

Souvenir

Silver Jubilee

Church of  
Our Lady of the Lake  
Green Lake, Wisconsin

1908 - 1933

# Our Lady of the Lake

Green Lake, Wisconsin

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## Christ's Plan of Salvation

**G**OD'S revelation to man, begun through the prophets of the Old Testament, was completed in Jesus Christ. Never will there be any further revelation. "God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all in these days hath spoken to us by His Son." (Hebr. I, 1,2). The teaching of Jesus must be the guide to salvation for men until the end of time. And in order that men of all times might receive His teaching without addition and without subtraction, Jesus established His Church, which He guaranteed would exist unchanged in doctrine throughout the ages. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. XVI, 18). "Going therefore teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. XXVIII, 18). "If any man will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican." (Matt. XVIII, 17). These words of Jesus outline clearly His plan of salvation. Men are to be saved by His Church which is governed by Peter. This Church is authorized to teach men His doctrine. Jesus will dwell in this Church to preserve it from error. Any man who rejects this Church is no better than a heathen or a publican, a heathen who despises the means of salvation offered to him, a publican who willfully persists in impenitence. Hence it is that wherever men are desirous of following Christ's plan for gaining salvation, they are anxious for the establishment of Christ's Church amongst them. It was this desire that led to the establishment of the Church of Our Lady of the Lake at Green Lake, Wisconsin.

## Origin of the Parish

The first steps towards the establishment of a Catholic church in this community were taken by Rev. Thomas Cosgrove, pastor

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of St. Patrick's church in Ripon. In the spring of 1907 Mr. George Ross, proprietor of the Pleasant Point Hotel at Green Lake, suggested to Father Cosgrove the idea of conducting Catholic services during the summer months for the guests of his hotel. Acting on the suggestion Father Cosgrove celebrated mass each Sunday during July and August of that year at some one of the cottages on the Lake shore, mostly at Dennis McCarthy's cottage.

At the end of the summer, in September a meeting of Catholic men was held at Pleasant Point Hotel. Among those present were Dennis McCarthy, Thomas Collins, George O'Callaghan, John O'Callaghan, Matthew De Moss, Joseph De Moss, John Broder, John Hoffmann and Thomas Keenan. It was the judgment of these gentlemen that the time had come for the establishment of a permanent church at the Lake. As a preliminary step it was voted to purchase a plot of ground. Mr. Thomas Keenan was authorized to make the purchase. Two lots at the corner of Lake and Ruth streets, were selected and bought from Mr. Wilkie Walker for the sum of \$600. The following year Mr. Joseph Klein of Chicago bought an adjoining lot on Ruth street and donated it to the church.

During the winter months of 1907-08 no services were held at Green Lake. In the following summer mass was celebrated regularly on Sundays in various cottages, mostly in the Dennis McCarthy cottage and on a pavilion on the grounds of Mr. Thomas Collins. In the fall and early winter of 1908 Father Cosgrove conducted services in a vacant house on Illinois avenue, later owned by Mr. Matthew De Moss.

### **The New Church**

Meanwhile building operations had been started on the new church edifice. The cornerstone was laid on Sunday afternoon August 23, 1908 by Archbishop Messmer of Milwaukee. He was assisted in the ceremonies by Rev. F. J. Fiss, Rev. Eugene McCarthy, Rev. John Zeller and Rev. Thomas Cosgrove. The church was built by a local carpenter, Mr. Charles Butler, at a cost of \$2800. It was ready for services by the end of the year.

On the second Sunday in January, 1909 formal dedication services were conducted by Father Cosgrove, authorized for the purpose by Archbishop Messmer. The new church was dedicated to God and placed under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary, with the specific title of "Our Lady of the Lake." Whilst every church is primarily "God's House," and its primary purpose

worship of God, yet in accordance with a tradition that dates back to the earliest ages of Christianity churches are frequently placed under the protection and erected in honor of God's saints, notably of the greatest of saints, God's own Mother. American Catholics in particular have shown a preference for the Blessed Virgin Mary in the dedication of their churches; for at the present day more than 3000 American churches honor her as their heavenly patroness. It need scarcely be said that this dedication of churches to the saints in no way derogates from the supreme honor and worship which is paid to God alone. It is a secondary honor paid to those who are God's dearest friends and who are united with Him in heaven. It is the belief of Catholics that because of their nearness to God the saints can aid men by their intercession. In fact, "the communion of saints," the truth that the saints hear our prayers is enshrined in the Apostles' Creed, which all Christians accept. The dedication of churches in their honor is therefore our Catholic way of honoring the saints and of enlisting their aid in our behalf through their intercession with God.

Beginning thus in January, 1909 regular services were held by Father Cosgrove who came from Ripon each Sunday for that purpose. The finances of the congregation were placed in charge of Messrs. Thomas Collins and Matthew De Moss, who had been elected its first trustees.

### **Succession of Pastors**

In the fall of 1910 Father Cosgrove was transferred to Fond du Lac and Father James Condon became pastor of St. Patrick's, Ripon, with the Green Lake church as a mission. In 1912 Father Condon was succeeded in Ripon by Father Michael Norton, who also took charge of Green Lake as a mission. Father Norton resigned St. Patrick's, Ripon in 1921 and took up his residence in Green Lake, which thereby became an independent parish. In June, 1923, Father Norton resigned his pastorate. Thus Green Lake was left without the services of a priest.

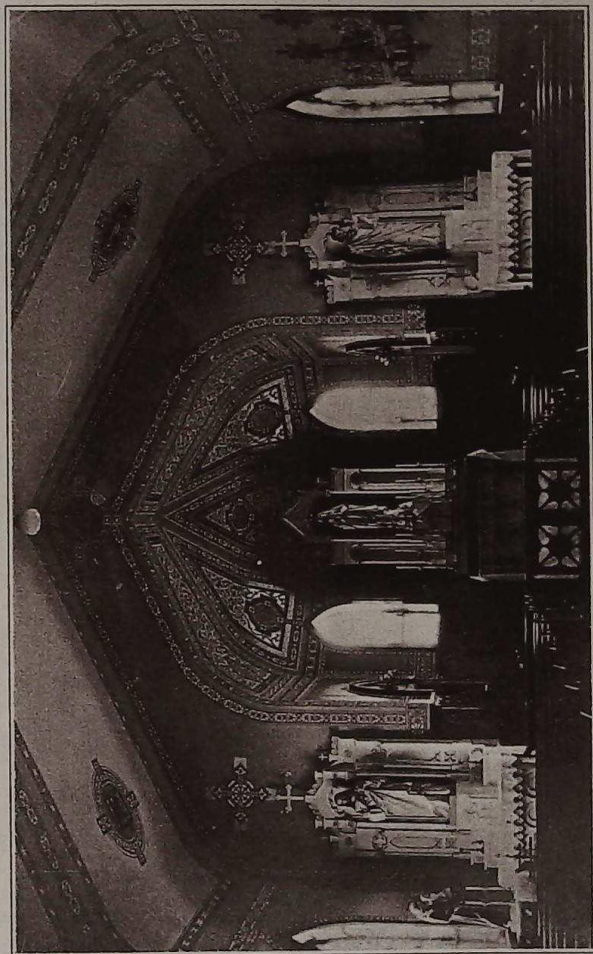
At this juncture Mr. Patrick J. Kelly went to Milwaukee to discuss the situation with Archbishop Messmer. The Archbishop seemed inclined to leave Green Lake without a pastor because he had no priest to send there. Mr. Kelly suggested that the Capuchin Fathers of Mt. Calvary might consent to take temporary charge of the parish. The suggestion met with the Archbishop's approval and he gave Mr. Kelly a letter to Father Corbinian, superior at Mt.

Calvary, explaining the situation and requesting the Capuchin Fathers to administer the parish at least temporarily. Arrangements were satisfactorily completed and in July Father Andrew Neufeld was appointed to take regular charge at Green Lake.

On his arrival at Green Lake Father Andrew at once called attention to various needs of the church, and with the cooperation of the energetic board of trustees lost no time in beginning the work of renovation and improvement. The entire exterior of the building was painted in a pleasing color of French gray, with trimmings of white; a new metal cross, decorated with bright gold-leaf, was placed on the spire; and the shingle roof was covered with moss-green stain, so that the church presented a most attractive appearance to the passers-by. The interior was likewise greatly improved. The side walls were painted in three colors, artistically blended into one, to present a handsome Tiffany effect, whilst the gracefully-arched ceiling received a uniform coat of delicate cream color. Notable new furnishings were added: two side altars, built to harmonize with the main altar; a spacious organ loft in the rear of the church; a set of beautiful stations of the cross in relief-group style; a sanctuary lamp of onyx and gold; a confessional of quartered oak; a statue of St. Anthony and a Pieta; and two electric light chandeliers in the sanctuary. To insure the comfort of the congregation in the cold winter season a furnace of ample dimensions in the basement was substituted for the two mammoth stoves, which formerly occupied space in the auditorium of the church and somewhat marred its appearance. Finally a bell, five hundred pounds in weight, was placed in the church tower to summon the faithful to the various services.

The completion of this work was signalized by an impressive service on Christmas morning. A solemn high mass was decided upon for the occasion. This would have been a simple matter in any large city parish, but at Green Lake it was a problem. The church had no choir and no organist, it lacked the required vestments, and there was only one priest. But where there is a will, there is a way, and Father Andrew resolved to find the way of having a solemn mass. Mt. Calvary must come to the assistance of Green Lake. Father Corbinian, the superior at Mt. Calvary, kindly agreed to send two extra priests and the necessary vestments, and some of the college students consented to play and sing the mass.

Next was the problem of bringing fathers and students and vestments to Green Lake. The village is forty miles distant from



INTERIOR OF CHURCH

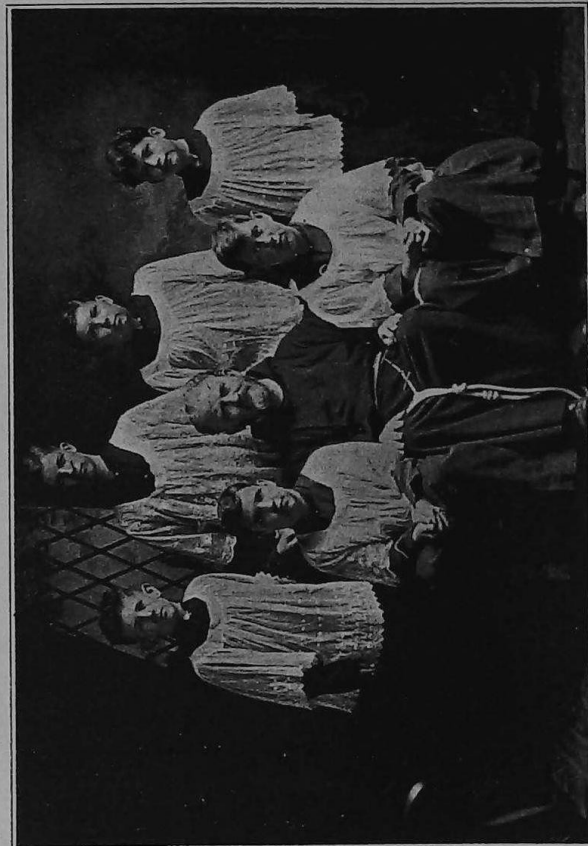
Mt. Calvary. There was no rectory attached to the church. Father Andrew had been enjoying the hospitality of the family of Mr. Patrick J. Kelly, but it would have been unreasonable to expect the additional priests and students to find lodging at Mr. Kelly's during the night preceding Christmas. However, Mr. Kelly found a solution of the difficulty. Early on Christmas morning he would send his large touring car to Mt. Calvary and bring the party by automobile to Green Lake. It was a feasible plan, if the weather proved favorable. Christmas morning came, and the weather was ideal—a bright sunny morning and not too cold. At six o'clock the car left Green Lake, and returning it landed the party safe at the church door at 9.45.

Promptly at ten o'clock the church bell sent forth a joyous peal to announce the beginning of the service. The church was comfortably filled with parishioners and their friends. The altars were decked with a wealth of candle and flowers, and a profusion of Christmas greens gave a festive appearance to the body of the church. Presently the organ began to play, and voices from the organ loft sent forth the joyful strains of a Christmas hymn by way of processional. Meanwhile altar boys and officiating priests slowly approached the altar. Father Andrew was the celebrant, assisted by Father Corbinian as deacon and Father Maurus as subdeacon. The mass progressed with becoming solemnity until the gospel. Here there was an interruption during which Father Andrew gave expression to his gratification on the occasion and introduced Father Corbinian as the preacher of the day. The sermon was both an enthusiastic commendation of the work accomplished and a forceful interpretation of the mystery of the feast. The mass continued in due order until the end and was followed by benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The hymn "Holy God We Praise Thy Name," chanted in chorus by the entire congregation, brought the service to a fitting close.

#### Notable Donations

The improvements to the church listed above were made possible by the generosity of the parishioners and various members of the summer colony both Catholic and non-Catholic. During 1924 and 1925 a series of card parties netted some \$2000. Particular furnishings were donated by the following persons.

1. The Sacred Heart Altar by Mrs. Vincent Duncan.
  2. The St. Joseph Altar by Mrs. Thomas Collins.
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Standing: John Carew, Patrick Kelly, Daniel Kelly, Martin Kelly  
Seated: Burton Blommer, Father Andrew, John Greenway

3. The Stations of the Cross by Mr. and Mrs. P. J. Kelly.
4. The Organ Loft by Mr. and Mrs. John Schaack.
5. The Sanctuary Lamp by Miss Carrie Smith.
6. The Tower Bell by Miss Brigid Lenihan.
7. The St. Anthony Statue by Miss Harriet Savignac.
8. The Pieta by Mrs. P. J. Kelly.
9. The Mass Chalice by Miss Carrie Smith.
10. A Set of Red Vestments by Miss Margaret Prendergast.

Father Andrew wishes also to acknowledge and register his thanks for a scholarship for poor students for the priesthood contributed by the parish to St. Lawrence college at Mt. Calvary as a memorial of his silver jubilee of ordination to the holy priesthood on September 21, 1927.

In preparation for the silver jubilee the interior of the church was newly decorated in the spring of the present year. The expense thereby incurred is the sole indebtedness on the church. It is hoped that this debt will be cancelled by donations which are respectfully solicited.

### **The Church Today**

At the present time ample opportunity is provided for divine worship by two masses on each Sunday morning and on the holy-days of the year, by afternoon service in the winter and by evening service in the summer months. Regular instruction in Christian doctrine is given to the younger children by the teaching of catechism and to older children and adults by an advanced course in religion, including a study of the Holy Bible. Each year during Lent a course of sermons is preached at the afternoon service. Special devotions are held in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the First Friday of the summer months and in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary during the month of May.

At various times efforts have been made to present Catholic teaching to the general public. In the fall of 1928 the pastor gave a series of popular lectures on fundamental questions of religion, and a second series in 1929, to which the public was invited. The lectures were followed up by a Religious Inquiry class held on Saturday evenings. On March 5th of the present year the pastor delivered a public lecture at Thrasher's Opera House in the village on "Catholics and People of Other Belief." This lecture was attended by an audience that taxed the capacity of the hall, numbering some 300 persons.

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### **To Our Blessed Lady**

Mother of Mercy! day by day  
My love of thee grows more and more;  
Thy gifts are strewn upon my way,  
Like sands upon the great sea-shore.

Though poverty and work and woe  
The masters of my life may be,  
When times are worst, who does not know  
Darkness is light, with love of thee?

But scornful men have coldly said  
Thy love was leading me from God;  
And yet in this I did but tread  
The very path my Savior trod.

They know but little of thy worth  
Who speak these heartless words to me;  
For what did Jesus love on earth  
One half so tenderly as thee?

Get me the grace to love thee more;  
Jesus will give if thou wilt plead;  
And, Mother! when life's cares are o'er,  
Oh I shall love thee then indeed.

Jesus, when His three hours were run,  
Bequeath'd thee from the cross to me;  
And oh! how can I love thy Son,  
Sweet Mother! if I love not thee?

—F. W. Faber.

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**Solemn Jubilee Service**

SUNDAY MORNING, AUGUST SIXTH, 1933

at ten o'clock.

**Pontifical High Mass**

*Celebrated by*

**His Excellency**

**Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, D. D.**

*Bishop of Omaha*

Singenberger's Mass in Honor of St. Rita

will be rendered by

THE CHURCH CHOIR

MRS. MARGARET BLOMMER

*at the Organ.*

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