



STS. CYRIL & METHODIUS CATHOLIC CHURCH

EAST HELENA, MONTANA

Hvaldein

Forbo Maass
Sammalms Vikar
Profijön Helena

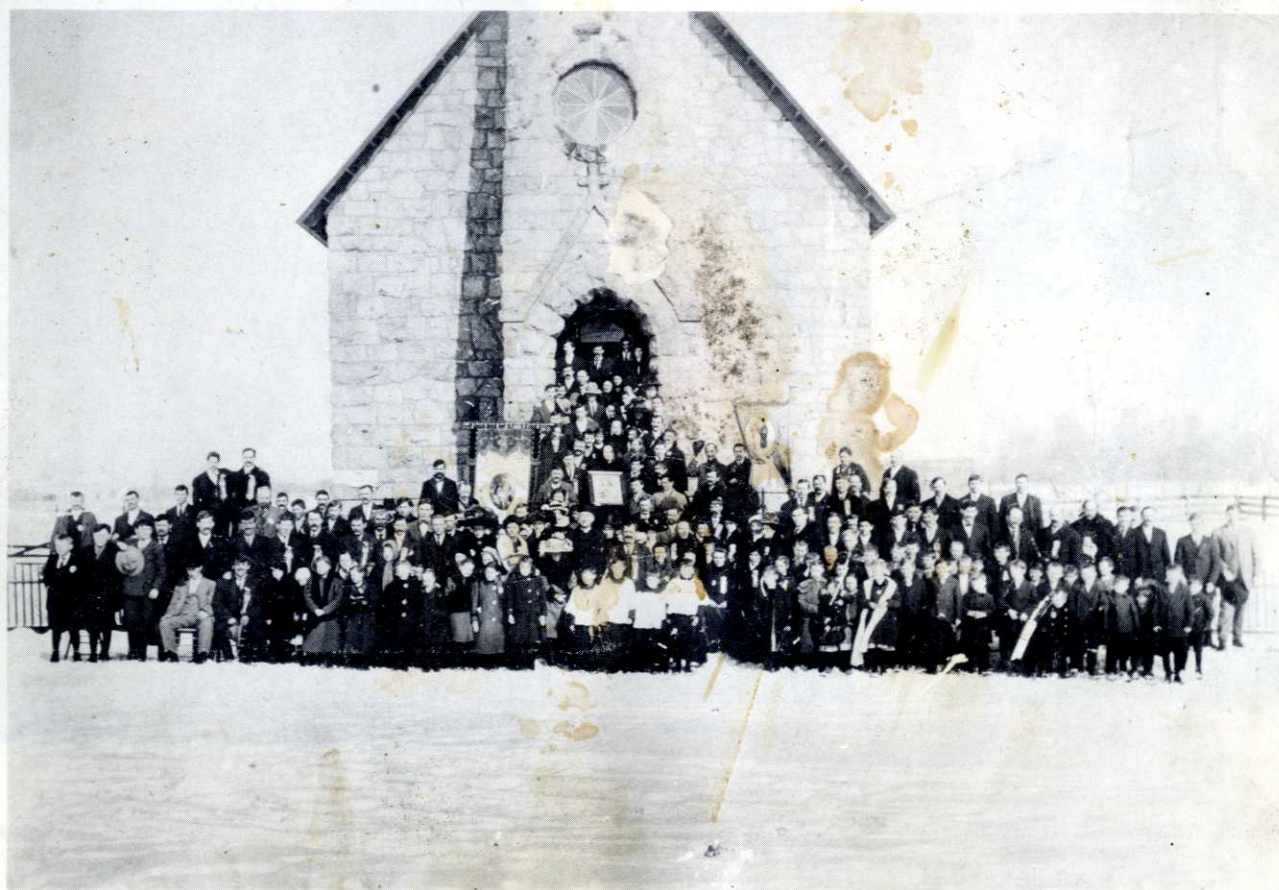


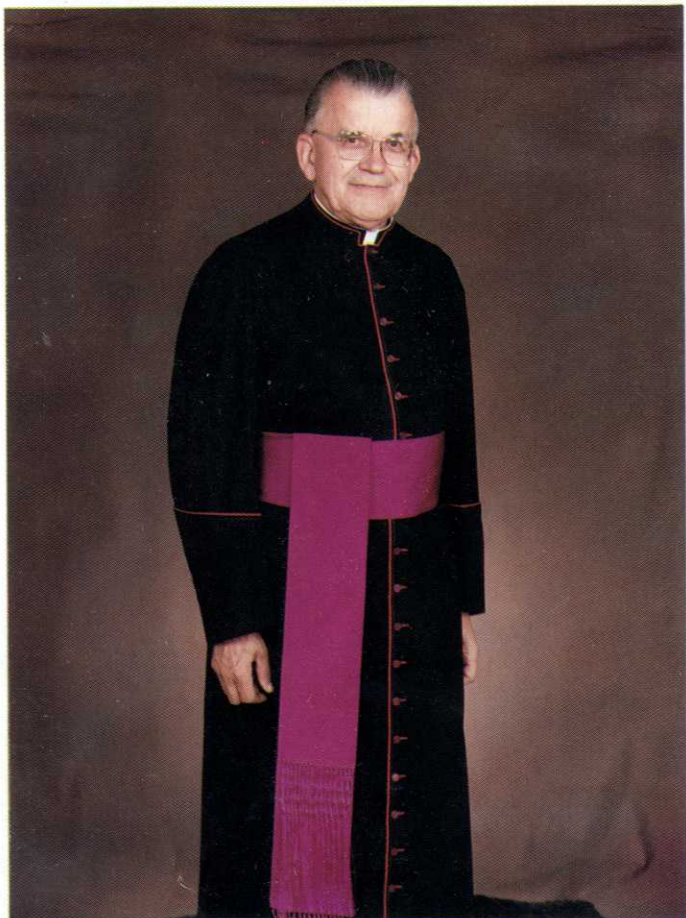
ORIGINAL CHURCH INTERIOR (circa. 1940)

ORIGINAL CHURCH EXTERIOR (circa. 1988)

ORIGINAL CHURCH AT DEDICATION
WITH PARISHIONERS (1895)

Special thanks to Frank Smole



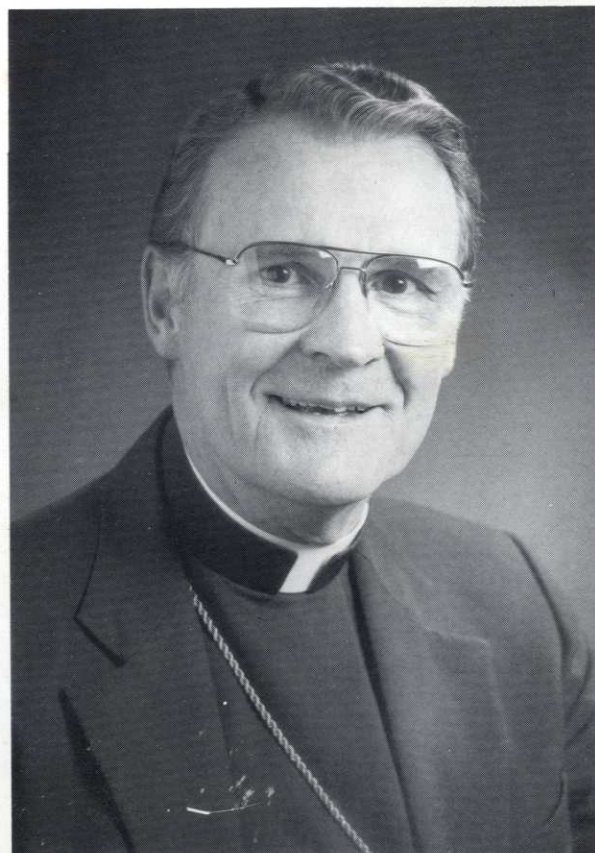


We welcome you to our Parish Album. We celebrate who we are as a church. Our new building gives us a wonderful place to gather but we remember it is the people now and throughout our almost 100 years that make us a church. Hopefully our new facility will serve us as well as the one conceived by the pioneers shown in the picture of the original building dedication in this album. The people of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in East Helena, Our Lady of the Lake at Canyon Ferry and St. John's in Clancy join with me in thanking those who have made our parish all that it is and all that it will be in the future.

May God bless you all with his love,

Monsignor Joseph Mavsar, V.G.

Bishop Elden F. Curtiss
Bishop of Diocese of Helena



HISTORY

According to his diary, Bishop John Brondel dedicated the Cornerstone of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church on November 16, 1895. However, the Catholic faith had been established in the community of East Helena since 1888, when the smelter was established. The international flavor of East Helena was established when immigrants from Slovenia, Croatia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Montenegro, Italy and Ireland came there seeking work and subsequently to worship in a new parish. In its earliest years the parish was served by various visiting priests, among them the priests from Sacred Heart Cathedral in Helena. Sunday Mass was offered in the Odd Fellows Hall from 1888 until the new church was completed. Bishop Brondel dedicated the new church on July 23, 1899.

The new church, placed under the patronage of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, was constructed at a cost of \$3,450.80. The building was built of native red porphyry donated by T.C. Power and quarried south of East Helena. Much of the labor was donated by stonemasons and carpenters from the new parish.

The first residential priest was Rev. Felix Kientz who served the parish from January, 1911 until December, 1912. From 1912 until 1926 the parish was served respectively by Rev. Anthony Heitoff (1912-1916), Rev. John Scherf (1916-1920), and Rev. Charles Scullon (1920-1926). During Father Scullon's pastorate the church was redecorated and new pews, altar, stations of the cross and other furnishings were added. Rev. Lionel Legris succeeded Father Scullon and served the parish until 1930 when Rev. George Lambertus was named pastor.



Rev. Kientz



Rev. Heitoff



Rev. Scherf



Rev. Scullon



Rev. Legris



Rev. Lambertus

In 1935 the church was extensively damaged by earthquakes and required rebuilding. The new construction nearly doubled the size of the church with the addition of a new sanctuary. Basement renovation resulted in a new parish hall. Father Lambertus died in 1942 and was succeeded by Rev. Edward Gilmore. During Father Gilmore's pastorate the sanctuary was redecorated and a Kilgen pipe organ was installed in 1948. In 1946 a financial drive was begun and soon after, at a cost of \$17,000, a new modern rectory was built replacing the log structure of an earlier era.

In 1952 Father Gilmore was succeeded by Rev. Charles McCarthy who served the parish until 1966 when he was followed by Rev. James White, former librarian of Carroll College. In 1977 Father White was succeeded by Rev. Joseph Mavsar. Under Father Mavsar's leadership many innovations in parish life have been undertaken, the most important of which is the construction of a new multi-faceted parish plant. The new edifice was dedicated by Bishop Elden F. Curtiss in June of 1989.

Included within the parish of Sts. Cyril and Methodius are the missions: St. John's at Clancy, and Our Lady of the Lake at Canyon Ferry. St. John's history reaches back to January 1, 1900, when Bishop Brondel purchased land across the street from the Clancy schoolhouse. In the same year he acquired the schoolhouse and had it moved to the site purchased earlier. The building became St. John's Catholic Church after having served for six years as the Methodist house of worship. Throughout its long history St. John's was served by various pastors from 1900 to 1911. The first pastor of Boulder, Rev. J.B. Thompson, served as pastor until 1905. His successors include Rev. C.J. Harrington (1905-1907), Rev. P.D. Ryan (1907-1909), Rev. T.C. Ahern (1909), and Rev. M.A. Lynch (1910-1911). In 1911, after the appointment of the first residential pastor in East Helena, St. John's was delegated to the pastor of East Helena as a mission church.

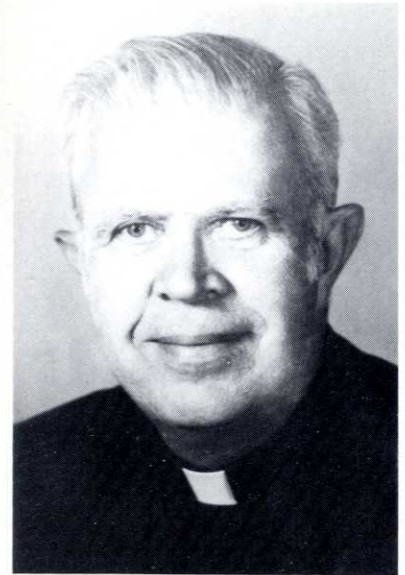
Father Charles McCarthy transferred services to the Methodist Church in Clancy because of the deterioration of St. John's. In 1980, the growing Catholic community of St. John's undertook the renovation of the old building which was rededicated on March 9, 1986, by Bishop Curtiss. Services are held there every Sunday.



Rev. Gilmore



Rev. McCarthy



Rev. White

Not nearly as old as St. John's, but yet another vital and expanding Catholic community has developed at Canyon Ferry. As far back as 1951 Mass was offered occasionally in private homes or at the Canyon Ferry School. Father McCarthy began a fund drive for a permanent building but was transferred before a site was chosen. Father White continued the fund drive and held regular summer services in the community center owned by the Bureau of Reclamation. On land donated by Josephine Cope of Helena and Jim Gist of Augusta, Father Mavsar began construction of a new permanent church. On July 25, 1982, the new building was dedicated by Bishop Curtiss as Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church. It is located on Canyon Ferry Lake in Magpie Gulch. Services are held each Sunday from May until the end of October. They are also held once each month during winter and on all religious holidays.

In 1984 a concerted effort began to plan for the needs of the growing parish in East Helena. The need for a new facility became obvious in 1980 after a careful study was made by Father Mavsar and the Parish Council. Population trends indicated that the community would grow and that a new facility would be needed to meet the demands of the future. In 1988 the parish planning board resolved that construction of the new building would begin in the spring of 1988 at an estimated cost of \$1,200,000. The building was completed in the Spring of 1989 and dedicated that June. Many features of the old building are incorporated in the new, including the original porphyry stone and the stained glass windows. All aspects of parish life are conducted in the new building including religious education, RCIA, parish meetings, social gatherings and parish business affairs. The facility is also used regularly for diocesan meetings and activities such as Cursillo and Pre-Cana Conferences.

ST. ANN'S SCHOOL

In a brief history of St. Ann's School, Sister Mary Seraphine Sheehan (SCL) notes that St. Ann's School opened as a result of agreements reached between Mother Irene McGrath of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth (SCL) and Bishop John Carroll in the Spring of 1907. The promise made by Sister Irene that two Sisters of Charity would come to Montana to establish a Catholic school in East Helena was fulfilled by her successor, Mother Mary Olive Mead. In the Fall of 1907 Sister Mary Louisa Madden and Sister Mary Annunciata O'Brien arrived in Helena to pioneer the creation of St. Ann's.

In a building purchased by Bishop Carroll and used formerly as a boarding house, the school was established on the outskirts of East Helena. The first school had an enrollment of 75 students which soon increased to 103. During his pastorate Father Scherf built a residence for the sisters which was attached to the school. After twenty years of use, the old building was closed and St. Ann's on Riggs Street was opened in 1928 during the pastorate of Father Legris. Funding for the new building was secured by Msgr. Victor Day from the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. The school was fully accredited in 1930. Until a new convent was built in 1959, sisters travelled each day from Helena to teach. The last class, numbering 17, was graduated on June 1, 1967. The closure of the school led to the development of a well organized religious education program that continues to flourish in the new parish facility.

STS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS PARISH

Monsignor Joseph Mavsar, Pastor	227-5334
Marie Lowney, Coordinator Religious Education	227-6260
Elementary and Junior High	
Bill Hunthausen, Coordinator Religious Education	227-6260
Senior High	
Lois Prebil, Bookkeeper	227-5334
Barbara Botz, Secretary	227-5334
Bill Knott, Maintenance Man	227-5334
Mary Stipich, Janitress	227-5334
Bob Jahner, Pastoral Council Host	442-3947
Lynette Pendergast, Facilities Coordinator	442-4783
Judy Wright, Liturgical Ministries Coordinator	227-6130

