mrs. E.E. Allen; Tabernacle, Mr. & Mrs. W.A. Blind; Stations of the cross, Mr. & Mrs. E.T. Daly, Sanctuary Crucifix, Mrs. J.P. Becker (deceased, 1960) and her son, Ernest; Spire Cross, Mr. & Mrs. E. Flahe; Our Lady of Fatima Statue, Mr. & Mrs. Ray Studer; St. Joseph Statue, Mr. & Mrs. T.J. White; Altar Chimes and Cruets, George Kobel; Communion, Mr. & Mrs. T.J. O'Leary.

Through unusually prompt action a new organ was made possible for St. Anthony's Church permitting the removal of the older one to the Our Lady of Fatima.

On December 3, 1954 announcement was made that Mr. & Mrs. Paul E. Kempter had donated a side altar in honor of the Blessed Mother in memory of their deceased relatives. The women of the parish worked in cooperation with the St. Anthony's auction sale committee and garnered \$100.00 toward the continued development of the little church. Many men of the church, under the able direction of Ben A. Schirk as chairman, conducted a Fall Collection. The funds were used in the progress also. Timothy J. O'Leary (father of Mrs. Lloyd Hagood and deceased in 1959) and Hugh S. Bryan gave the rectory (1745 Westridge Drive) a face lifting with a new coat of paint. Mr.

& Mrs. Joseph J. Gilgan generously donated St. Joseph's side altar to the church, in memory of deceased members of their families. The Gilgans now reside in Colorado Springs Colorado. Mr. Frank Plemel, a member of Sts. Cyril and Methodius' Parish in Rock Springs, and father of Mrs. John P. Hunter of the parish, donated toward the pews in memory of the Hunter family. Mrs. Carlo Colibraro and sons, Philip, Daniel and their sister Rose, donated toward the pews in memory of their father and husband. In April, 1955 tile flooring was laid in the church, blue and gold to compliment the drapery in the sanctuary. S.W. Stewart and George Weber of the Weber Floor Covering Co donated the labor. Hugh S. Bryan made and donated a wooden tabernacle, canopy and three prie dieux. The Colibraro boys, then seminarians, covered the kneelers with blue plastic and covered the larger one with white satin. In August 1955 men of the parish, under the supervision of John Haass and Ed Meidling, placed a much-needed sidewalk all around the church. On the west and east sides it is 5' wide with a 10' walk on the back and before the entrance. Ryan and Davis of Peter Kiewit Co. removed dirt and made a refill of sand and gravel preparatory to blacktopping a parking area around the church. September 2 the blacktopping was completed . . . by October, 1955, the basement had been completed, refinished from floor to ceiling and a kitchen was in the process of being installed . . . a diligent group of men started in January, 1955 on the basement—William Otis, Mike Grannan, Joe McCarthy, A.J. Tram, Matthew Grannan, Casper Rowse, Larry Hussion, John Fraher, Don Stagg, John Haass, Joe Kasper, George, Mike, Dick and Tom Kasper, and a Mr. Karen. Group statues of Our Lady of Fatima (5'6" tall), Jacinta and Francisco, (2'7"), Lucy (2'7"), and two lambs were generously donated by an anonymous out-of-town friend of the parish, and were given in appreciation for graces received from Our Blessed Mother. The dedication of these statues was held May 31, 1957 with Bishop Newell leading the procession from the church to the Garden for God, where the statues were placed. Recitation of the Rosary and dedication was held outdoors and Benediction in the Church. Visiting clergy for the occasion were the Monsignori Thomas O'Reilly and James A. Hartmann, Revs. Herbert Kraus, Lawrence Etchingham and Joseph Maroney. J. Jones, Inc. was issued a permit for the remodeling of the church and erection of a campanile on August 29, 1959. The cost was \$13,000. Fred Moore & Son Co. did the brick veneering. They donated the brick and work for the chimney and back steps, which was not included in their contract. In the campanile there are three bells, the largest is a 44" lip, and came from the old Church of St. Mathew in Gillette; the next smaller bell is from the old St. Mary Magdalen Church in Worland; the smallest bell was brought by Mr. & Mrs. Elmer Jansen from a ranch in the Big Muddy field at Glenrock. Ken LeClere of Rusco Window Co., installed the stained glass storm windows on the church, with the help of Mike Quealey (who is still the constant guardian of the church grounds). Mr. & Mrs. Jansen gave the windows for the basement of the convent with Mr. LeClere doing the installation when he installed the upstairs windows. Rusco Co. supplied all the storm doors, too, at the convent and

rectory, and the labor for their installation was donated. Mr. & Mrs. Mark (Friday) O'Connell have been monetarily generous toward all the building phases of the parish. These, as we said before, are only a few names, as it is hard to mention everyone who was so faithful in the meals and lunches served to the workparties throughout the twice-a-week schedule for the past six years; the cleaning crews who have been ever ready to prepare the church for all special occasions, as well, as the weekly cleaning it requires—the many officers and their board members, down through the memberships to include almost every family of the parish! We are certain that Our Lady of Fatima Parish has been-and will continue to be blessed abundantly! The many communions at each Mass is a sign of the parishioners' true offering for the Honor and Glory of God.

Under the competent leadership of the Misses Shirley Kercher and Shirley Kobel (now, Mrs. Bob York) a choir was begun to compliment the liturgy of the church. They showed their efforts of their many hours of practice at the first Christmas program in 1954. The choir then consisted of Mrs. Madalain Lynch, Mary Christopher, Tommy Ann Eager, Danice Hooker, Shirley Kercher, Shirley Kobel, Mrs. J.P. Hunter (later a director of the children's choir), Mrs. C.L. Dalgarno, Mrs. S.A. Reimers and Sylvia, Peggy Graf, Catherine Graf, Ann Donohue, Pat Kasper, Nancy Gilgan, Stella Howard, Patricia and Dorothy Howard, Evelyn Downie, Donna Stagg, Beverly Janeaux, Connie Dalgarno, Martha Kallerud, Dick Schirk, Vic Poirer and Barbara McIlroy, organist.

Preceding the Midnight Mass the choir sang at intervals the traditional Christmas Carols while the priest and people made the visit to the crib. The new figures for the crib had arrived and made the occasion more heartwarming for many a child and adult. The "Missa de Angelis", from the Vatican Gradual, transcribed and harmonized by N.A. Montani, was sung at the High Mass and the Offertory hymn was, "Adeste Fideles", arranged and edited by Montani.

The first annual Christmas Party for the "children" of the parish was held December 18, 1955 in the basement of the church. More than 300 parents and children crowded the church auditorium. They all joined in the singing of carols accompanied by Miss McIlroy on the accordion and Mr. Robert Meyers, then adult choir director, led the caroling. Santa was there with the traditional Christmas goodies (that the ladies of St. Mary Magdalen's Circle had prepared for him). Tim Mahoney, by his portrayal of the well-known gentleman, contributed much to the children's enjoyment of the party.

The spruce trees that had been planted on either side of the church entrance the previous summer, were trimmed with colored lights and at night their glow could be seen far down the Alcova Highway, doing much to lend Christmas cheer to the western approach of the city.

Also in 1955 a very special honor was paid the members of the parish when Bishop Newell installed Rev. A.H. Grannan as the first pastor of the parish, March 6. It was the first time in nearly 20 years that such a ceremony had been performed in Casper. Msgr. O'Reilly assisted Bishop Newell and the Knights of Columbus were the honor guards.

Looking back in the records we find that the "firsts" include COMMUNION: Miss Donna Jean Staggs of 1640 Westridge Way made her first communion on November 7, 1954. Miss Nancy Gilgan, her neighbor and friend, acted as her attendant and was most instrumental in bringing Donna to receive the sacrament.

BAPTISM: One of the first babies to be born in the infant parish was Donna Kay, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Ed Balben (the former Marion Campbell), then of 1638 S. Poplar St. She arrived November 23, and was baptized December 12, 1954. Her godparents were Dominick P. Gallelo and Shirley Kercher. Fr. Grannan baptized the infant.

The first convert to be baptized was Don Hall. The new baptismal font arrived in the week of January 24, 1955 and it was quite fitting and proper that the first time the font was put into use was at the baptism of a convert. Don was baptized January 29, 1955. He received his First Holy Communion the following morning. His godparents are Mr. & Mrs. Hugh Bryan, who are also his father and mother-in-law. Don is the son of R.T. and Myrtle Twedt Hall.

MARRIAGE: Father Grannan solemnized the wedding of John Louis Sedar to Helen Mary Ortiz on June 25, 1955.

DEATH: Mrs. Patricia Peterson, 24-year old daughter of Mr. & Mrs. John Sullivan died March 17, 1956 from complications of a gunshot wound. Under the very attentive instruction of Father Grannan she was admitted back into the church before her death.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CLASS: May 8, 1955, was Mothers day, the traditional day for this event in Our Lady of Fatima Church. The first class numbered 29 and on May 8, 1960 the number was 50. Those in the first class were: Daniel Crawford, Leo Dunn, John Gilgan, Paul Hunter, Jack Kasper, James LaBerge, Jerry Marburger, Steven Van Maren, John McCarthy, Russell Ruttinger, Larry Slaymaker, Dennis Green, Paul Stapleton, James W. Huff, Larry Culver, David Pedry, Richard Blower, Jerry Jacobs, Keith Norcross, Sandra Balben, Jo Anne Clark, Mary Ellen Haass, Alice Jager, Janice Lewallen, Linda Muller, Rosemary Pearce, Karen Prazak, Sharon Tescher and Maureen Ahern.

CONFIRMATION: (Combined with St. Anthony's) May 1, 1955 there were 19, 8 adults, who were confirmed by Bishop Newell at St. Anthony's Church. Adults: Colonel Erwin

Blagg, Mrs. Flora Blower, Donald Lee Hall, Marian Rooth Huff, Barbara Perrett, Patricia Ellen Ruttinger, Mrs. Ellen Ann Ruttinger and Donna Jean Stagg; children: James Patrick Davis, James Michael Schirk, Phyllis Ann Mahoney, James Stafford Smith, Douglas Jerome DeMars, Colleen Ann Cronin, Cornelia Marie Dalgarno, Nancy Stephanie Gilgan, Michael Hugh Taylor, Elizabeth Jean Farmer, and William Francis Cote.

The first confirmation class in Our Lady of Fatima Church consisted of 22 being confirmed by Bishop Newell April 8, 1956: Brian J. Clare, John W. Dunn, Alvin T. Eager, James R. Farmer, Robert J. Ford, Barbara J. Goulette, LeRoy Green, Bernice A. Hamilton, Janice M. Houck, Mary J. Hurley, Connie J. Kercher, Helen Kinsella, Melvin R. Moen, Jayne Morton, Jan L. Prazak, Russell Ruttinger, Priscilla Schultz, Cary A. Shafsky, Shirley A. Simeone, Cora A. Tescher, Wm. L. Townsend and Patricia Van Horn. March 27, 1960 there were 40 persons in the confirmation class. There is no question but that Our Lady of Fatima will continue to have Confirmation in its own parish.

[Statistical review UNED]***

Father Grannan has continued his fine leadership here at Our Lady of Fatima, adding much to his past accomplishments by the continued vigorous programs of activities for the parishioners. The formation of an Altar & Rosary Society, Holy Name Society, Fatima Youth Organization, Christian Family Movement Groups (2), adult and Junior choirs, a large number of altar boys, Circles and the now forming Confraternity of Christian Doctrine are all stemmed from the enthusiastic leadership of a man that knows only too well the needs of these organizations for the continued success of a parish.

The Altar & Rosary Society began one March 17, 1955 with recitation of the Rosary, led by Father Grannan, in the Church. A coffee was the means of the gathering and the inspirational talk by Father began the "wheels" turning in the development of the organization. He appointed a nominating committee and on March 31 the first official meeting was held with a luncheon being served by Mrs. Joe Kasper, Mrs. Paul Kempter (now of Bellevue, Iowa), Mrs. W.G. McNamara, Mrs. B.A. Schirk, Mrs. W.J. Goggin, Mrs. John P. Hunter, Mrs. Tom Ryan and Mrs. James M. Huff to 31 ladies of the parish. Officers elected at this meeting were: president, Mrs. McNamara; Vice-president, Mrs. Schirk; Secretary, Mrs. Huff; Treasurer, Mrs. Harold Purdy.

Those who attended the meeting besides the new officers and serving committee were: Mmes. W.E. Longpre, L.E. Hussion, E.A. Beck, E.M. Hooker, J.H. Farmer, A.J. Tram, W.J. Schirk, Casper Rowse, Joe Faulkner, Don Hall, John A. Fraher, N.P. Van Maren, L.R. Green, C.C. King, P.A. Tescher, L.D. Lefevre, Ken Blower, J.F. Dunn, E.C. Balben, Carlo

Colibraro, M.W. Downie, W.C. Miley, Joe McCarthy, D.R. Norcross, John J. Pedry, Colonel E. Blagg, Joe Gilgan, H.S. Bryan, and Houston Williams.

The Society divided its members into Circles. Every woman of the parish is automatically a member of the A & R and it will continue that way under Father Grannan. Each Circle chose a chairman and this chairman became a member of the Board. Through these Circles the projects of the parish were scheduled on a monthly basis: each Circle being given a month to serve at the monthly A & R meeting, another month they would have the cleaning of either the rectory or the church (since 1958 they disbanded the rectory cleaning). Many hands began to make light the work that only a few had done for almost three years. An annual bazaar has become the main project of the Society each October—the anniversary month of the parish—as well as the Circles taking their turns in monthly sessions to run the concessions on Monday nights for the Holy Name Society during the winter months and their Bingo games. Each Circle has an annual event they sponsor, thus the means of raising funds for the continuing progress of the parish. Each Circle also has a plot in the Garden for God each summer; this garden surrounds the church parking area.

The Holy Name Society of the parish was formally chartered at a meeting held March 3, 1958. Presented by Fr. Grannan, the officers were named: president, James Farmer; vice-president, Ben Schirk; secretary, Ron Tideman; treasurer, John Haass; Marshall, Joe Kasper; Spiritual Moderator, Fr. Grannan.

Present at the first meeting were: Leo Smith, Dean Owens, Warren Perkins, Richard McClaskey, Clarence Nollette, James Ryan, John Rees, Carl Grieshaber, Douglas Kincaid, Elmer Jansen, Jim Price, Robert A. Meyer, Lin Meese, Dan Norcross, Wm. Svoboda, Wilfred Longpre, E.V. Dobbins, Paul Kempter, Joe Culver, Cecil Ainsworth, Francis Mullin, Leo Hallock, Tom and Dick Kasper, Wm. Muller, James Herold, N.P. Van Maren, Virgil Smith, John Keeley, Philip Peters, Robert D. Meyers, Anthony Kawulok, Ray Bader, Casper Rowse, Everett Beck and L.D. Lefevre.

These men have been instrumental in the workparties and campaigns of the parish (Bishop's Fund Campaign & Parish Support Appeal). They began the Monday night Bingo games that have brought the project to be the most desired of any in the city! Many of the men and their wives worked together at the painting of the convent workparties.

Like all expanding parishes, the need for a parochial school stands first among the "musts". When the Diocesan Fund Campaign was inaugurated in May 1955, a new rectory was the prime aim of the parish. However, the need for the children was far

greater in Fr. Grannan's eyes than his comforts, so plans began to formulate for the convent, then a school. By February 1959 the convent was plastered at a cost of \$4,600.00 with Fred Moore & Son doing the brickwork and fireplace. Volunteers from the parish did most of the concrete work like placing forms, etc., interior work, painting. Doyle's, Inc. did the plumbing and American Electric Co. the electrical work. They also did the school under the direct supervision of Fr. Grannan. Linoleum Studios supplied labor and material for the convent floors, as well as John Jourgenson Paint Co. Boatright-Smith did the excavations for both school and convent, as well as the back-filling and the grading and graveling of the access road about the grounds. This work could be roughly estimated at \$5,000-\$6,000. White Sheet Metal donated the work of putting eaves on the church and convent. On July 11, 1959 L.D. Leisinger Construction Co. was awarded the contract for the first of four school buildings (each accommodating 3 large classrooms, 2 restrooms, janitorial room and either office or another classroom) for \$38,547.00. A total of \$27,532.15 had been spent for new buildings by the end of 1959. Other plans were still on the drawing board to accommodate a housekeeper and assistant pastor in the present rectory, as well as future church, rectory and high school on the 10 acres.

On October 5, 1955 the first catechism class for the high school students of the parish met with Father as instructor. By November 1955 the first grade school classes were also a weekly event with the ladies of the parish doing the instructing for the 44 children in the auditorium of the church. Mrs. L.D. Lefevre, Mrs. James H. Herold, Mrs. Wm.A. Muller and Mrs. James Farmer were teachers. In the fall of 1959 the Diocesan Youth held their first meeting in Casper and Our Lady of Fatima parish was among the diocesan parishes to start a Youth Organization. This took care of the teenage groups. The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Committee took over the direction of the grade school catechism classes and with the help of the Victory Knoll Sisters—who arrived May 28, 1960—classes for the first two weeks in July with over 159 children enrolled were scheduled. A series of classes to instruct the lay catechist was given by the Sisters also. The new school building had its first "class" June 29, 1960.

The first Sisters to occupy the convent were the four Victory Knoll Sisters: Sister Charlotte, Superior, Sister Mary Bernarda, Sister Theodora, and Sister Stephanie. Sister Thomas replaced Sister Theodora on June 28. They took a parish census during their two months stay as well as the two-week catechism classes in July.

The school-convent site was blessed on July 13, 1959 at 7:30 p.m. Father Grannan and the acolytes led the Procession to the excavation, where the blessing was given. Rosary was recited before the statue of Our Lady of Fatima then all returned to the church for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

For a few highlights: In February 1955 the parish supported the WYOMING CATHOLIC REGISTER subscriptions 100%. The parish consisted of 175 families. This was the first time, since the inauguration of the REGISTER in 1952, that any parish had 100% coverage. To quote from the REGISTER: "What Our Lady of Fatima Parish accomplished is what His Excellency, Bishop Newell, wishes for the entire diocese—namely that every Catholic family in the diocese should be receiving the paper every week. If one parish can have 100% coverage then there are several other parishes capable of doing the same thing."

On the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, August 22, 1955, Sister Mary Carlo, daughter of Mrs. Carlo Colibraro, professed her vows. Her two seminarian brothers, Daniel and Philip were acolytes of the Mass of Profession for the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, in Xavier, Kansas.

In October, 1955 the first Forty Hours Devotion was given by the Rev. Cyril Hmelovsky, pastor of St. Mary Magdalen's Parish, Worland, Wyo. October 9, 10, and 11 the Devotion coincided with the first birthday of the new parish. Clergy present were Msgr. O'Reilly of St. Anthony's, who was the celebrant at the closing devotions; Father Joseph Maroney, also of St. Anthony's; Father Hmelovsky; Father Martin Collett, O.F.M.Conv. who was deacon and Father Wm. Bader, O.F.M.Conv., both of Douglas; Father Bartholomew Svete of Hartville and Father McBrien of Lusk.

November 1, 1955 was All Saint's Day and the first evening Mass was held at 5:30 p.m. This Mass time will continue on all Holy Days and First Fridays.

May 25, 1956 the newly ordained Father Daniel Colibraro offered his first Solemn Mass at 10:30 a.m. in Our Lady of Fatima Church. Father Colibraro was the first to be ordained in Casper for the priesthood. His brother, Philip received the sub-diaconate from Bishop Newell at the ceremonies in St. Anthony's Church.

In September 1956 Rev. Wm. Walsh, Servite, and O.S.M. conducting a Mission from September 30 through October 6 celebrated the second anniversary of the parish.

On June 1, 1957 Bishop Newell again ordained a Casper boy for the diocesan priesthood at St. Anthony's Church. Fr. Philip Colibraro received the sacrament of Holy Orders. He said his first Solemn Mass at 9:00 a.m. in Our Lady of Fatima Church.

Rev. Father Staudinger, O.S.B. of Xavier, Kansas conducted the first annual Day of Recollection for the women of the parish on April 2, 1960 and for the men on Passion Sunday, April 3.

In this month of June 1960, we are again indebted to the Mother Church, St. Anthony's, and her priests, Father Lawrence Etchingham and Father Patrick McGovern. They have come to the aide of the Our Lady of Fatima people by attending the parish during the recuperation of Father Garman, who suffered a severely cut hand June 5. They attended for several weeks while Father James Doudican of Our Lady of the Tetons Church in Jackson, Wyoming said the daily Masses during the first parish two-week summer school.

It is indeed significant that this new church, dedicated to the Mother of God during the Marian Year, has received many blessings from Her and Her Divine Son and we continue our prayers in the hope that She and Her Son will watch over those who have the guiding post of this blessed parish in their hands—may they be continually helped by those who have already taken the small part of “assistants” in their daily and weekly tasks of keeping the parish duties in hand so the pastor might be relieved to go about his work in the field of instruction and ministering to the sick, the dying, the newly born and general problems that parishioners seem to place on the broad shoulders of their pastor. We pray that in the next “chapter” we might tell of the coming of an assistant pastor, completion of the other three school units, Sisters occupying the convent, and the school in full use.

As the Fathers of the Church so often remind us, the aim of the Blessed Mother co-redemptorist has always been to draw the attention of Her children to Her Divine Son.

In a niche left in the entrance of the new school there is a statue of the Sacred Heart with hands extended in blessing donated by the Jansens, which about summarizes the efforts of all who have helped, or are helping or are benefiting from the patronage of their Blessed Mother, the graces coming from on High upon the people of the parish working for the salvation of souls and the greater Honor and Glory of God.

HISTORY OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA CHURCH 1954-1970

HISTORY OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA CHURCH 1954-1970

SUBMITTED TO HIS EXCELLENCY,
THE MOST REV. HUBERT M. NEWELL, D.D.,
BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF CHEYENNE,
ON APRIL 1, 1970.

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THE BEGINNING

[1] Extensive residential development in the southwest part of Casper confirmed the need for another parish in Casper, Wyoming. Thus in July 1949, the Rt. Rev. Monsignor Thomas F, O'Reilly, Pastor of St, Anthony's Church in Casper, acquired ten (10) acres at \$1,000.00 per acre from Harry Yesness. The price seemed exorbitant to some at the time. Even after the purchase an offer was made by Mr. Yesness to buy back the ground because of the building "boom" then starting. The acreage was located on the south side of CY Avenue at 20th Street.

The purchase of a chapel from the Casper Air Base was arranged at a cost of \$17,050.00. On January 13, 1953, the chapel was moved to the parish site and placed over a full basement. The structure was the largest ever moved without a floor in the Casper area. It was indeed an unusual maneuver as it was moved across the Old Fort Casper Bridge. The building was 80 feet long, 40 feet wide and 29 feet high. The steeple, cross and interior work were completed on January 30, 1953. Cost of moving and completing the church was about \$65,000.00.

Dedication of Our Lady of Fatima Mission was held March 25, 1953, on the Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady. Monsignor O'Reilly was celebrant of the Solemn High Mass, His Excellency, the Most Rev. Hubert M. Newell, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of Cheyenne, gave the sermon. The chapel was now a mission church served by priests from St. Anthony's.

The first "boundary lines" were: that portion of southwest Casper embracing Westridge, Southridge, Fort Casper, Garden Creek, Sunset and Meadow Acres. Within six years the "boundary lines" included South Poplar Street from West 13th and West, all of West 13th Street from South Poplar and South.

FROM A MISSION TO A PARISH-1954

[2] On September 24, 1954, an official proclamation was issued making Our Lady of Fatima a parish church. Also announced at this time was the appointment of Rev. Alphonsus H. Grannan, then pastor of St. John the Baptist Church in Buffalo, Wyoming, as pastor of Our Lady of Fatima parish, effective October 1, 1954.

Father Grannan was born in Montgomery, Indiana, and was ordained in 1940. While Father Grannan was assistant pastor at St. Anthony's of Casper, he had performed the first military wedding at the "Little Chapel of the Sagebrush" at the Casper Air Base. The chapel was moved and now is to be known as Our Lady of Fatima Church.

The first rectory was an existing house at 1745 Westridge Drive. The parish listed 98 families at its beginning.

The Mass schedule at the start was at 8:00 A.M. and 10:30 A.M. on Sundays and Holy Days with daily Mass being offered at 7:30 A.M.

The very first happenings include: a young girl, Donna Jean Stagg, made her first Communion on November 7, 1954; and on December 12, 1954, Donna Kay, infant daughter of the Ed Balbens, was the first child of the parish to be baptized. Under the leadership of Misses Shirley Kercher and Shirley Kobel, a choir was begun to compliment the liturgy of the church. Their efforts were heard at the 1954 Christmas Program and Midnight Mass.

Lay trustees, appointed on November 11, 1954, were Lawrence E. Hussion and Casper Rowse. Mr. Hussion headed the drive in 1952 when funds were raised to purchase the chapel now serving Our Lady of Fatima parish.

Incorporation date of the parish was December 6, 1954. Officers included: President, Bishop Newell; Vice-President, Msgr. O'Reilly; Secretary, L.E. Hussion; Treasurer, Casper Rowse; and Manager, Father Grannan.

ADVANCEMENTS-1955

[3] Already by February of 1955, the parish consisted of 175 families. At this time the parishioners supported the Wyoming Catholic Register one hundred per cent. This was the first time any parish had 100% coverage since the inauguration of the REGISTER in 1952.

During the early months of 1955, the immediate needs of the parish were undertaken. After removing the 2 by 4 wooden benches, the sanctuary was extended on the Gospel and Epistle sides; the entire floor was sanded and varnished; window screens put up; new pews and kneeling benches and pads were installed; along with a communion rail that was given by the Willard G. McNamaras.

The new baptismal font arrived on January 24, 1955, and a convert, Donald Hall, was the first one to be baptized at the new font.

Bishop Hubert M. Newell conducted a formal installation of Rev. Alphonsus H. Grannan as pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Parish on March 6, 1955.

The Altar and Rosary Society was formed on March 17, 1955, with recitation of the Rosary led by Father Grannan. The first official meeting was held on March 31. Lunch was served to 31 ladies of the parish. Officers elected at this meeting were: President, Mrs. W.G. McNamara; Vice-President, Mrs. B.A. Schirk; Secretary, Mrs. James M. Huff; and Treasurer, Mrs. Harold Purdy.

During these early months, the basement of the church was finished from floor to ceiling by donated labor of the people of Casper; and upon completion provided an excellent meeting place for the parishioners.

On May 8, 1955, twenty-nine children received their First Holy Communion.

The first wedding held in the Church was that of Helen Ortiz and John L. Sedar on June 25, 1955.

By the fall of 1955, most of the immediate physical needs of the parish had been met, and the spiritual needs of the children were of paramount importance. In October, Father Grannan began catechism classes for high school [4] students. In the same month, forty-four grade school children registered for weekly catechism classes. Four ladies instructed these children. They were: Mrs. L.D. Lefevre, Mrs. James H. Herold, Mrs. William A. Muller, and Mrs. James Farmer.

A larger and more adequate house was purchased in December, 1955, for use as a rectory. The new rectory was at 1732 Westridge Way and was directly across the highway from the church. It was a most welcome addition to the parish.

A most rewarding venture not to be overlooked was the beautification of the grounds that encompass Our Lady of Fatima Church. Seedling trees were planted in abundance and their growth rapidly began to grace the entire grounds. The men of the parish placed a much-needed sidewalk all around the church and blacktopping of a parking area around the church was completed.

By the end of this year the parish list had increased to 217 families.

ONWARD: 1956 THROUGH 1962

Much happened during these next few years,

1956

The first confirmation class in Our Lady of Fatima Church consisted of twenty-two being confirmed by Bishop Newell on April 8, 1956.

One of the highlights of 1956 was the ordination of Father Daniel Colibraro, son of Mrs. Carlo Colibraro of Our Lady of Fatima parish. Father Colibraro was ordained at St. Anthony's on May 25, and celebrated his First Mass at Our Lady of Fatima Church on May 27, 1956.

As a means of celebrating the second anniversary of the parish, a Mission was conducted from September through October 1956.

The Altar and Rosary Society was extremely active during the year 1956 in that they took as their main project a fall bazaar. It was the plan to continue this bazaar annually each October.

[5] An indication of the growth of the parish was that the women of the Altar and Rosary Society held a Newcomers Coffee on December 7, 1956.

1957

In the spring of 1957, Father Grannan suggested to the women that the Altar and Rosary Society circles help beautify the grounds by a "Garden for God". The area around the parking lot was used for flower gardens and was cared for by circle members. A watering system was installed. A wonderfully shaded and beautiful retreat was thus created for everyone's pleasure. The little ones were not overlooked as swings and slides were also installed.

The final touch for the Garden for God was the placing of a statue of Our Lady of Fatima with the children, Jacinta, Francisco and Lucy, kneeling in front of her, along with statues of two lambs. The dedication of these statues was held on May 31, 1957 with Bishop Newell leading the procession to the garden area.

How fortunate the parish felt when on June 1, 1957, Father Phillip Colibraro, the second son of Mrs. Carlo Colibraro, was ordained. Father Phillip Colibraro also celebrated his First Mass at Our Lady of Fatima Church.

1958

On January 6, 1958, a group of men from the parish met for the purpose of organizing a men's club. They choose to become a Holy Name Society. Thereafter, the Holy Name

Society of Our Lady of Fatima Parish was formally chartered at a meeting held March 3, 1958. Father Grannan presented the officers: President, James Farmer, Vice-President, Ben Schirk; Secretary, Ron Tideman; Treasurer, John Haass; Marshall, Joe Kasper; and Spiritual Moderator, Father Grannan. The charter members helped with the Bishop's Fund Campaign and the Parish Support Appeal. They established weekly Bingo games on Monday nights. The immediate project of this group of men was to erect a school and convent. Like all expanding parishes, the need for a parochial school stood first among the "musts".

[6] On July 13, 1958, the ground for the school and convent was blessed. Two days later work started on the convent. The convent was built almost entirely with donated labor consisting of "work parties" working twice weekly, not only the men, but the women and children, along with Father Grannan, made up the "work parties".

By the fall of 1958, 356 families were listed on the parish books.

1959

Work on the convent continued during the months of 1959. The finished convent represented a \$70,000.00 building. However, the actual cash expended was only \$41,434.35. The difference between these two figures represents the donated help, labor and machinery.

Upon completion of the convent, work was started on the school building.

In the fall of 1959, Our Lady of Fatima Church received a face lifting. The little white frame building with the blue roof was still picturesque, but there were indications of age. The remodeling consisted of covering the entire structure with a brick veneering, constructing an entryway, and installation of stained glass storm windows. A campanile was also erected. There are three bells in the campanile. The largest bell came from St. Matthews Church in Gillette; the next smaller bell came from the old St. Mary Magdalen Church in Worland; and the Elmer Jansens brought the smallest bell from a ranch in the Big Muddy field in Glenrock.

Also in the fall of 1959, the Diocesan Youth held their first meeting in Casper and Our Lady of Fatima parish started a Youth Organization, taking care of the teenage group. Also the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Committee took over the direction of the grade school catechism classes.

Growth of the parish was not confined to the buildings during this year as the parish books now listed 410 families.

1960-1962

[7] The school was completed in 1960. However a teaching staff was not available at the time, so the building was utilized for many other functions.

During the summer four Victory Knoll Sisters conducted a summer school session for catechism students in the new school building. These same Sisters used the new convent for the first time.

On September 29, 1960, Father Patrick McGovern was assigned to Our Lady of Fatima Church as its first assistant pastor. Father McGovern was already well known to the parishioners, as he had assisted with Sunday Masses while Father Grannan was recuperating from an injured hand.

In October 1960, construction of a new rectory on the church grounds was begun.

In August 1961, the rectory at 1732 Westridge Way was sold; and the unoccupied convent was used as a "temporary rectory", awaiting completion of the new rectory.

Another building was added to "Fatima Village" when a house was purchased and moved to the church grounds. The house was placed over a full basement and the exterior was faced with brick to match the existing buildings on the grounds, thus making the finished "cottage" unrecognizable from the original house as purchased.

Sadness engulfed Our Lady of Fatima parish when the assistant pastor, Father Patrick McGovern, was killed in an automobile accident on February 23, 1962 at the age of 31.

Father George Tellez became the second assistant at Our Lady of Fatima Church in March 1962.

Later that same spring, Father Grannan and Father Tellez moved into the recently completed rectory.

The "workers" of the parish did not remain idle. The parish had increased to approximately 500 families and the parish had outgrown the Church. So in [8] 1962, under the supervision of Joe Stasiak, work began on enlarging the Church. The building was lengthened with transepts added to each side; seating capacity was doubled; two

new confessionals were added; the sacristies were enlarged; and the auditorium was also enlarged.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

Without the many helping hands and hearts and the material gifts which the parishioners were so generous with, and above all without the prayers and communions offered, this parish could not have met the many goals made, nor could the small Army chapel have become such a lovely building in a few short years. All those who labored, and who gave of their monetary aid and prayers can look with pride on their church that is dedicated to Our Blessed Lady of Fatima.

SCHOOL OPENS: 1963-1964

The prayers of the clergy and parishioners were answered when it was announced that Sisters from the Order of St. Benedict would staff Our Lady of Fatima School. Sister Florence, Principal, Sister Mary John, and Sister Edmund, housekeeper soon arrived and took up residence in the convent. The doors of the school opened in September 1963, and 84 students enrolled in grades six, seven, and eight. Assisting the Sisters were two lay extension volunteers, Miss Ann Murray and Miss Sheila Vandercar, and they were the first occupants of Fatima Cottage.

This same fall, 350 children enrolled in CCD classes covering the eight elementary grades. Also 70 high school students enrolled in the high school religion classes.

A noticeable change this year was the "fall bazaar" became a "summer festival" and was held during July.

[9] On October 25, 1963, a meeting was held to discuss the formation of a Home and School Association. In conjunction with this meeting, a Parent-Teacher Club was formed on January 28, 1964.

During the fall of 1963, the roads to the rectory and cottage were blacktopped, completing the road system thru the grounds. An outdoor basketball court was added for the use of the students.

Plans were formulated during the fall to form neighborhood units, thus uniting neighborhood with the parish. This was to be known as the Contact Couple Program.

On January 2, 1964, Joe Kasper and Lorin Lefevre were appointed as the new lay trustees.

On February 4, 1964, Father Tellez left Our Lady of Fatima Church for his new assignment. Rev. William Gianola arrived from St. Joseph's Church in Rawlins and became the third assistant pastor.

Time passed quickly, and on May 28, 1964, the first class, consisting of 22 eighth graders, graduated from Our Lady of Fatima School.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED

At 8 P.M. on October 15, 1964, in the Church auditorium, a pictorial and narrative review of the first ten years of Our Lady of Fatima Church was presented to the Altar and Rosary Society. And then on October 18, at the end of 40 Hours Devotion, the same program was given for the entire parish. It was stated at this time "the people and priests have worked hard during the past ten years for the greater honor and glory of God."

There were now three Sunday Masses and three Masses on the Holy Days.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 1965

Our Lady of Fatima School was now in its second year. A Silver Tea was held on March 28, 1965, honoring the Sisters of St. Benedict who were staffing the school.

[10] Occupying Fatima Cottage at this time were Miss Frances Browning and Miss Mary Ann Scollo, lay extension volunteers.

During 1965, the parish societies continued to function, helping in numerous ways to better Our Lady of Fatima Church.

Formed during this year was a Parish Executive Board of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.

In celebration of the tenth anniversary of Our Lady of Fatima's Altar and Rosary Society, Father Grannan gave a brunch on March 21, 1965. Past presidents of the Altar and Rosary Society were honored at this time.

A parish open house was held on May 14, 1965, honoring Rev. A.H. Grannan. Father Grannan was celebrating his "Twenty-fifth Anniversary" as a priest. The parishioners made A thousand dollar donation to the seminary burse in Father's name.

It was again time for clerical assignments. On September 16, 1965, Father Gianola was assigned to St. Patrick's, Casper. The new assistant pastor at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Rev. John Murray, arrived at this same time.

ALL'S WELL: 1966-1967

These next years saw the parish continuing to run smoothly. Enrollment in Our Lady of Fatima School was very satisfactory; and it was indeed a pleasure to see the school, convent, and grounds in use.

During 1966, a parish coordinating committee was established.

Early in 1967, the "Contact Couples" were correlated with the CCD activities. The parish was divided into neighborhood areas with a contact couple in each area. Their purposes included: Welcoming newcomers (there are many transfers, in and out of our parish, of families associated with the petroleum industry); supplying information on parish activities to the Catholics in their area; rendering assistance if needed; and keeping parish census files [11] up to date. A map was placed in the rectory indicating where each family in the parish lives.

In August, 1967, Father John Murray left to become editor of the Wyoming Catholic Register. Our Lady of Fatima's next assistant pastor was Rev. Thomas Sheridan.

DISAPPOINTMENT-1968

After much consideration it became evident, due mainly to lack of proper facilities and financial problems that Our Lady of Fatima School would not open for the 1968-69-school term. However, the Sisters of St. Benedict would continue to teach the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine classes.

Graduation of the last class from Our Lady of Fatima School took place on May 23, 1968; and the school closed its doors on May 24, 1968.

Sister Edith, Sister Colette, and Sister Cor Marie, Sisters of St. Benedict, arrived to conduct a summer school session and remained at Our Lady of Fatima Parish to conduct CCD classes for the next school term.

There were many highlights too during 1968. Among them was the Priests' Institute held in late August at Our Lady of Fatima Parish. By joint effort on the part of the societies, the results of this Institute were very successful.

The parish indebtedness was diminishing and was now standing at between \$30,000.00 and \$35,000.00.

Additional Masses were needed and an evening Sunday Mass was added to the five Sunday Masses already scheduled.

A change of assistants was seen in the early fall of 1968, when Father Michael Carr replaced Father Thomas Sheridan.

A tremendous undertaking during 1968 was the "Educational Study Census" taken on October 6 by the members of Our Lady of Fatima Church. This was a citywide census with the three parishes in Casper each taking the census covering their own boundary lines, and thus every residence in Casper was contacted. [12] A study of the results of this Census was conducted for the purpose of reassessing Catholic education in Casper.

CHANGES-1969

As a result of the study made from the recent Census, the three Casper parishes combined to form a Tri-Parish CCD for junior and high school students, utilizing St. Patrick's School for classes, and a Tri-Parish Religious Education Board was also formed. Therefore, junior and high school students belonging to Our Lady of Fatima parish now attend weekly CCD classes at the Catholic Education Center. Elementary CCD classes are conducted at Our Lady at Fatima three times a week, using the school building and the church auditorium as classrooms. The elementary grades are completely staffed with volunteer lady teachers from Our Lady of Fatima parish, who so generously give of their time.

The Little Sisters of the Poor were offered the use of Our Lady of Fatima's convent and Fatima Cottage. On June 19, 1969, Mother Rose, Mother Emilie, and Sister Mary Charles arrived in Casper. Soon thereafter, Sister Therese arrived. After extensive changes in the two buildings, which were necessary in order to meet requirements established to care for elderly persons, the Sisters opened the doors and their hearts to the elderly of Wyoming. The first guests at the home were: Frank Lanouette, Frances Schertler, and Mary Wegner.

Clerical assignments were announced in August. Father Carr was assigned to St. Anthony's, Casper, while Father Donn G. Shelly was appointed assistant pastor at Our Lady of Fatima Church. However, before the end of the year, Father Shelly was sent to Cheyenne, leaving Father Grannan without an assistant.

The end of 1969 had issued 518 packets of adult envelopes. The parish indebtedness had been reduced to \$18,000.00.

The middle of December saw the start of a 5:30 P.M. Mass on Saturday. This Mass fulfills one's obligation to attend Mass on the Sabbath. Since the middle of [13] January 1970, this Saturday evening Mass has become known as the "guitar Mass" and it is well attended by both the youth and adults of the parish.

ANNUAL EVENTS:

First Communion and Confirmation classes have been held yearly, along with society meetings, the holding of many moneymaking projects, and the hostessing of various events. In particular, exceptionally successful meetings have been hosted at Our Lady of Fatima parish as was indicated by the meeting of the Cheyenne Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, held in April of 1963, and the Casper Deanery meetings of the DCCW held on October 28, 1966, and on September 25, 1968. By tradition, each year on Mother's Day, the crowning of the Blessed Virgin is held. Annually in March, the Altar and Rosary Society has continued to have a Brunch given by Father Grannan.

LOOKING AHEAD: ALL FOR THE GREATER HONOR AND GLORY OF GOD AND THE SALVATION OF SOULS

Our Lady of Fatima parish has experienced many changes since its beginning fifteen and a half years ago. The many societies have never failed to function these many years, and their members are constant help to the continued advancement of Our Lady of Fatima Parish.

In this year of 1970, Our Lady of Fatima Church remains ever active in all fields of endeavor. Our Lady of Fatima's parishioners offer grateful thanks to God for the past accomplishments of this parish. We dedicate ourselves to the salvation of our souls and other souls and ask God for His blessing in the years to come.

We are morally certain, that in God's own good plan and with the help of His grace, the blessings that have brought the big happy family of Fatima Parish to this stage of history in material, and especially spiritual [14] development, will continue for many

years into the future. May Our Lady of Fatima continue to garner graces and blessings from Her Divine Son upon the "little home away from home" which is Our Lady of Fatima Parish.

AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM

B.V.M. J.M.J.

***UNED

Casper OLF 1970 UNED [15] STATISTICS: October 1, 1954 through December 31, 1969

***UNEDEND

[16] CHARTER MEMBERS:

Altar and Rosary Society:

Mrs. W.G. McNamara, President; Mrs. B.A. Schirk, Vice-president; Mrs. James M. Huff, Secretary; Mrs. Harold Purdy, Treasurer; and Mmes. Joe Kasper, Paul Kempter, W.J. Goggin; John P. Hunter, Tom Ryan, W.E. Longpre, L.E. Hussion, E.A. Beck, E.M. Hooker, J.H. Farmer, A.J. Tram, W.J. Schirk, Casper Rowse, Joe Faulkner, Don Hall, John A. Fraher, N.P. VanMaren, L.R. Green, C.C. King, P.A. Tescher, L.D. Lefevre, Ken Blower, J.F. Dunn, E.C. Balben, Carlo Colibraro, M.W. Downie, W.C. Miley, Joe McCarthy, D.R. Norcross, John J. Pedry, Colonel E. Blagg, Joe Gilgan, H.S. Bryan, and Houston Williams.

Holy Name Society:

James Farmer, President; Ben Schirk, Vice-president; Ron Tideman, Secretary; John Haass, Treasurer; Joe Kasper, Marshall; Father Grannan, Spiritual Moderator; and Leo Smith, Dean Owens, Warren Perkins, Richard McClaskey, Clarence Nollette, James Ryan, John Rees, Carl Grieshaber, Douglas Kincaid, Elmer Jansen, Jim Price, Robert A. Meyer, Lin Meese, Dan Norcross, William Svoboda, Wilfred Longpre, E.V. Dobbins, Paul Kempter, Joe Culver, Cecil Ainsworth, Francis Mullin, Leo Hallock, Tom and Dick Kasper, William Muller, James Herold, N.P. VanMaren, Virgil Smith, John Keeley, Philip Peters, Robert D. Meyers, Anthony Kawulok, Ray Bader, Casper Rowse, Everett Beck and L.D. Lefevre.

Choir:

Miss Shirley Kercher and Miss Shirley Kobel, leaders; and Mrs. Madalain Lynch, Mary Christopher, Tommy Ann Eager, Danice Hooker, Mrs. J.P. Hunter, Mrs. C.L. Dalgarno,

Mrs. S.A. Reimers and Sylvia, Peggy Graf, Catherine Graf, Ann Donohue, Pat Kasper, Nancy Gilgan, Stella Howard, Patricia and Dorothy Howard, Evelyn Downie, Donna Stagg, Beverly Janeaux, Connie Dalgarno, Martha Kallerud, Dick Schirk, Vic Poirer, and Barbara McIlroy, organist.

[17] PERSONS IN "FIRST" CLASSES:

The First Holy Communion Class (May 8, 1955) included:

Daniel Crawford, Leo Dunn, John Gilgan, Paul Hunter, Jack Kasper, James LaBerge, Jerry Marburger, Steven VanMaren, John McCarthy, Russell Ruttinger, Larry Slaymaker, Dennis Green, Paul Stapleton, James W. Huff, Larry Culver, David Pedry, Richard Blower, Jerry Jacobs, Keith Norcross, Sandra Balben, Jo Anne Clark, Mary Ellen Haass, Alice Jager, Janice Lewallen, Linda Muller, Rosemary Pearce, Karen Prazak, Sharon Tescher, and Maureen Ahern.

The first Confirmation Class (April 8, 1956) included:

Brian J. Clare, John W. Dunn, Alvin T. Eager, James R. Farmer, Robert J. Ford, Barbara J. Goulette, LeRoy Green, Bernice A. Hamilton, Janice M. Houck, Mary J. Hurley, Connie J. Kercher, Helen Kinsella, Melvin R. Moen, Jayne Morton, Jan L. Prazak, Russell Ruttinger, Priscilla Schultz, Cary A. Shafsky, Shirley A. Simeone, Cora A. Tescher, Wm. L. Townsend and Patricia Van Horn.

The first graduating class of Our Lady of Fatima School (May 28, 1964) included:

Linda Bochmann, JaNel Dubsky, Molly Bochmann, Margery Lefevre, Judy Mack, Jane Benes, Constance McCann, Peggy Stasiak, Denise Damme, Denise Fitzsimmons, Christine Sullivan, Dolores Perrett, Veronica Spencer, Patricia Monohan, Ann Whiston, Danny Vogel, Jim Legerski, Mike Snow, David Tokach, James Bush, Mike Fuson, and David Chorney.

[18] DONATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS:

The following parishioners provided for the very necessary and essential furnishings and appurtenances for the "chapel" transforming it into a most worthy "House of God" and for other items:

Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd N. Hagood—Main Altar

Altar and Rosary Sanctuary Group:

Mrs. C.J. Carter, Chairman—Magnificent blue and gold drapes in sanctuary

Mr. & Mrs. W.A. Blind—Tabernacle

Mr. & Mrs. E.E. Allen—Chalice

Mr. & Mrs. E.T. Daly—Stations of the Cross

Mrs. J.P. Becker & son Ernest—Sanctuary Crucifix

Mr. & Mrs. E. Flahe—Spire Cross

Mr. & Mrs. Ray Studer—Our Lady of Fatima Statue

Mr. & Mrs. T.J. White—St. Joseph Statue

George Kobel—Altar Chimes and Cruets

Mr. & Mrs. T.J. O'Leary—Communions

Mr. & Mrs. Paul E. Kempter—Side Altar

Timothy J. O'Leary and Hugh S. Bryan—New coat of paint on rectory at 1745 Westridge Drive

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph J. Gilgan—St. Joseph's Side Altar

Mr. Frank Plemel, father of John P. Hunter of this parish, in memory of the Hunter family—Donated toward the pews

Donating toward the pews was Mrs. Carlo Colibraro, sons, Philip, Daniel, and their sister Rose, in memory of their father and husband.

S.W. Stewart and George Weber of Weber Floor Covering Company—Donated their labor to lay blue and gold tile flooring in the church

Hugh S. Bryan—Made and donated a wooden tabernacle, canopy and three prie dieux

[19] Anonymous out-of-town friend of the parish—Donated the statues placed in the Garden for God

Mr. & Mrs. Mark (Friday) O'Connell—Were monetarily generous toward all building phases

Boatright-Smith—Donated labor and materials over the years for excavations, back filling, grading and graveling in the amount of approximately \$50,000.00

The abovementioned are only a few of the many who have donated of their gifts, time, labor or monetary aid during the years.

Our Lady of Fatima Casper 1980-1990 Shelby Loftus, CCW President

Our Lady of Fatima Casper 1980-1990 Shelby Loftus, CCW President

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

Father Daniel Colibraro: June 1977 - present

Father Gerry Sullivan: July 1978 - June 1981

Father Terry Hruska: Jan 1987 - Jan 1988

Father Joseph Hebert: Aug 1989 - May 1990

Father Philip Colibraro: July 1990 - present

Sister Mary Carlo [Carol]: June 1988 - present

Father Alphonsus Grannan assisted at masses until his death May 11, 1986.

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

1981 Carl Gallinger left to study for priesthood.

1981 Terri O'Brien won as top performer in "Stars of Tomorrow" contest.

1983 Chad Ripperger left to study for priesthood.

1984 Lori Woitaszewski named Casper College Honoree.

1985 \$1500 collected by parishioners for Cheyenne flood victims.

1985 Lisa Archibeque named Miss Teen America.

1985 Greg Kapeles is state winner in National Greeting Card Contest.

1987 Rich Gasowski had two articles published in Police Journal.

1989 Brenda Farmer received the Horatio Algier Award, which included a trip to Washington D.C.

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

May 1981 - Father Dan Colibraro celebrates his 25th anniversary of Ordination with a special Mass and reception.

June 1988 - Sister Mary Carlo began the Caring Ministry program, which includes hospital and nursing home visitation, providing rides and meals for the sick.

1989 - Sister Mary Carlo began AIDS Ministry Team.

March 1989 & March 1990 - A Morning of Reflection was held, with talks, reflection

time, and small-group sharing.

November 1990 - Sister Mary Carlo began two programs: Prayer Ministry and Telephone Reassurance Program.

Father Dan Colibraro began annual adult education classes.

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

1981 - Paneling, altar table, lecterns and new carpet installed in sanctuary.

1982 - Fatima Parish Hall (basement of church) completely remodeled and new equipment purchased.

1983 - New windows installed in school.

1984 - Drop-In Center basement remodeled for young adults.

1984 - Holy Name Society put split-rail fence around church property.

1986 - Holy Name Society repaired the church bells.

May 1987 - Father Grannan's Memorial Stone was placed in the Grotto.

November 1988 - New hymnal holders installed in pews.

November 1989 - Elevator installed in main church building.

Summer 1990 - Two rooms in school remodeled.

5. Land acquisitions: (give dates)

None

6. Lay Trustees and term of service for each:

Ray Charles - 1977 to present

Lorin Lefevre - 1977 to present

7. Pastor's overview of the decade:

The past decade has been one in which there has been steady growth in parish activities. Most significant has been the development of the youth program under the direction of James Zierden and the adults of the parish. Mr. Zierden has enjoyed a good deal of success in engaging the adults to participate in the youth program.

The music, liturgy, and art and environment staffs have done outstanding work. Of the past three years the Caring Ministry program has made great strides in reaching out to and aiding the elderly, particularly in bringing the Eucharist to shut-ins.

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

1981 - An evangelistic mission was held. Father Czaja was the priest evangelist.

1981 - Children put on special liturgy, a "Snoopy" Mass, for Father Dan's 25th Anniversary of Ordination, with a reception following.

October 1981 - Father Dan performed the first Blessing of Animals, which still occurs yearly.

1982 & 1983 - Fatima Family Olympics was held in the summer sponsored by Confirmation students and adult parishioners.

1983 - Jim Zierden, Youth Minister, started many Junior and Senior High youth activities: retreats, lock-ins, Bible studies, youth group meetings and trips. The youth had many fund-raisers to support the program. He involved many adults as chaperons and sponsors.

1984 - Youth Drop-In Center, located in basement of cottage, was begun by Youth Minister Jim Zierden.

1985 - Holy Name Society began serving Mexican dinners to benefit Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for the needy. Dinners continue.

1985 - CCW Bake Sale aids Holy Name Society with their food baskets for needy at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Event continues.

1985 - A new religious education program, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, started. This program offers hands-on lessons and encourages spontaneous prayer. The program now covers preschool through first grade.

1987 - CCW ladies compiled a Centennial Cookbook to be sold at WCCW convention, which we hosted.

July 1987 - Father Grannan's Memorial and OLF statue were blessed, which was followed by a Fatima Festival including a Fatima History Room.

September 1987 - Fellowship time, with coffee and donuts, was begun and continues.

November 1987 - Father Farrell, O.P., led a Five-day Mission.

December 1988 - Toys, donated by parishioners, were given to needy children at Christmas

December 1988 - Children of OLF collected two large baskets full of soap, shampoo, deodorants during the Children's Mass to give to Holy Cross brothers.

December 1988 - The "60 Something Dinner" was given for parishioners 60 plus by the Senior High Youth group and is an annual event.

May 1988 - OLF held Open House for new library, located in the Education Center basement.

November 1989 - Thanksgiving Mass given by Father Carl Gallinger, following his Mass of Ordination.

1990 - CCW sponsored one needy Natrona County child in an insurance Caring Program sponsored by Blue Cross/Blue Shield Insurance Company.

February 1990 - A Time and Talent Program initiated - an appeal to parishioners to share responsibility in Lay Ministry.

September 1990 - Aging Process Seminar held.

May 1990 - The Pilgrim Virgin Home Visitation program was started by purchase of the International Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima by CCW.

May 1990 - "Aging Parents" video by Dr. Richard Johnson was shown.

Annual Events:

Children's Christmas Liturgy on Christmas Eve.

Celebrations: birthdays; anniversaries of Ordinations; farewells; receptions for new clergy, staff and newcomers.

General cleaning of church by CCW.

General grounds clean up by Holy Name Society.

Food collected every fourth Sunday for Holy Cross Brothers.

Our Lady of Fatima
1990-2000
Fr. Phil Colibraro, Pastor
April 6, 2000

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

Rev. Daniel Colibraro 1990-1998. Then he retired.

Rev. Philip Colibraro 1998 to present Pastor

Deacon Ed. McCarthy 1998 to present

Liturgist Sister Mary Carlo 1990-1996. Caring Ministry Program begins.

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

Religious education dept. 1990 to present: Teresa Sears

Youth Ministry 1999 to present, Kris Gaddis

Caring Ministry Program begun and continues, Mary Lee Bell

3. Notable accomplishments by the clergy and religious. (Give dates.)

Rev. Dan Colibraro Remodel sanctuary 1987.

Rev. Philip Colibraro Remodel front of Church, June 2000

Remodel of Parish Offices, 1995 both Fr. Phil & Fr. Dan

4. Construction - new or remodeling. (Give dates.) See #3

5. Land acquisitions. (Give dates.) None

6. Lay Trustees and term of service for each.

Lorin Lefevre 1990-1997 Ray Charles 1990 to present Jan Harshman 1997 to present

7. Pastor's overview of the decade.

The parish is slowly growing... Programs are continuing and improving.