

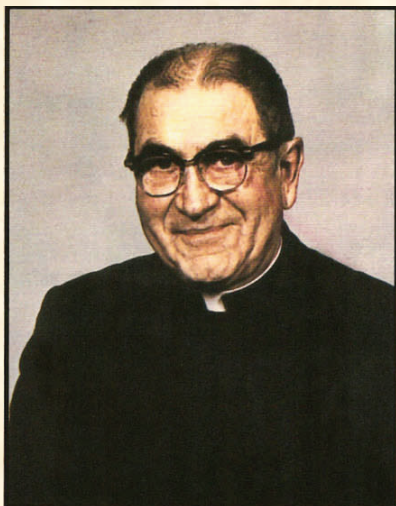
The following information is from the original 1957 document provided by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Archives with minor editing to accommodate space restraints...

***Dedication:***

***To the pioneers of St. Patrick's Parish whose initiative and generosity are our inspiration today, this history is respectfully dedicated.***

\* \* \*

**Our Past, 1848 - 1957**



Fr. Joseph Hanauska  
1956-1983

The following history was authored by Father J.F. Hanauska sometime in 1957. Interestingly he opened the St. Patrick timeline with:

“As the people of St. Patrick’s are about to start upon one of the most important building projects of their time, it is interesting to note some of the events that have taken place in this past century.” Remember this was 1957 – and he was referring to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Comments related to dates refer to that year.

As early as 1848, the Most Rev. M. Henni, first Bishop of Milwaukee, was sending circuit riders to the distant parts of his diocese. The first of these riders to arrive in the Elkhorn area was Rev. J. Pendergast. For eight years Father Pendergast rode on horseback through the wilderness of this diocese to bring the comfort of their religion to a small and widely scattered group of families.

As far as can be ascertained, the first service held in Elkhorn was in 1848 in the home of Michael Fahey. Mass was often celebrated in private homes. Father Pendergast’s pastorate extended to 1856 when he was succeeded by Father John Brennan.

During Father Brennan’s time, services were held in the county court house. In order to serve the outlying areas, Mass was said in various places. Squire Stanford, although not of the Catholic faith, offered the use of his carpenter shop. Sometimes rooms over a blacksmith shop in Tibbets (known as the Mike Dooley Place) were put to use.

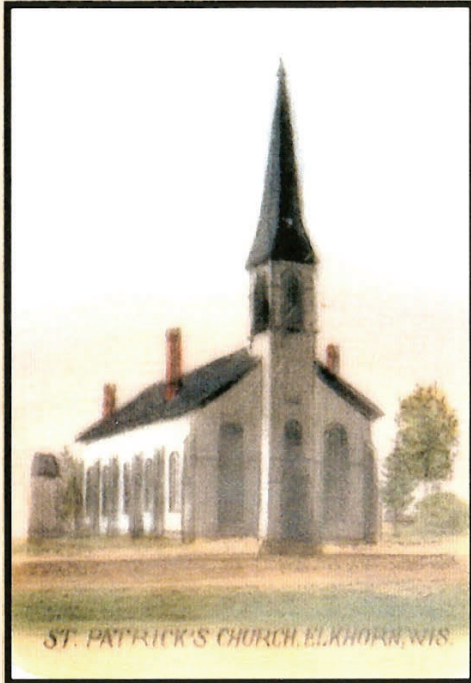
In 1860 an old tannery was bought and moved near where the high school is now located, and this building was converted into a temporary church. A new generation had replaced the Irish settlers who had helped build the parish. Many Germans, as well as other nationalities, had now become members of St. Patrick’s to aid in the plans for the future.

The Catholics of Elkhorn were cared for by itinerant priests and by the pastors of St. Andrew’s, Delavan. Some of the priests who offered Mass for the Mission were Fathers H.J. Roche, James Morrissey, J.J. Allen and R. Dunphy. This was roughly the period between 1850 and 1871. It was through their tireless efforts, a site was purchased in Elkhorn for a Church and parsonage in 1871.

There was considerable controversy over the site of the new church. Finally and fortunately the committee selected the present location. A parcel of land was bought for the sum of \$240. It included the land upon which the former Masonic Temple now stands.

The first resident priest, Father James Vahey, was assigned to Elkhorn in 1878.

## The First St. Patrick Church



In 1880 the Church was incorporated under the laws of the State of Wisconsin with the following members acting on the committee: The most Rev. M. Heiss, Father Vahey, Thomas O'Brien and Thomas Slattery. The first St. Patrick Church was completed in 1881.

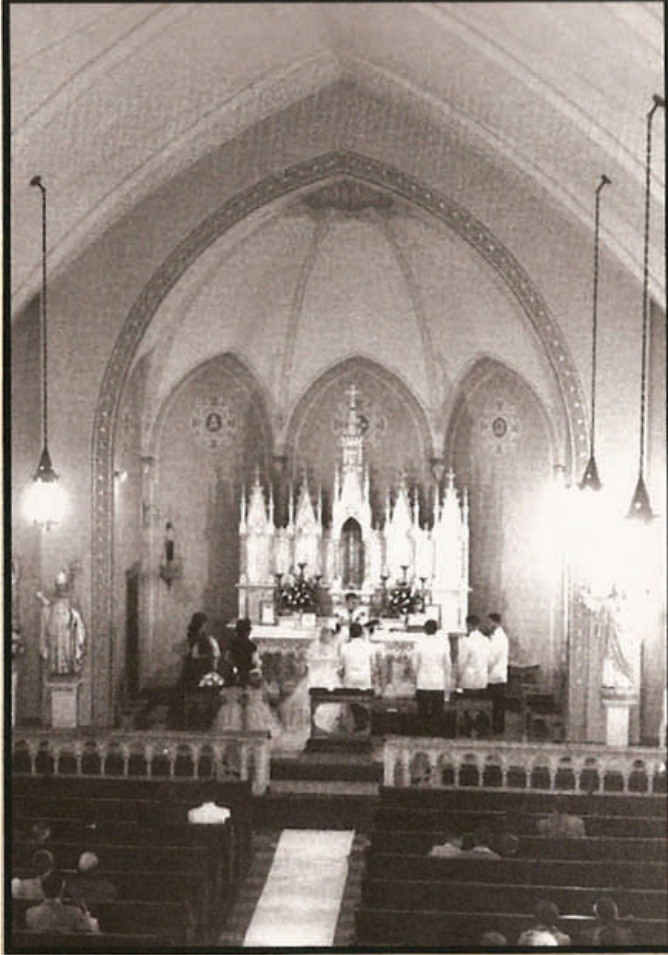
In 1886 Father M. Luby served the needs of St. Patrick's for one year. In 1887, a vigorous young Irish priest named Father James Nicholas, who had just completed his education in Europe, became pastor of the church and served the parish for 25 years. During his pastorate the church flourished.

Branch 105 of the Catholic Knights was chartered here about 1892 and its 55 members were most active in promoting the parish. (Columbus Hall was built in 1897)

The need for a cemetery presented itself and in 1886 the land for Mount Olivet was purchased. Prior to this time, the parish buried its dead in Delavan and East Troy. The men of the parish donated their labor... and built the stone gateway. The car of today is somewhat wide for the arched gateway. In 1956 this gateway was closed and a new entrance was made... the arched gateway remains as a memorial to the pioneers.



Mt. Olivet Cemetery - Court Street, Elkhorn



Church Interior as photographed in the early 1950's

In 1905 the second and present St. Patrick's Church was built of red brick by the Morrissey Brothers, on the original site of the first church. The cornerstone was laid by the most Rev. Archbishop G. S. Messmer. Some of the principal donations to the new church were a bell by Mr. Thomas Howard, The Stations of the Cross by the Patrick Farrel family, and the altar and railings by Margaret and Ella Grady.

After Rev. Nicholas' health failed, the parish had substitute priests... Rev. John Fisher became permanent pastor in August, 1915, and served for seven years... followed in 1922 by Rev. William Eggers who remained until 1925. (The Rectory was built in 1918 and added onto in 1961)

For the next several years, Rev. John Stehling was assigned to this pastorate and emphasized programs with youth...

Rev. Felix Sippel was pastor from 1932-1942, followed by Rev. Walter Doherty. Doherty remained until May of 1956. Father saw the need for more spiritual instruction of children of the parish, and obtained a few nuns from St. Mary's of Burlington to come every Saturday morning... In order to complete the parish unit, St. Patrick's in 1955 set up a campaign to build a school.



"Colorized" Postcard



Father Walter Doherty

Father Doherty was replaced by Rev. Joseph Hanauska who had been an assistant at St. Mary's in Burlington. To complicate the school project, a fire gutted the church on May 25, 1957.

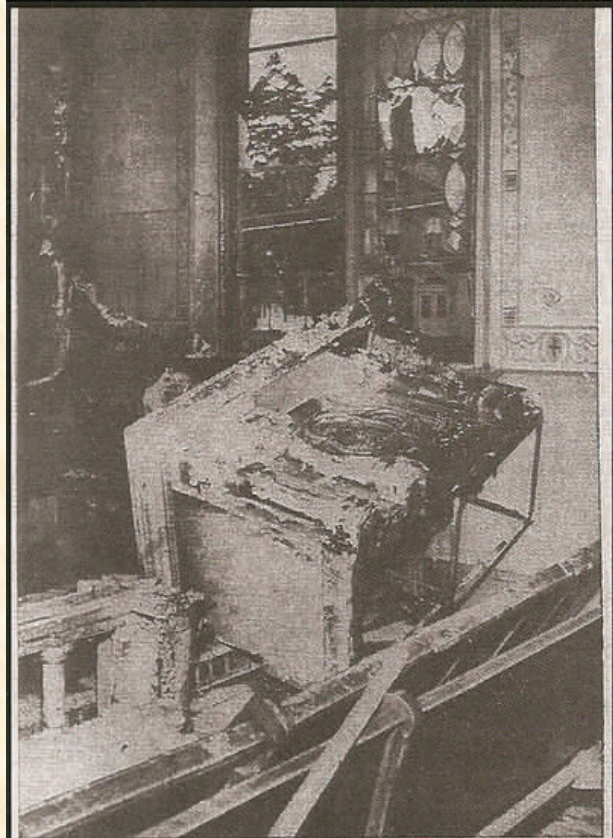
Prior to this, the parish purchased 20 acres of land in the northwest part of the city for the school. After a ceaseless search for sisters, Father Hanauska obtained a promise of three Notre Dame Sisters to teach if the school could be ready for opening in September of 1958.

One can see that St. Patrick's has developed through the years and now, to meet the current needs of the parish, it is necessary that the church be renovated and restored and that the new ten-room school be completed.

The future of St. Patrick's lies in the hands of the present parishioners, for we likewise are making history through our efforts at the present time.

Father J. F. Hanauska  
Pastor of St. Patrick's Congregation

Trustees  
Herbert O'Connor  
Alan Morrissey



The sanctuary of St. Patrick's church, Elkhorn, was gutted by fire early this morning. Damage was estimated at \$75,000 by the Rev. Joseph Hanauska, pastor. Fire swept through the area at the south end of the brick building, destroying the main altar and floor. Firemen from Elkhorn, Delavan and Lake Geneva fought the blaze, and Elkhorn firemen were at the scene for almost six hours. Volunteers helped carry altar trappings and statuary from the smoke filled building. Herb O'Connor (right) Elkhorn fireman, emerged from the interior with the statue of the Blessed Virgin. The entire main floor of the church was covered with an inch or more of water. Windows were broken to clear smoke from the building.

(Daily News photos by John Cobb)



**Elkhorn Church Hit  
By \$75,000 Blaze**  
May 25-1957  
**Edifice Saved**



Father Hanauska's pleas for courage during those times of crisis and opportunity were answered by the members of St. Patrick Parish. Only seven months after suffering a devastating fire, St. Patrick members celebrated Christmas Eve Mass in the newly restored church.

On May 14, 1958 ground was broken for a new elementary school thanks to the vision of Father Joseph Hanauska. On September 8<sup>th</sup>, Sisters Mary Frances, Mary Jane and Mary Gabriel, School Sisters of Notre Dame arrived; Sister Mary Frances was the first principal. The Sisters lived in the rectory while the pastor made his quarters in the sacristy of the church. School supplies including desks, books, etc. were stored in Columbus Hall. On September 19<sup>th</sup>, the men of the parish transported the school supplies to the school. The following day, Sisters, lay teachers, women and children made preparations for the opening of the school. Much work, sacrifice, and love were put into these preparations.

**“All things are possible with God” Mark 10:27**

On September 22, 1958, opening date of St. Patrick School, two newly acquired school buses brought children from outlying areas. About 150 students registered and 199 arrived on the first day. The dedication took place on May 17, 1959, Pentecost Sunday. Blessing of the \$390,000 parochial school was officiated by the most Reverend Archbishop William E. Cousins. The first graduation (26 students) took place on June 2, 1960.

A statue was placed in front of the school in honor of Fr. Hanauska's role in establishing our parish school. In 1963, a convent was built across the street from the school at 529 Sunset Drive. The residence was home to a number of School Sisters throughout the years. The convent was sold in May of 1995.

1978 marked the centennial of St. Patrick Parish. This milestone was celebrated with the publication of a Centennial Directory and the celebration of a Centennial Mass.

Following the retirement of Father Hanauska, Father Joseph Haas became pastorate in 1983. Father Haas described his mission here in three distinct periods. The first was a period of stabilization. Initially there was a need for financial stabilization during which time a detailed financial system was established. Not only was this to improve the financial security of the parish, but to also bring the parish into the period of Vatican II. Financial advice was sought and two professional stewardship drives were held.

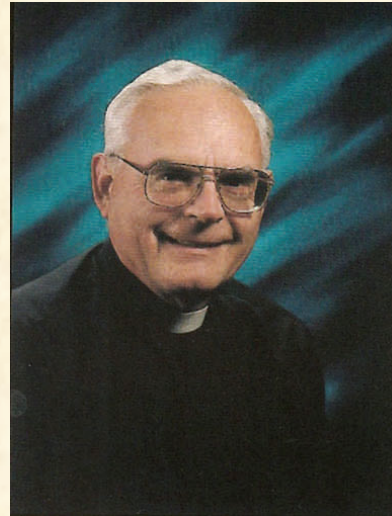


St. Joseph statue in honor of Fr. Hanauska



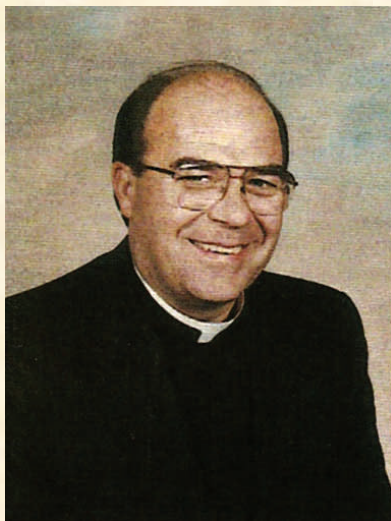
Church interior 1978

Period two was the initiation of a planning process for the future of St. Patrick. During this time, the professional services of the Archdiocese planning office were engaged. Included in this was the question of future space needs as the parish prepared for expansion and growth. Period three for Father Haas was devoted to making the parish an attractive and welcoming community for all. This included improving the church interior without significant expenditure. Projects were completed mostly under the direction of the firm 'Richie Brothers' of Madison, WI and included: repainting and decorating of the interior, installing new carpeting, removing wainscoting, installing new lighting and a new sound system, removing side altars, and adding new church furniture, altar,



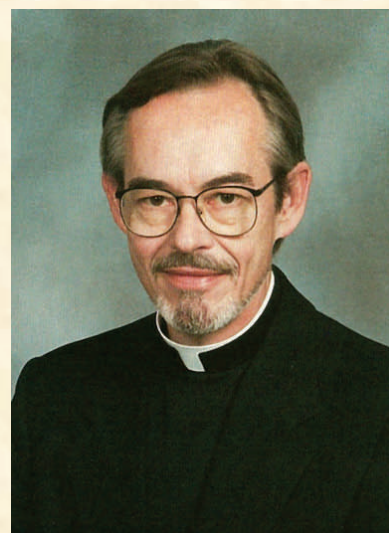
Fr. Joseph Haas, 1983-1995

Father Haas spent 12 years at St. Patrick. In 1995, he was assigned to a parish in Port Washington, Wisconsin and was succeeded by Father Terry Huebner. Father Terry continued the welcoming spirit. Under his guidance, our parish enjoyed a period of relative calm and expanded evangelization initiatives began. "A Place at the Table" was introduced as an organization focused on reaching out to our community and welcoming all Catholics home again. Father Terry was also key in the formation of the Ad Hoc Space Needs committee whose goal was to ensure that the future needs of St. Patrick Parish would be met. In 2000, Father Terry took an assignment in the Milwaukee area and Father Michael Benham was installed as St. Patrick's pastor in June 2000.



Fr. Terry Huebner, 1995-2000

Parish History  
To be Continued...



Fr. Michael Benham, 2000-2003