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D'Antoni, Blaise C.

One hundred years on Bayou
des Glaises



ONE HUNDRED YEARS
ON BAYOU DES GLAISES.

A Parish History of Sacred Heart Church
of Moreauville, formerly St. Hyacinthe's
Church of Bayou des Glaises

by

FATHER BLAISE C. D'ANTONI

Compiled and published under the direction of Rev. John Timmermans, pastor of
Sacred Heart Church, for the observance of the Parish Centennial, October, 1961.

DEDICATION

To the Memory of All Those Valiant Priests
whose zeal prompted them to leave their
native soil to serve the cause of God and
His Church and who helped our people so
unselfishly, this History of the Catholic
Church in Moreauville and the Avoyelles
is Respectfully Dedicated.



POPE JOHN XXIII

Gloriously reigning at the time of the Centennial of Sacred Heart Parish
of Moreauville, Louisiana.



BISHOP'S RESIDENCE
1805 JACKSON AVENUE
ALEXANDRIA, LA.

My best wishes and heartfelt gratitude to the Parishioners of Sacred Heart Church on the Bayou de Glaises, Moreauville.

Hundred years of Catholic life — One hundred years of dedication to God and the Church, manifested in love and generosity of the past. Four Churches were built during this century, two of which burned down — one on Easter-Sunday, 1897, the other on Christmas Day, 1908. The faith and loyalty of the fine people of Bayou de Glaises gave them the courage to rebuild anew.

The remodeling and completion of the present building into a beautiful Church will stand for centuries to come as a monument of faith and a permanent centennial gift to Almighty God.

+ C. P. Greco

/ Charles P. Greco
Bishop of Alexandria



MAR 7 '62

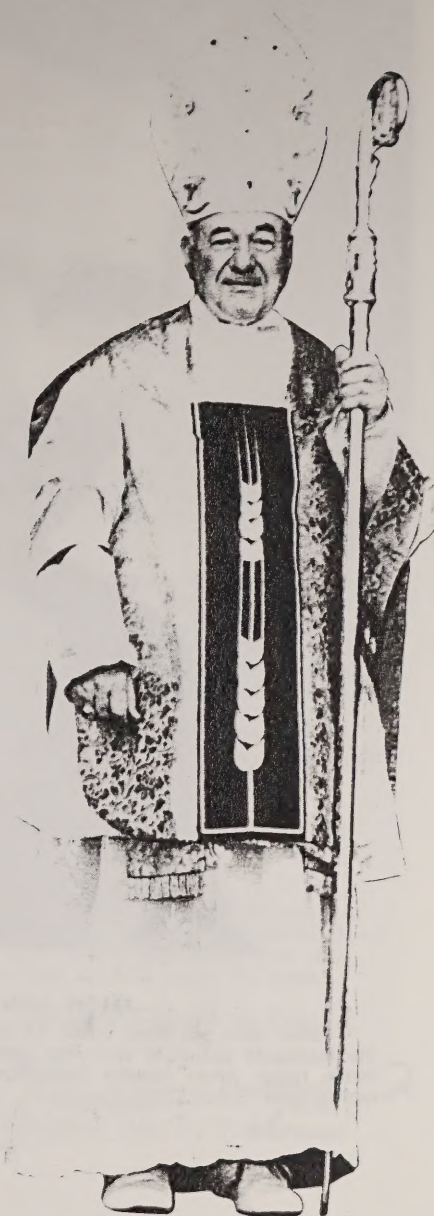
**HIS EXCELLENCY
THE MOST REVEREND
CHARLES P. GRECO, D. D.**

**Bishop of
Alexandria**

His Excellency has officiated many times at Sacred Heart Church since his installation in 1946 as Bishop of the Alexandria Diocese.

He has supported and approved the expansion and improvement project undertaken in the parish.

His Excellency appointed Father John Timmermans, centennial pastor, to Moreauville in 1959. His interest in and admiration for Sacred Heart Parish are voiced in his message of greetings on the opposite page.



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FATHER JOHN M. TIMMERMANS

Father John has been pastor of Sacred Heart Church since November 19, 1959, the fourteenth pastor to serve the venerable parish since its foundation in 1860. Under Father John's capable leadership, the parish church has been re-decorated and restored.

SACRED HEART CHURCH

P. O. BOX 97

MOREAUVILLE, LOUISIANA

September 1961

Dear Parishioners:

It is with a heart full of gratitude that I'm writing these words on the occasion of our Centennial Celebration. Gratitude towards God for so many and innumerable blessings bestowed upon this Congregation; gratitude towards you, the Parishioners of the Sacred Heart Church for the splendid cooperation and good will shown to me and many of my predecessors.

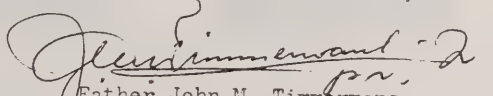
Due to circumstances beyond our control, we were forced to postpone our Centennial Celebration to this year, 1961. But with God's help we are now able to celebrate this 101st year of organized catholic life in Moreauville in a beautifully restored and renewed church building; symbol of your spirit of sacrifice and of love of God.

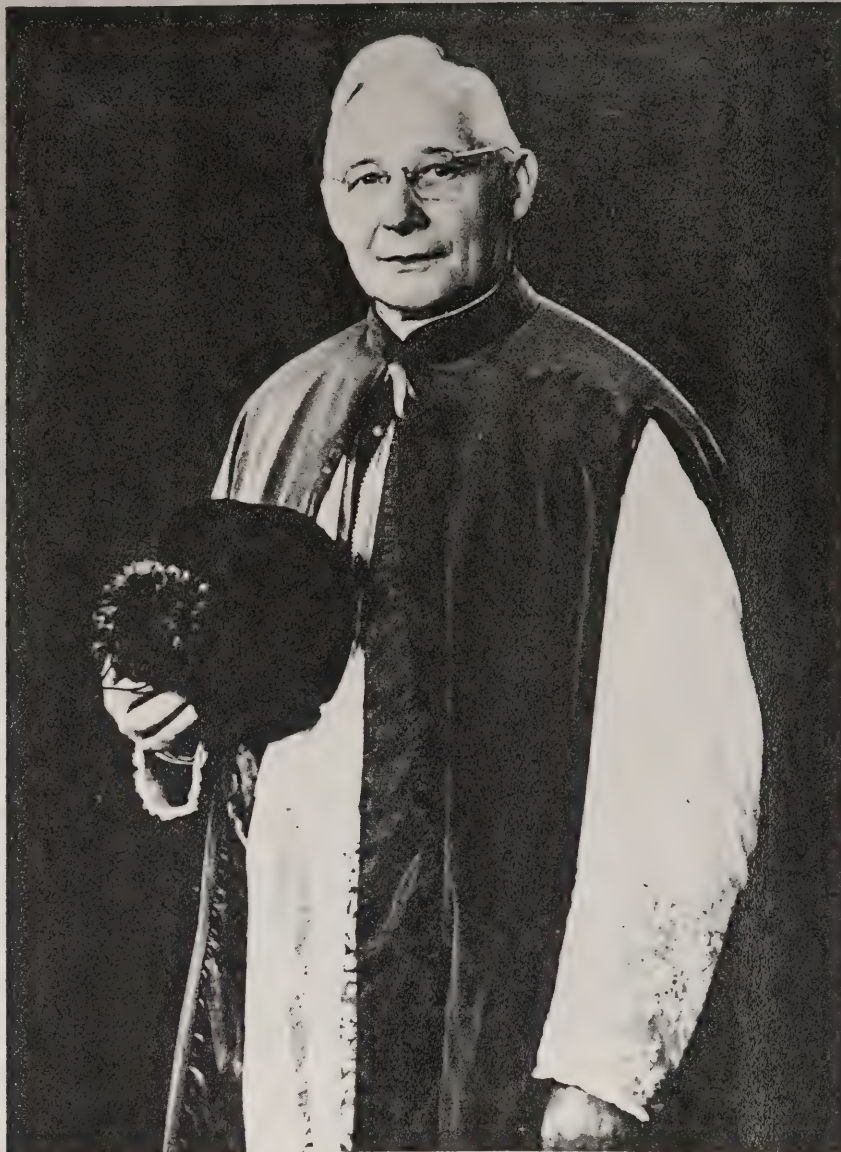
We have faced the challenge to our faith in God and in ourselves. We have faced the challenge to work as we had never worked before. And we did it successfully!

May all of us treasure this book as a precious souvenir of the glorious days of the past and the Centennial of our Sacred Heart Parish.

Together, we -Pastor and people- will remain united for the greater honor and glory of God, being ever mindful of our obligations towards Him and praying humbly for His gracious blessing and protection in the days to come.

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Father John M. Timmermans



THE RIGHT REVEREND MONSIGNOR HENRY VAN DER PUTTEN

Prothonotary Apostolic
Vicar General of the Alexandria Diocese
Dean of the Avoyelles
Pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Marksville

St. Joseph's Catholic Church

MSGR. H. VAN DER PUTTEN, V. G., PASTOR

Marksville, Louisiana

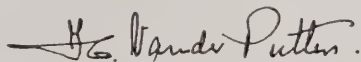
October 26, 1961

Congratulations to the people of Bayou des Glaises at the occasion of the Centennial Celebration commemorating the Canonical erection of the Parish of Bayou des Glaises originally dedicated to St. Hyacinth and later to the Sacred Heart.

I salute this Venerable Church as the mother church of the southern part of Avoyelles Parish. She administered to the spiritual needs of Bayou Current, Woodside, Yellow Bayou, Simmesport, Choupique, Plaucheville, Cottonport, Bordelonville, Couvillionville, and Big Bend, and these congregations trace their origin to the Church of Bayou des Glaises.

Be proud of the accomplishment of the past, and may you live up to the high standards set by your ancestors and pastors during the last hundred years.

From one who has seen your good work for the last 42 years.



Msgr. Henry Vander Putten, V.G.P.A.



Exterior of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Moreauville, Louisiana. The present structure, fourth in the parish's history, was begun in 1909. The present front with its elegant tower were added in 1931 by the late Father Henri Jacquemain.

Chapter One

EARLY MISSIONARIES

Although the Church on Bayou des Glaises is only 100 years old, the ministry of the Church first reached the Avoyelles some 200 years ago.

The Avoyelles Indians, first inhabitants of the "Prarie des Avoyelle" received occasional visits from the various colonial missionaries of Louisiana. The first visitor was the Franciscan Father Zenobius Membre, who had come to North Louisiana to preach to the Tensas Indians, near present-day Newellton, La. This was in 1682. Father Antoine Davion, chaplain to the Tunica Indians from 1706 to 1722, also ministered to the Avoyelles Indians. In 1716 when the Tunicas moved north and settled on the Mississippi, two leagues above its junction with Red River, Father Davion accompanied them. Since the Avoyelles were very friendly with the Tunicas, it is not surprising to find them also receiving the benefit of Father Davion's ministry. The spot where this devoted missionary lived and died atop a hill overlooking the Mississippi became known as "Davion's Rock". The site is present-day Fort Adams, Mississippi.

After Father Davion's death, missionary efforts among the Avoyelles and Tunicas virtually came to a stand-still. However, in 1717 a new Indian mission had been established in North Louisiana, the Mission San Miguel at Los Adaes. Alarmed by the French settlement of Natchitoches the Spanish sent troops to establish a Fort at the present site of Robeline, Louisiana, some 21 miles west of Natchitoches. About a mile from the Fort, the Spanish Franciscans, headed by the saintly Father Antonio Margil de Jesus, established their mission. As there was no resident priest at Natchitoches, Father Margil often made the 21 mile trek on foot to that Poste, where he celebrated Mass, administered the Sacraments, and instructed the people. The Natchitoches Registers bear the names of these early missionaries: Father Francisco Ballejo, P. Campe, Marmolejo, Anastasio Romero and Infante.

As people began settling along the banks of the Red River, south of Natchitoches, the Los Adaes missionaries would occasionally visit them. In the early 1760's before the abandonment of the Mission, the Padres made several trips to the Apalache Indian Village on Red River, at present-day Pineville, La. It is

MOST REVEREND LUIS PENALVER Y CARDENAS, first bishop of Louisiana, who personally visited the Avoyelles in 1796, and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to the earliest settlers. On June 8, 1797 Bishop Penalver established Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in the Avoyelles near Cocoville.



quite possible that they continued southward and ministered to the Avoyelles Indians also.

With the establishment of "Fort St. Jean Baptiste" on an island in Red River in 1714, a new colony began. Within the old Fort there stood a small church, and the Government was petitioned for a priest to serve it. The matter tarried on, and finally, in 1722, the first pastor of Natchitoches (and all North Louisiana) was named. He was a Father Mace who sailed for Louisiana from France sometime in 1722. Upon arrival at New Orleans, Father Mace took sick and on September 1, 1722, he died, without ever reaching his parish. Finally, in 1728, the second pastor was appointed in the person of Father Maximin, a French Capuchin. As the priests at Natchitoches began their missionary journeys southward, they came upon the earliest settlers of the Avoyelles, bringing to them the consolations of their Faith.

In 1721, the Louisiana territory was officially divided into nine districts, which division remained throughout the French colonial days. Under the Natchitoches district was included all that land in present-day Avoyelles parish. Thus, in the early colonial days, the Avoyelles people were members of the Parish of St. Francis Assisi at Natchitoches. Sometime after this official division, another Church was established within the range of the Avoyelles. This was the Church of St. Francis at the Poste of Pointe Coupee, or "Punta Cortada" as the Spanish called it.

The Pointe Coupee Poste had been established some miles below the junction of Red and Mississippi Rivers on the West Bank of the River. At the site, the Company of the Indies had established a Fort, barracks, jail and warehouse. During his tour of Louisiana in 1726, the Capuchin Superior, Father Raphael, had noted the need of a Church and priest at Pointe Coupee. From December, 1728, until March, 1735, Father Pierre Vitry, a Jesuit, served the area. In 1728 and 1729, the Natchitoches pastor, Fr. Maximin, was also at Pointe Coupee. En route between his two parishes, Fr. Maximin would stop at the homes of the first Avoyelles settlers to celebrate Mass for them, to baptize their children and anoint their sick. Until his transfer to the Natchez in 1729, Father Maximin was the official collector for Governor Perrier for the taxes due on slaves in the Pointe Coupee district.

In 1734 and 1735, Father Pierre Vitry was serving both Pointe Coupee and Natchitoches, visiting likewise the Avoyelles Prairie. From 1736-1738, Fr. Vitry remained at Natchitoches, and a Father Pierre, a Capuchin, served the Pointe Coupee Church. On September 1, 1737, Father Pierre baptized Antoinette Le Moyne (Lemoine), daughter of Guillaume Le Moyne and Marie Leste. This is the oldest recorded baptism of an Avoyelles family. Likewise, the marriage of Jean Baptiste Poureux to Marie Theresa Chatelain "native of the Avoyelles, Diocese of Quebec" on September 10, 1737, is the oldest recorded marriage of any Avoyelles family.

During the ensuing decades, the growing Avoyelles settlement received the ministry of both the Natchitoches and Pointe Coupee clergy. Between 1740 and 1760, the following Capuchins served the Avoyelles from the Natchitoches Post: Fathers Arcange, Dagobert, Barnabe and Eustache. From Pointe Coupee, during the same period, there came Fathers Anselme de Langres, Matherne, Remy, Barnabe and J. Pierre. Occasionally a missionary from Natchez visited the Avoyelles en route to Pointe Coupee. During his pastorate at Natchitoches, Father Valentine made extensive tours throughout all North Louisiana. His journeys took him as far south as the Attakapas country and the Opelousas Post. From there he would journey to Pointe Coupee, and back to Natchitoches via the Avoyelles, the Rapides and the small settlement at "Riviere aux Cannes".

In 1763, the Louisiana territory was again divided, this time into eleven districts. One of the new districts was located at Pointe Coupee. To this new district was allocated the lands of the Avoyelles. For several decades already the people of the Avoyelles had

in practice considered themselves members of the Pointe Coupee rather than Natchitoches, because of the proximity of the Pointe Coupee Post and their coming to the Avoyelles from that place. Thus, the new division had but little practical import to the Avoyelles people.

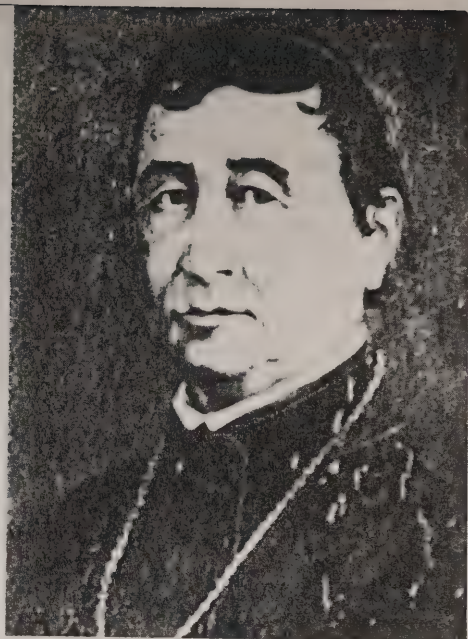
In the district of Mobile there stood a village of Apalache Indians. However, when the British took over Mobile, the Indians pulled up stakes and headed west-ward. For their new home, they chose a section of land on the east bank of the Red River, almost directly across from the "Puesto del Rapido," in which is present-day Pineville, La. Father Valentine visited the Apalaches in their new home, and realized the importance of a priest residing among them. Thus, he petitioned the Capuchin superior at New Orleans to erect a parish there. The superior, Father Dagobert, formally erected the new parish, naming Father Valentine as first pastor. Erected in 1764 under the title "St. Louis of the Apalaches", the new Church served the area for well over 70 years. Its first extant record is dated March 10, 1764, and reads: "I, Father Valentine, Capuchin, Missionary Apostolic, and cure of the Royal Parish of St. Louis of the Apalaches, which was transferred to the Rapids on Red River (from Mobile), dependence of New Orleans, Capitol of Louisiana, French colony, certify that during my visits of said parish . . ." Thus, Father Valentine became the first pastor of the Rapides. This new Church at the Apalaches was a boon to the Faith in the Avoyelles. St. Louis Church was the closest Church to the "Puesto des Avoyelles", and the people of that area began looking to Father Valentine for the consolations of their religion.

Once Spain took over the Louisiana Colony in 1769, the French



FRAY ANTONIO DE SEDELLA, Spanish Capuchin and rector of the New Orleans Cathedral. "Pere Antoine," as he was popularly called, came to the Avoyelles with Bishop Penalver in 1796, and performed many baptisms in the Puestos of Rapides and Avoyelles. The oldest church records in the Avoyelles bear his signature.

MOST REVEREND ANTOINE BLANC, Bishop and later Archbishop of New Orleans, 1835-1859, who visited the Avoyelles on several occasions to administer Confirmation. Archbishop Blanc sent Father Tumoine to Cocoville in 1850, and encouraged him in spreading the Avoyelles mission to include Bayou des Glaises and Marksville.



Capuchins withdrew, and returned to France. Within a year, the Spanish Capuchins replaced them. Some of the French clergy, however, wished to remain and were allowed to do so. Likewise, since Spain now owned Louisiana, there was no further need for an outpost at Los Adaes. Thus, in 1774, the Presidio Los Adaes and its adjoining Mission San Miguel were abandoned by the Spanish crown.

In 1769, Governor O'Reilly abolished the old territorial organization and established a new military division under the "Province of Louisiana". It consisted of eleven separate districts, three within our territory: Natchitoches, Pointe Coupee and Rapides. The Avoyelles was now dismembered from Pointe Coupee and added to the new district centered in the "Puesto del Rapido."

Since the lands around the Pointe Coupee Fort were subject to great flooding, many of the Punta Cortada inhabitants began seeking lands more suitable for farming. Thus, the ever increasing migration north to the fertile Avoyelles prairie. By the last decade of the century, the Avoyelles was forming into a definite and large settlement, with its nucleus in the area between present-day Marksville and Mansura. With the increased population and expanded farm lands, the Government found it necessary to step in and protect the rights of the original inhabitants, the Avoyelles Indians. To this end, there was established the "Puesto des Avoyelles", or "Aboieles" as it was sometimes spelled. The actual site of the

original Fort is somewhat dubious, but the best location offered is on the northern out-skirts of present day Marksville.

During the first three decades of the Spanish Regime, the Avoyelles continued to receive the ministry of the Pointe Coupee clergy. Fathers Luis de Quintanilla remained until 1775. Father Valentine served the area from 1775-1778; Father Hilaire, 1778-1780; Father Grumeau, a Dominican, and pastor of Opelousas during the 1780's, and Father Bernardo de Limpach, 1791-1796.

From Pointe Coupee, Father Luis de Quintanilla became pastor of Natchitoches in 1775, remaining there until 1783. In May, 1777, from Natchitoches, he was also serving the newly established Church of St. Landry at Opelousas Post. In addition, from August, 1777, until February, 1778, he was caring for Pointe Coupee, making him the sole priest within all of central and north Louisiana—quite a large parish for one man! Imagine trying to serve three Churches, separated from one another by over 230 miles (560 round trip) with the only means of transportation being horseback!

In the 1780's, the religious life of the Avoyelles people was neglected, due to the dire lack of priests. At Natchitoches, conditions were not much better. Father Jean Delvaux, the new pastor, became engrossed in the political unrest of that settlement, and was finally arrested by the Commandant and sent to New Orleans, whence he was exiled to Havana.

By the year 1795, the Avoyelles district was well settled, and needed its own priest and Church, as had most other settlements. A census taken in 1794 showed the Avoyelles post to have 432 settlers: 336 whites, 2 free persons of color, and 94 slaves. In the same census Avoyelles was still the smallest among its neighbors. Opelousas with its 2,454 inhabitants was the largest settlement; Pointe Coupee was second with 2,150; at Natchitoches there were 1,631; while Rapides had a population of 753.

With the growth of the Avoyelles, there came the first shops. In 1791 a tannery was opened, followed the next year by the opening of the first shoemaker's shop. Later, in 1804, the first Avoyelles cotton gin, owned by a Mr. Clark, was set in operation. Travel in those early days was extremely difficult. A trip from the Avoyelles to Pointe Coupee in 1795 took three days—one way!

Along with the growth of the Avoyelles was the growth of the entire Louisiana colony. According to the custom of the times, the King of Spain established the Diocese of Florida in 1525, naming Father Juan Suarez as first Bishop. The new Diocese was to include the entire territory along the Gulf Coast, from the Rio Grande to

the Florida Keys, including present-day Louisiana. Father Suarez, a Spanish Franciscan, had come to Mexico in 1524 with the pioneer band of missionaries. The year following he returned to Spain on a mission for the Indians. It was during this visit that the King formed the Florida Diocese, naming Father Juan Suarez as first bishop, pending the approval and sanction of the Holy See. Although he lacked episcopal consecration, Fr. Suarez did exercise jurisdiction over the present State of Louisiana, and therefore, however brief his stay, he should be recognized as the "first bishop in the United States Territory". In 1529, Bishop-designate Suarez died of hunger and exposure on the Texas Coast, in the vicinity of present-day Matagorda Bay, within the Diocese he was appointed to serve.

Later, the territory of the present Alexandria Diocese was annexed to the Diocese of Quebec in Canada, thus explaining the entry "native aux Avoyelle, Diocese de Quebec" in the early Church Registers. During the Spanish Domination, Louisiana was made part of the Diocese of Santiago, Cuba. Later it was transferred to the Archdiocese of Havana.

Finally, in 1793, Louisiana and the Floridas were formed into an independent Diocese, with the See City at New Orleans. Dr. Luis Penalver y Cardenas was appointed first Bishop of the newly erected Diocese. In 1795 Bishop Penalver finally arrived in New Orleans and began the vast task of organizing a Diocesan administration. The year following he began a tour of all parts of his extensive Diocese. The Avoyelles was to be included in the visitation. On this tiresome journey the Bishop was accompanied by his secretary, Father Isidro Quintero; by Father Antonio de Sedella, pastor of St. Louis Cathedral at New Orleans; and Fr. Juan de Dios Valdez, first priest ordained in the State of Louisiana.

En route to the Rapides from the Post of Opelousas, Bishop Penalver and his party made a short stop in the Avoyelles. On Tuesday, November 1, 1796, in the "Puesto del Rapido", for the first time in North Louisiana, Bishop Penalver y Cardenas administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to a class of 45 persons, including many of the old Rapides families: Baillio, Douval, Gremillion, Lacour, Paget, Poiret and others.

From the Rapides the group continued their trip to the Church of St. Francois de Natchitoches, where the Bishop held the first visitation of that parish. On Saturday, November 12, Bishop Penalver confirmed a class of 86 persons at that Post. On the return trip from Natchitoches, Bishop Penalver sent Father Quintero to

Annie 1860.

Le 14 Feb. 1860. On a vu à la messe à 8 heures
 2 personnes, un homme et une femme, qui se
 sont mariés. Le mari s'appelle Gali Laborde et la
 femme Celine Firmin. Le mariage a été célébré
 par le pasteur Thomas Rebours, premier pasteur
 de la paroisse. Les témoins étaient M. et Mme
 Joffroy. Le mariage a été célébré dans l'église
 de St. Hyacinthe. Les mariés ont été
 accompagnés par leurs parents et amis.
 Le mariage a été célébré à 8 heures.
 Les témoins étaient M. et Mme Joffroy.
 Le mariage a été célébré dans l'église
 de St. Hyacinthe. Les mariés ont été
 accompagnés par leurs parents et amis.

First marriage in the Moreauville Parish. On Feb. 14, 1860, Gali Laborde married Celine Firmin in St. Hyacinthe Church. Father Thomas Rebours, first pastor, performed the ceremony.

Gali Laborde
 Celine Firmin
 Joffroy
 Joffroy

the Apalache Indians to prepare them for Confirmation, while he and his other two companions journeyed on to the Avoyelles. At the latter Post the Bishop gathered the people together and he, Pere Antoine and Fr. Valdez gave them the instructions they so vitally needed. Quite probably the instructions were given within the walls of the Fort. Finally, on Sunday morning, November 20, 1796, assisted by Pere Antoine and Fr. Valdez, Bishop Penalver y Cardenas administered Confirmation in the "Puesto Aboyeles" to a class of 109 persons, young and old, men and women alike. Among the families represented were: Joffron, "Cubion" (Couvillon), Taisain, Mayeux, Bordelon, Lemoine, "Gotie" (Gauthier), Roy, Ducote, St. Romain, Gaspard, Rabelais, Laborde, Juneau, Chatelain and Grand-pre.

That same day, November 20th, Father Antonio de Sedella conferred the Sacrament of Baptism upon 49 candidates, both young and old.

Four days later Bishop Penalver was at St. Louis des Apalaches Chapel, where Fr. Quintero had prepared a class of 8 Indians for Confirmation. On November 24th, the Bishop confirmed them in the small chapel. Fr. Juan de Dios Valdez served as sponsor for several of them. From the Apalache village Bishop Penalver and his companions began their journey southward, back to the See city of New Orleans.

The vast visitation, tiring though it was, had produced startling results. The Faith was re-enkindled in the souls of the thousands who had heard the mission band preach, those who had received

the Sacrament of Baptism, Holy Communion, Confirmation, or Matrimony.

The time was now ripe to reap a great harvest—if only the Faith would not be allowed to grow cold. On the trip back to New Orleans the Bishop determined that he must give a Church and resident priest to the people of the Avoyelles. This he would strive to do!

Chapter Two

EARLY FAMILIES

Among the early settlers of the Avoyelles Prairie were many families still prominent today. The original spelling of their names is sometimes different from our present-day spellings. The Bordelon family was sometimes spelled "Bourdelon" or "Borde". The oldest was a Nicholas Bordelon who married Francoise Roland of New Orleans, and their son Antoine Bordelon married Marie Descuire in 1759. From Antoine's marriage were born Marie (who in 1779 married Pierre Mayeux) and Pierre Bordelon. At the time of his marriage to Perinne Lacour in 1783, Pierre is listed as a "resident of the Avoyelles." Their son, Antonio, was among those baptized in 1796 by Pere Antoine.

After the death of his wife, Antonio Bordelon, Sr., married in 1779, Marguerite Frederic, widow of Simon Lacour, and mother of Perinne Lacour—the wife of Pierre Bordelon.

Another early family was the Chatelains, originally dubbed "Chalin". Maria Theresa Chalin, daughter of Jacques Chalin, is listed as a "native aux Avoyelle, eveche de Quebec" at the time of her marriage to Jean B. Poureaux in September, 1737. The ceremony was performed by the Capuchin, Father H. Pierre, of Pointe Coupee, and is the oldest marriage record of any Avoyelles family. In December, 1738 their son Philippe Poureaux was born.

A second, and later, group of Chatelain's descended from Nicholas Chatelin and Mariana Moreau. Their son, Belonio Cathelin, married Susana Gautie (Gauthier), and their daughter, Julia, was born in the Avoyelles in 1794. Belonio Cathelin and his family lived near the "Puesto Abolieles." Another son, Nicolas, married Catherine Junaux (Juneau) in 1779.

Francois Chenvert, a native of "Trois Rivieres en Canada" is

the eldest member of that family in the old records found so far. In 1779 he married Marie Therese Riche.

The Coco family trails its ancestry through Dominic Baldonide, Sr., a native of Venice, Italy. Dominic came with General Lafayette to fight against the British in America in the War of Liberation. Later he migrated to Pointe Coupee where he married a Miss Rabalais. Their two sons were Dominic Baldonide, Jr., and Joseph Baldonide.

Dominic Baldonide, Jr., moved to the Avoyelles and settled in the vicinity of Hydrópolis where he engaged himself in the mercantile business. A good portion of his trading and sales was with the Avoyelles Indians, to whom he bartered coconuts. After a time, due to the difficult pronunciation of his last name, the Indians called Dominic "L'Homme de Coco"—"The man of the Coconuts". The name has come down to us today simply as "Coco". There are descendants of Dominic Baldonide Coco in all the communities of the Avoyelles today.

The original spelling of "Quevillon" has come down to us today as "Couvillon". Other early spellings that appear in the old records are: Couillon, Cuvillon, and Couvillion. The Couvillon family of Louisiana can trace their ancestry back to Adrien Couvillon who came to Canada from France in 1664. From their home near Montreal, the Couvillons came to Pointe Coupee in Louisiana, and from there to the Avoyelles Prairie. The early Church Registers list a Barbara Couillon. She was the wife of Mr. William Le Moyne.

Pierre Ducoder was the eldest member of the Ducote family to be a native of the Avoyelles. His parents, Francois Ducoder and Catherine St. Paul were from Pointe Coupee. Pierre's wife, Marie Fayeux Mayeux, whom he married in 1752, was native of Mobile.

Another Pierre Ducoder married Magdelene Cable, and their son, Pierre, Jr., in 1773, married Henrietta Ravali (Rabalais). Their daughter, Celine Ducote, was born in the Avoyelles in 1794.

Etienne Gauthier, born in October, 1736, from the marriage of Jean Gauthier and Marie Andree, is the first mentioned member of that family. He was a native of Pointe Coupee district.

A second Gauthier, Rene, who married Jeanne Laurent (sometimes spelled Lorand) in the 1750's, lived in the "Poste de Natchitoches." One of their daughters, Susana, married Belonia Cathelin, and lived with him in the Avoyelles, where their daughter Julia Cathelin was born in 1794.

Graimillon is the old spelling for the Gremillion family name.

MOST REV. AUGUSTE MARIE MARTIN, first Bishop of the Natchitoches Diocese, 1853-1875. Bishop Martin erected the parish of St. Hyacinthe on Bayou des Glaises on Feb. 2, 1860. He also brought Fr. Thomas Rebours from France, ordained him a priest, and appointed him as first pastor of Bayou des Glaises.



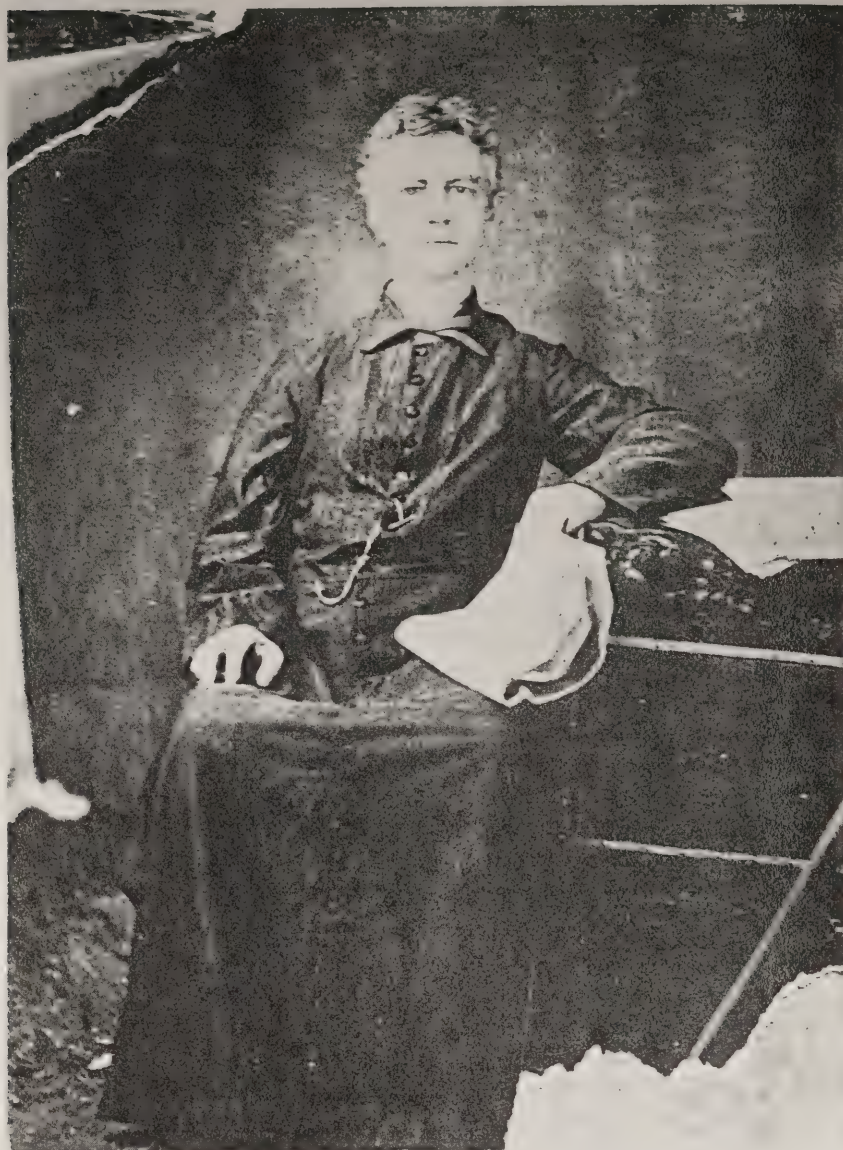
Louis Graimillon seems to be the oldest member of that large family. From his marriage with Marie J. Robillard, there were two children: Henrietta, born 1772, and Francois, who, in 1779 married Petronille Breza, daughter of Joseph Breza and Antoinette Lemoine.

The Gagnard family can trail its ancestry through Jean Gagnard, a native of St. Erbilon in Brittany, Diocese of Nantes, France. His daughter, Marie Gognard, as the name was then spelled, married Michel Lemoine. After his death in 1742, Marie married William Lemoine, of the Avoyelles.

The Joffrion family name was originally spelled "Jeooffrion", and Joseph Jeoffrion, Sr., of Pointe Coupee was the oldest bearer of that name. His son, Joseph, Jr., married Francoise Bouchard, daughter of Louis Bouchard and Marie Jeanne Lemoine in July, 1773. They, too, lived in the Avoyelles. In April, 1858, when plans were begun for the first church along Bayou des Glaises, Aimee Joffrion, widow of John H. Boyer, donated a plot of land for the Church building.

The Juneau family can trace its name through several old spellings: Juinot, Juneaux, and Juneau. Augustin Juinot, a native of Chambly in Canada, came to the Pointe Coupee district to live with his wife, Marie Elizabeth Blanchon, and their son, Claude Juinot. In September, 1755, Claude married the daughter of William Lemoine, Miss Francoise Lemoine. From this marriage were born Catherine Juneaux, who in 1779 married Nicolas Chatelain; and Augustin Juinot. In 1776 Augustin married Marguerite Duplechain. They resided in the Avoyelles District where their son Jean Baptiste Juneau was born in 1794.

The earliest record of the Laborde family is the birth of



FATHER PAUL EMILE SIMON, second and fourth pastor of Moreauville. His first pastorate extended from 1878-1880. On January 1, 1882, he returned to head the Sacred Heart Parish until January 14, 1894. Under Father Simon's capable leadership a new church was built in 1882 and dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the second Bayou des Glaises church.

Antoine Laborde in January, 1796. His father, Pierre Laborde was a native of Fartaches, in the Diocese of Aix, France. His mother was Modeste Lacour, a native of Pointee Coupee, and the daughter of Simon Lacour and Margarita Frederic. Antoine's paternal grand-parents were Jean Laborde and Catherine Lamue.

Simon La Cour (Lacour) lived at Pointee Coupee with his wife, Margarita Frederic of New Orleans and his two daughters, Modeste and Perinne. Modeste married Pierre Laborde and lived in the Avoyelles. Perinne married thrice. Her first marriage was to a "Sieur Roi", called "Chatelleron". After his death, she remained at the Opelousas Post, where she married Francois Marcantel in 1779. After his death, Perinne married Pierre Bordelon and came to live in the Avoyelles. That was in May, 1783.

In the 1722 census of the Natchitoches Poste, there is listed a Francois Lemoine. According to the records, he was not married, and had no family with him.

Jacques Le Moine and Jeanne Madre of Havre de Grace in the Province of Normandy, France, are the progenitors of the Lemoine family of the Avoyelles. Their son, William Le Moyne, came to Pointe Coupee where he married Marie Leste. Of their marriage, there were six children. Antoinette Le Moyne, born in 1737, is the oldest recorded baptism of an Avoyelles family. She was baptized in September, 1737 by Fr. J. Pierre, Capuchin missionary. Francoise, another daughter, married Claude Juinot in 1755. Marie Jeanne, in 1744, married Louis Bouchard, a native of La Valee in Canada. Louis married Marie Anne Descuirs in 1756. Marie Francoise, born in 1739, married Joseph Gremeaux.

Jean Baptiste Lemoine was born in September, 1741 and in November William Lemoine lost his wife, Marie Leste. She was only 35 years old. In August, 1742, he remarried, taking Marie Gognard (Gagnard) as his bride.

The Mayeux family comes from two separate groups, one living in the Mobile Post, and the other from the Arkansas. Fayeux Mayeux and his wife, Marie Theresa Brette lived in the Mobile District, where their two daughters, Marie Therese and Marie Fayeux, were born. Later the family moved to Pointe Coupee, where the two daughters found husbands for themselves. Both were married on the same day: April 26, 1752. Marie Fayeux married Pierre Ducoder (Ducote) and moved to his home in the Avoyelles. Marie Therese Fayeux Mayeux married Joseph Ruillard, a native of Bastieus in the Province of Louisiana.

The other portion of the Mayeux family trace themselves to

Pierre Mayeux and his wife Marie Sellier (also Cellier). Of their marriage were born four children: Francois, born in the Arkansas Post; Cecile, born in the Natchez Post; Magdaleine and Marguerite, both born in Pointe Coupee. In February, 1745, Francois Mayeux contracted marriage with Nicole Prevost, a native of the Natchitoches Post. Their children were: Francois, Jr., who in 1772 married Julie Marioneaux, also of the Natchitoches; and Pierre, who married Marie Bordelon in 1779.

In the Avoyelles there lived still another member of the Mayeux family: Joseph. In the 1770's Joseph married Adrienne Bordelon, and they had two daughters: Modeste, born in 1775, and Marcelite. The latter married Estevan St. Romain in the 1790's, and their son, Serafino, was born in the Avoyelles in 1796. After his first wife's death, Joseph Mayeux married Constance Hebert, called "Milan", in the Opelousas Post, on November 11, 1797.

The Moreau's, after whom the Bayou des Glaisses town is named, came from the town of Vitry le francois, in the Province of Champagne, France. Paul Moreau, Jr., was born in the Post of Pointe Coupee in 1745, the son of Paul Moreau, Sr., and Julienne Lerurene. Later the family moved to the Avoyelles and settled along Bayou des Glaisses.

Many spellings were used in writing the name of the Rabalais family, such as: Ravali, Ravale, Raballer and Raballeris. This family descends from Jean Baptiste Raballeris, who married Marguerite Bellaniger and lived in the Pointe Coupee District. In 1748, their daughter Jeanne Raballer married Francois le Ferre, a native of Lyons, France, and a soldier "in the company of Mr. Benoist" at Pt. Coupee. After his death, Jeanne married Joseph Gofrillon (Joffrion) in May, 1752. In 1754 their son, Joseph Raballeris, married Anna Daniels, a native of Pt. Coupee. Of this marriage there was born a daughter, Henrietta, who in 1772 married Pierre Ducote and took up her residence in the Avoyelles. Of Joseph Raballiers' marriage there was also born a son, Jean Baptiste, who married a Pointe Coupee girl, Louise Bouchard, before taking up his residence in the Avoyelles. They were in Avoyelles when their son, Valerio, was born in 1796.

According to tradition in the Avoyelles, Joseph B. Rabalais was the first white settler within present-day Avoyelles parish. He and his family came to this district from Pointe Coupee.



The second Church of Bayou des Glaises, begun in 1879 and completed in 1882 by Father Paul E. Simon. The church was dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and solemnly blessed by Rt. Rev. Antoine Durier, Bishop of Natchitoches, in May, 1888. The Church and Rectory burned on Easter Sunday, 1897. Below is a view of the church's interior, and its pastor, Father Simon.



The oldest record for the Roy family is the marriage in 1744 of Joseph Roy and Perinne La Couv. A native of La Pre de St. Anne, in the Diocese of Quebec, Canada, Joseph Roy came to Pointe Coupee. His wife, Perinne, was a native of Natchez, the daughter of Micholas La Couv and Perinne Brete.

Another early settler, Denis Le Roy, called "La Motte" came to Pointe Coupee from his home in Reber, Province of Briec. He was a soldier in the Pointe Coupee Militia.

In the 1790's there was a descendant of Joseph Roy living in the Avoyelles. His name also was Joseph Roy, and his wife was Julia Viset. Their daughter, Julia Roy, was baptized by Fr. Antonio De Sedella in November, 1796, in the Avoyelles.

Along the Bayou des Glaises, not too far below the site of old St. Hyacinthe's Church was the home of the Voorhies family. Although of a later period than the early families, Cornelius Voorhies came to Louisiana around the time of the Louisiana Purchase. His parents, Daniel Voorhies and Sara Gordon, lived in New Jersey, where he was born. In July, 1803, Cornelius Voorhies chose as his wife a native of the Opelousas Post, Aimee Gradenigo. Eventually the descendants of this family reached the Avoyelles.



Front entrance to the century old Moreauville cemetery as it looked during one of the floods that constantly struck Moreauville. The original cemetery stood out in what is now the Moreauville-Bordelonville Road.

Chapter Three

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH

1796 - 1845

Impressed with his visitation and the spiritual rejuvenation of the people throughout his vast Diocese, Bishop Penalver, early in 1797, set about supplying more priests for the Churches of Louisiana. The problem was a severe one—the Harvest was so great, and the Laborers so few!

Late in 1795 there had arrived a band of six Irish missionaries from Spain. Driven from their home-land because of religious persecution, they had gone to Spain, where they were ordained to the priesthood, and then sent to the newly established Diocese of Louisiana. Of the six, three were destined to see service in the Avoyelles. Leaning heavily upon these missionaries, Bishop Penalver began filling the vacancies within his Diocese.

From his office in the Episcopal House at New Orleans, Bishop Penalver came to another decision: to open a new parish—the first in his administration! To this end, on the 8th of June, 1797, His Excellency formally established the parish of “Neustra Senora del Carmen” which was to cover the “Puestos del Rapido, Avoueles y Ouachita”, thereby severing the former Natchitoches parish in half.

As first pastor of the new parish, the Bishop chose Father Juan Maguire, a Discalced Carmelite, and a member of the 1795 missionary band. However, Father Maguire did not register any Baptisms in the Avoyelles until May 1, 1798. Just when he took up residence in the Avoyelles is not certain, nor do we know the circumstances under which he lived there. His pastorate was quite short, because his last entry in the Avoyelles is dated August 3, 1798. Bishop Penalver was dissatisfied with his management of the mission, so he was recalled to New Orleans. In May, 1799, he signs as Pastor of the Church of the Ascension, Donaldsonville, where he remained until July, 1803, when he left for San Antonio, Texas.

Still determined to erect a permanent parish in the Avoyelles, Bishop Penalver appointed a second pastor in the person of Father Juan Brady. This was on October 1, 1798. Father Brady, like his predecessor, was a Discalced Carmelite, and a member of the 1795 missionary band. He came to the Avoyelles from St. Louis Cathedral



MOST REV. FRANCIS LERAY, second Bishop of Natchitoches. The Bishop visited Moreauville shortly after his installation in 1878. He also appointed Fr. P. E. Simon as pastor in 1881 and approved plans for the second parish church.

where he had been stationed since his return from the Natchez post in 1796.

Under Father Brady's leadership the parish nucleus was formed. A Church was erected and dedicated under the patronage of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. A small presbytery was built for the pastor, and the parish cemetery was staked off. This first parish plant was located in Hydropolis, on the road between present-day Marksville and Mansura. The old cemetery there dates back to the time of Father Brady.

Spiritually, the parish also began to take shape. By the year 1800 there were 123 Baptisms in comparison with the meager 12 recorded in 1798 and the 35 registered in 1799. On April 22, 1800, Father Brady was at the Ouachita, where he baptized Edmond Filhoil, the son of Don Juan Filhoil, Captain of the Army and Commandante civil and military of the Post.

Likewise, Father Brady visited the settlers in the "Puesto del Rapido" and ministered to the Indians across the River in their chapel of St. Louis of the Apalaches.

In mid-March, 1803, after a very fruitful pastorate of four and a half years, Father Brady left the Avoyelles to assume the parish of Baton Rouge. From Baton Rouge, in 1818, the aged missionary departed for Havana, Cuba, where he died.

The third pastor of the Avoyelles Church was a native of Waterford, Ireland, a Father Patricio Lonergan. His stay was also very short: from March, 1803, until the end of February, 1804. Father Lonergan, a Franciscan, was the third member of the 1795 missionary band to serve the Avoyelles. In 1804 he was recalled to New Orleans by Father Thomas Hassett, Administrator of the Diocese in the absence of the Bishop, and assigned to New Feliciana

(St. Francisville). Fr. Hassett, also a native of Waterford, Ireland, died April 24, 1804, shortly after making the new appointment, and Father Lonergan, stricken sick during his stay in New Orleans, followed Fr. Hassett to the grave on October 17, 1804. He was 52 years old. His remains were laid to rest in a crypt in the Cathedral floor, on the Epistle side next to the Sacristy door.

With the departure of Father Lonergan, the life of the Church at Hydropolis came to a stand-still. Twenty years were due to elapse before another priest would take up residence in the Avoyelles. And what a difficult task would it be to re-build the Faith in the Avoyelles!

Between the years 1804 and 1806, no priest visited the Avoyelles. In fact, there was not one priest within the present confines of the Diocese of Alexandria. This situation continued until 1813, when a new pastor arrived to take over the Church at Natchitoches. Meanwhile, the North Louisiana Churches had to depend upon the annual visit of Father Luis Buhot, pastor of St. Landry Church at the Opelousas. After Father Buhot left Opelousas in 1813, the new pastor of that post, Father Miguel Bernardo Barriere, continued the annual visits to the Avoyelles. After several years of neglect, a bogus priest, named "Father Clement", began performing the ecclesiastical functions at the Avoyelles. He remained until 1817.

A new hope arose in the hearts of the people in 1818, when Father Francisco Maynes, Natchitoches pastor, accepted the Avoyelles mission as part of his parish. The original Church of Neustra Senora del Carmen had disappeared, and a new edifice was sorely needed. Father Maynes, who had already built churches at Cloutierville and Alexandria, determined to give the people of Avoyelles a new house of Worship.

The project was authorized in February, 1818, and was to be incorporated under the title of "Church of St. Joseph, Avoyelles". To raise the necessary subscriptions, six Church Wardens were appointed, the first in the Avoyelles. They were: Joseph Joffrion, Sr.; Jean Baptiste Mayeux; Jean Baptiste Rabalais, Sr.; Francis Bordelon; Joseph Joffrion, Jr.; and Cyprien Lacour.

Subscriptions did not come in as anticipated, and the erection of the Church had to be delayed. In March, 1822, a new Board of Administrators was appointed. This second group included: Pierre L'eglise; Charles Cappel; J. M. Cleveland; C. Voorhies; Francois Bordelon; and George Gorton.

But the new administrators could do no better than their

predecessors, and in April, 1824—two years later—they were still without the funds necessary to complete the structure.

In 1819, Father Maynes, totally discouraged with the lack of cooperation and support, gave up the Avoyelles mission and requested the new Bishop, Rt. Rev. William Dubourg, to secure another priest to care for that section. To this end Bishop Dubourg appealed again to the Opelousas pastor, Father Flavius Rossi. Fr. Rossi complied, but within a very short time he, too, became discouraged with the situation and gave up. Then the Bishop turned to Father Marcel Borella, assistant priest of St. Mary's Church in the Attakapas country. Father Borella complied with the Bishop's request, and served the Avoyelles from the Attakapas from the end of 1819 until 1821. From 1822 to 1824, Father F. H. Rossi of Opelousas again assumed charge of the difficult mission.

The chief sore spot in question among the people was the location of the new Church. Each community vied with the other for the site of the Church, and no one group was ready to give in to the other.

The Avoyelles was growing rapidly in all directions, and it was a real problem for Church authorities to decide which location would serve the entire district best. In 1820, the white population was up to 1,438—almost double the 1810 number. No matter which spot was chosen, the Church would be at a disadvantage to a goodly number of the parishioners.

In 1818 it was decided to erect the new Church of St. Joseph on a tract of land "six arpents front by forty arpents in depth, situated in the Prairie of Avoyelles". These lands amounted to 240 arpents and were bordered by the lands of Pierre Lemoine and those of Pierre Bordelon. Those lands already belonged to the parish, and were a concession originally given by the Spanish Crown for the Avoyelles Church. Father Louis Buhot had formally filed for these lands with the American Government during the years he served the Avoyelles.

The first church, that of Neustra Senora del Carmen, stood on these grounds, likewise the parish cemetery.

The settlers in the Marksville section were not satisfied to have the new Church of St. Joseph at Hydropolis; they wanted it at Marksville proper. Thus, in March, 1821, an amendment was made to the decisions of 1818. It read: "The Church and other edifices of the Congregation of St. Joseph shall be erected in the Town of Marksville, on a piece of ground which has been given, or which shall be given for that purpose by Pierre L'eglise."

The Mansura families were dissatisfied to have the new Church in Marksville, and more dissension followed. Finally, in April, 1824, by way of compromise, it was decided that "when a sum sufficient to build said Church shall be subscribed, it shall be the duty of the parish judge to hold an election . . . for the purpose of choosing a site for said Church". Two conditions were added to the agreement: 1) Anyone contributing less than five dollars would not be eligible to vote; 2) the place having the greatest amount of capital subscribed shall be selected as the site of the Church.

Such was the situation and state of affairs when Bishop Dubourg, in 1824, assigned Father Jean E. Martin as pastor of the Avoyelles parish.

Upon his arrival at the Post, Father Martin not only found no Church or Rectory, but he found a people divided among themselves.

His first difficulty was to find a place in which he could lodge. He was refused hospitality in seven different homes, before he found one family willing to take him in. For over two years this condition persisted, and in order to secure a little corn bread to eat, he went from home to home bringing peace and instructions to the people.

Within a year, by his self-denial and apostolic spirit, Father Martin had done much to relieve the tension of his flock. The number of Baptisms was most encouraging and over fifty marriages had received the Church's blessings.

The question of a parish Church had also been settled—to the displeasure of only a small part of the parishioners. By September, 1825, a new church had been constructed at Hydropolis. Although the furnishings consisted of "an altar made of boards on carpenters horses, a crucifix of bone 6 inches high, and two little candlesticks of brass" the people flocked to the Church in large numbers. At Marksville, however, the determination to erect the St. Joseph Church still persisted. Father Martin did not stop the project, and in a short time, Marksville had its own chapel, dedicated under the patronage of St. Joseph, and served from Hydropolis by Father Martin. This was the second church in the Avoyelles, and was destined to serve Marksville until the new Church was built in June, 1869.

In 1825, Rt. Rev. Bishop William Dubourg made a visitation of his Diocese. On September 13, the Bishop and his party left Opelousas and headed for the Avoyelles. At Bayou Boeuf the

party encountered some difficulty crossing the swollen stream with the result that the Rt. Reverend Bishop nearly drowned. As there was no bridge across Bayou Boeuf, the guide crossed the horses and supplies first. The Bishop tried to cross via two trees which had fallen from opposite banks and joined in mid-stream. However, they were about a foot underwater. It was a hazardous crossing. About mid-way across, His Excellency lost his balance and fell in water well over his head. The guide jumped to his aid and brought him ashore. Once his clothing dried out, Bishop Dubourg had only minor scratches as a memento of the crossing. Father Anduze, his companion, decided to put his bundle on his head and swim across.

Early the next day the party reached the "Petite-Prarie du Bayou Rouge"—the outskirts of the Avoyelles mission. That night they were with Father Martin at Hydropolis. During his visitation of the Church at Avoyelles, Bishop Dubourg administered Confirmation to an exceptionally large class. It was the second such ceremony in the parish history. The Bishop praised both the pastor and the people for the great progress and revival of the Faith in the Avoyelles.

In June, 1829, Rt. Rev. Bishop Joseph Rosati asked Father Martin to make a visit to the Arkansas mission and report on the conditions found there. For several months, Fr. Martin was absent on this mission. His journeys took him to a large colony of Catholic colonists near the State Capitol. He likewise took the census of the Arkansas Post, Petit Rocher and Fort Smith.

En route to and from the Arkansas Mission, Father Martin



MOST REVEREND ANTOINE DURIER, third Bishop of Natchitoches, 1885-1904. His Excellency dedicated the second parish Church of Bayou des Glaisses on May 30, 1888, at that time changing the name from St. Hyacinthe Church to Sacred Heart Church of Moreauville.

also visited the Ouachita Post and Fort Miro, where he baptized, instructed, blessed marriages, and conferred the other benefits of the Church upon the inhabitants.

His visits also extended to the small chapel of St. Francis Xavier in the Rapides Post (Alexandria) and to the Indian chapel of St. Louis of the Apalaches. His name is also found in the Natchitoches Registers, as having ministered there on occasions.

The first efforts to provide a definite educational system for the Catholics of the Avoyelles district were made by Father Jean E. Martin. On February 20, 1831, in the city of New Orleans, Father Martin signed a contract with a Mr. Jerome Callegari, engaging him to teach school in Avoyelles parish for the meager sum of \$100 per year. It was also stipulated that Father Martin furnish the young professor with lodging, board and laundry.

A graduate of the famed Padua University in Italy, Jerome Callegari came to America in 1830. His education was a thorough one according to the traditional lines, including a command over four languages. Thus he was well suited for his task. Between the time he signed the contract and his arrival in the Avoyelles, some fifteen months elapsed.

Twenty-five students comprised the first class, which began on June 4, 1832, at the home of Mr. Martin Rabalais.

This school continued through the year 1847, with its enrollment varying from 23 to 36 students.

In 1832 trouble developed with the Church Wardens. Just before Holy Week, the problem became acute, and the Wardens took it upon themselves to take over the parish. On their own authority, the Wardens placed seals upon the Church doors and secured an injunction against Father Martin's entering the building. On April 18, as Bishop Leo De Neckere was holding a meeting of his consultors in the Episcopal House at New Orleans, the door suddenly opened, and in walked Father Jean Martin, bent upon seeing the Bishop immediately. Immediately after Easter, Bishop De Neckere and Father Blanc made the journey to the Avoyelles to investigate the source of the trouble. It was to no avail—the arrogant wardens simply didn't want Father Martin as their pastor, so they were locking him out of the Church. The Bishop interdicted the parish Church, and Father Martin was assigned as pastor of Pointe Coupee.

Finally, in 1834, the Wardens gave in, and Father Antoine Blanc, Administrator of the Diocese, sent Father Edward D'Hauw of Natchitoches to lift the interdict and re-install the pastor, Father

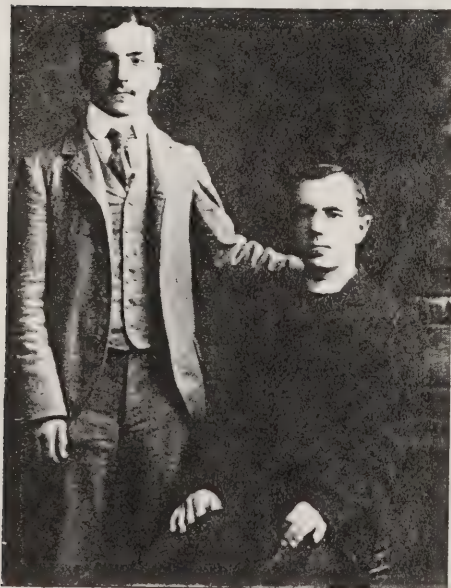
Jean E. Martin. Later in 1835, Father Martin left the Avoyelles and was replaced by a Father Louis Alaux. Towards the end of 1836, Father Martin returned, for the third time, remaining as pastor until 1840.

The next Avoyelles pastor was Father N. Francais, who had been assistant pastor of Natchitoches since 1835. Bishop Antoine Blanc, in 1840, confided to his care the larger Avoyelles parish, excluding the Rapides district. In March, 1840, the Bishop sent Father Robert Doogan, a newly ordained priest, as first resident pastor of St. Francis Xavier Church at Alexandria. Father Francais' first months at the Avoyelles were very trying and discouraging, so much so, that in September, 1840, he wrote the Bishop: "it will be extremely difficult for a priest to live permanently in this parish of Avoyelles . . . if there is in the Diocese another Post where I could serve . . ." He was ready to leave, if only the Bishop would permit him to go.

However, within a few weeks, things began to shape up, and Father Francais became adjusted to his new surroundings. Late in September, he bought a house near the Church to be used as his home. The house cost him personally \$1050 for the building and its 60 arpent lot.

Once settled in his new home, Father Francais began to plan for a new Church, an item sorely needed at Hydropolis. Meanwhile, he began catechism classes each Sunday in the existing building, and by the end of September he had a class of 47 to make their First Holy Communion.

In October, 1842, a new problem arose. The third and last



DOCTOR G. BRAHIC, and his brother, **FATHER CONSTANCE BRAHIC**. The Doctor had a plantation below Moreauville, and Father Brahic served as Moreauville's sixth pastor, February, 1898, to December, 1905. He was responsible for the opening of St. Francis de Sales Convent in 1899.

FATHER FRANCIS GROSSE, seventh pastor of Sacred Heart parish. He served from December, 1905 until his death on August 2, 1908. Father Grosse is well remembered by many of the old-timers of Moreauville and Marksville, where he had served before coming to Moreauville.



note on the house was due; but Father Francais had no money. As pastor he had received no salary, there had been no stole fees of any kind. Therefore, he appealed to Bishop Blanc to give him the money to meet the note and save the house. The Bishop complied and the house was saved.

In 1843, Bishop Blanc relieved Father Francais of the Avoyelles parish, and sent a young Canadian, Father William Cheutier, as pastor. Father Cheutier remained only a year, and he, too, took up the matter of erecting a new Church. It was his opinion that the parish center should be Cocoville, thus indicating that the bitter struggle for the Church site was not yet over. Father Cheutier also visited all sections of the Avoyelles and made efforts to set up permanent mission stations throughout the parish. On October 29, 1843, he held an election granting the members of the Congregation the privilege of selecting a new Board of Church Wardens. The results were gratifying. In October, 1843, Father Doogan of Alexandria died of yellow fever, and Father Cheutier was asked to take over the Alexandria parish temporarily. This he did, spending All Saints Day, 1843, with the Alexandria people. Monthly thereafter, he would be in Alexandria for Sunday Mass.

Finally, in December, 1843, Father Cheutier petitioned the Bishop to permit him to give up his parish, and return to his native Diocese of Quebec, Canada. He had also written the Bishop of Quebec, asking to be assigned as an assistant in some parish in that Diocese.

To replace Father Cheutier, Bishop Blanc again called upon Father N. Francais, requesting him to return to Hydropolis until he could find another priest to assume that pastorate.

Chapter Four

SAINT PAUL'S CHURCH

1845 - 1860

Early in 1845, His Excellency Bishop Antoine Blanc, appointed a new pastor to the Avoyelles. He was Father Charles Dalloz, a young German priest, full of zeal and determination. Within a very short time, Father Dalloz set to work to build a new Church. Again, opposition arose, and Father Dalloz had his share of troubles with the Church Wardens. Discouraged but not defeated, he went ahead with the plans for the new structure. Before long, he was backed by many loyal families, and the new Church became a reality.

This was the third church erected in Hydropolis, the others being the 1798 Church of Father Brady, and the 1824 Church of Father Jean Martin. It was destined to serve the people of the Avoyelles for 25 years. When the new edifice was blessed, the name of the parish was changed from Our Lady of Mount Carmel to Saint Paul's, at the wish of the people.

In 1846, Father Dalloz was compelled to make extensive repairs to the old rectory, the home originally bought by Father Francais five years earlier. As he had no money available for the repairs, he appealed to Bishop Blanc at New Orleans to come to his assistance.

In June, 1849, just as things were running smoothly, Father Dalloz took sick, never to recover. He died on June 21, 1849, at the age of 42. His remains were laid to rest in the small parish cemetery adjoining the church he had erected.

After Father Dalloz's death, some time elapsed before Bishop Blanc sent Father M. P. Mazzerechelli as pastor of the Avoyelles. Upon arrival at the post, the new pastor found the Wardens in full control of the Church administration. They presented Father Mazzerechelli with a debt of \$600 left by the late pastor, and then had the audacity to bill him \$100 for the tomb in which Father Dalloz was laid to rest! In an effort to retain peace, Fr. Mazzerechelli paid the bills, and then left the Avoyelles, and returned to New Orleans.

Early in 1850, Most Reverend Antoine Blanc, now Archbishop of New Orleans, assigned a new pastor to the Avoyelles. He was Father Hyacinthe Tumoine, a native of the Rennes Diocese in

France and was 31 years old. He had come to the New Orleans Diocese as a seminarian and completed his studies for the priesthood at St. Vincent Seminary, Plattenville, on Bayou Lafourche.

Within a year after Father Tumoine's arrival, Archbishop Blanc removed the Ouachita district from the Avoyelles parish, and formed the new parish St. Matthew at Monroe, thereby relieving Father Tumoine of that vast territory.

Still, Father Tumoine was not satisfied with the conditions of the Church at Cocoville. As his house was a distance from the parish Church, he had set aside one room where he celebrated Mass on the days he could not do so at the Church. Worst of all, he was not able to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the parish Church, for the simple reason that they did not have a tabernacle for the altar. This he set out to remedy.

The people backed Father Tumoine in his efforts to better their parish plant. On Sundays, the ladies of the parish held raffles and small sales which realized \$200 within a short time. With these additional funds, Father Tumoine was able to complete the church furnishings.

By August, 1851, Father Tumoine had reached a solution to his Church problem. Instead of placing a permanent tabernacle in the parish Church and reserving the Blessed Sacrament there, with no one to watch the Church, Father Tumoine decided to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the small chapel of his home. To this end, he built a small tabernacle and placed it on the altar in "ma chapelle" as he called it. On August 4, he wrote the Archbishop for permission to bless the chapel and reserve the Blessed Sacrament there.

Father Tumoine spent much of his time "on the road", visiting especially the Town of Marksville with its small chapel of St. Joseph. Each Sunday after his Mass, the pastor held catechism classes for the Marksville children. This was in October, 1851. By February, 1852, Father Tumoine had established regular catechism classes in another section of his parish. Each Friday he would go to Bayou des Glaisses, present-day Moreauville, and gather together the children for their catechism classes. Archbishop Blanc, through his Vicar General, Father Rousselon, kept the pastor well supplied with catechisms for all the children.

In the 1850 census of the Avoyelles, there was a total of 4,059 whites and 5,267 colored in the civil parish, an increase of near 3000 within ten years. The number of Baptisms likewise increased. In the first year Fr. Tumoine was at St. Paul's (1850) the



MOST REV. CORNELIUS VAN DE VEN,
fourth occupant of the Episcopal See, 1904-
1932. In Dec. 1910 Bishop Van de Ven
blessed Moreauville's present church. He also
came often to administer Confirmation with-
in the present structure.

baptisms numbered 78, and the year following they had jumped to 193.

During the summer of 1853, His Excellency, Archbishop Blanc, made a visitation of all the parishes in his Diocese. On August 8, that illustrious Prelate visited Saint Paul's Church, and in the parish registers he attested to the fine spirit existing between pastor and people. He likewise expressed his genuine satisfaction over the great progress made throughout the Avoyelles. Little did the people realize that this was to be the last visit of that great Prelate to their parish, for North Louisiana was no longer under his jurisdiction.

Almost three weeks before this visit, July 19, 1853, to be exact, in the city of Rome, His Holiness Pius IX, had divided Louisiana into two Dioceses, erecting a new Bishopric in the city of Natchitoches, Louisiana. In the midst of a terrible yellow fever epidemic in October of that year, the papal briefs reached Natchitoches by boat. They were addressed to Father Auguste Marie Martin, pastor of the Church there. Upon breaking the seals and reading the documents, Father Martin became Bishop-elect Auguste M. Martin, first bishop of Natchitoches. On November 30, in resplendent ceremonies in New Orleans' St. Louis Cathedral, Archbishop Blanc consecrated Father Martin a Bishop of the Church.

On Sunday morning, December 11, 1853, the new Bishop took formal possession of his Diocese. Large delegations of persons from all sections of the Diocese came to Natchitoches to welcome their new Bishop. Included in these delegations was a group from Saint

Paul's parish of Hydropolis, headed by Father Tumoine, their pastor.

In the spring of 1854, after appointing Father Pierre F. Di-charry as Vicar General of the Diocese, Bishop Martin departed for France to beg for priests, seminarians and funds for his mission Diocese. Bishop Martin returned early in 1855, bringing with him the pioneer band of missionaries for the Natchitoches Diocese. As many of them were still students, Bishop Martin opened a small seminary in the buildings adjoining the Episcopal residence at Natchitoches. From this seminary seventeen priests went out to the parishes of the Diocese. Many of them served the Avoyelles people.

On April 17, 1855, Bishop Martin made his first official visitation of Saint Paul's Church at Cocoville. In July, he assigned an assistant pastor to the mission center in the person of Father Jean M. Beaulieu. He remained at St. Paul's until August, 1856, when he was appointed pastor of St. John's Church, Cloutierville.

During his trip abroad securing subjects for the new Diocese, Bishop Martin accepted an offer of the Daughters of the Cross to come to his Diocese and establish a Convent of their community. The Bishop decided to place the convent in Avoyelles, where the greatest number of Catholics lived. Accordingly, Bishop Martin, in 1855, asked Father Tumoine to make all necessary arrangements for a convent for the Sisters. On November 26th, 1855, at 10:00 P.M. the Sisters landed at the Red River landing, about ten miles from Cocoville, accompanied by Rt. Rev. Bishop A. Martin. Awaiting them was Father Tumoine, who had everything prepared for the new community. By his encouragement and aid, the Sisters were able to adjust themselves more rapidly to their new surroundings and work.

At the end of May, 1856, Father Hyacinthe Tumoine left the Avoyelles parish and returned to his own Diocese of New Orleans. He was immediately appointed pastor of St. Ann's Church in the city of New Orleans. In June, Bishop Martin assigned the new pastor: Father Julius Janeau. He was a young French priest who accompanied Bishop Martin to Natchitoches in 1855. His entire priestly life was spent in the Avoyelles—at Cocoville until 1869, and at Marksville until his death.

Other assistants to serve St. Paul's during this period were: Fr. Mathurin T. Chapin, August, 1856, to May, 1857; and Fr. T. C. Durand, May to October, 1856.

On June 29, 1857, Bishop Martin, accompanied by Fathers

Simon D'Angles of Alexandria and Francois Martin of Isle Brevelle, arrived in the Avoyelles on a Confirmation tour. On July 2, His Excellency presided over the First Communion class at Presentation Convent, under the direction of the Daughters of the Cross. After Mass that morning, the Bishop administered confirmation to forty persons, thirty of them students at the Convent school. On Sunday, July 5, the Bishop confirmed a class of 80 persons in St. Paul's Church—forty of these having made their first communion that very same day.

Sometime before the year 1850, the original chapel of Saint Joseph at Marksville disappeared, because it is not mentioned in any of the records. As the parish had continued to develop down through the years, by 1855 the Church of St. Paul at Cocoville, although still in use, was poorly located and too small for the needs of the congregation.

Therefore, in 1857, a large meeting was called by the pastor. Father Janeau proposed the erection of two new Churches: one at Marksville and the other on Bayou des Glaises, at Moreauville. These two places were selected because of their location and also because regular mission stations had already been set up in both towns.

The people of Marksville were not too interested, and let the plan drop. In 1860, another effort was made, but failed due to the War between the States. Finally, in 1867 a committee was formed and work actually commenced on a new Church for Marksville. In January, 1868, a contract was let, and in May work began. Finally, on June 4, 1869—twelve years from the original call—the new church was completed, dedicated and formed into an independent parish.

The people of Moreauville, however, reacted quite differently. From its very inception, they gave their full support to the plan. A committee was selected, with Mr. William L. Voorhies as President of the Association. It consisted of "Catholics of Bayou des Glaises of Avoyelles Parish, who are assembled to construct a Church on the said Bayou". On April 9, 1858, Mrs. Aimee Joffrion, widow of the late John H. Boyer, donated to the Church a plot of land along Bayou des Glaises as the site of the first Church.

Plans were drawn, contract let, and work began on the Bayou des Glaises Church.

In January, 1858, Bishop Martin sent a young French priest as assistant to Father Janeau. He was Father Thomas Auguste Rebours. He had joined the Diocese as a seminarian on August 22,

1855. Upon his arrival in America the young cleric completed his studies at St. Joseph Seminary in Natchitoches. On February 16, 1856, at Immaculate Conception Cathedral, Natchitoches, Rt. Rev. Bishop Martin raised this young cleric to the Priesthood.

In 1857 Father Rebours served as an assistant at the Natchitoches Cathedral and towards the end of the year he replaced Father J. Pierre at Holy Apostles Church on Bayou Pierre. It was from Bayou Pierre that Fr. Rebours came to the Avoyelles.

Father Rebours took over the Bayou des Glaises mission, visiting there often, teaching catechism to the children, and caring for the needs of all the people. Towards the end of 1858 the chapel was completed, and the people of Bayou des Glaises were justly proud of their accomplishment.

In May, 1859, Bishop Martin again returned to the Avoyelles. After completing his visitation and Confirmation schedule at St. Paul's and Presentation Convent, the Bishop visited, for the first time, the new Church of Moreauville. Bishop Martin made the following entry in the parish registers concerning the Dedication of the first Moreauville Church: "On Monday the 23rd (of May) we went to Bayou des Glaises, accompanied by the same priests and a large concourse of people, where we solemnly blessed and dedicated under the invocation of Saint Hyacinthe, a new Church, constructed at the expense of the inhabitants of the said Bayou, on a piece of land attached to the plantation of Mme. J. H. Boyer, giver of the land for the Church . . . After the celebration of a Solemn Mass, we have administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to five persons. Auguste Martin, Bishop of Natchitoches."



MOST REVEREND DANIEL F. DESMOND,
fifth Bishop of the Alexandria Diocese, 1933-
1945. His Excellency visited Moreauville on
numerous occasions. On May 22, 1933, the
Bishop solemnly blessed the present structure
after completion of the renovation and beau-
tification by Father Jacquemain.

Among the clergy present for the solemn dedication were: Father Julius Janeau and Fr. Jean B. Malassagne, St. Paul's Church; Fr. Jean B. Avenard, pastor of Campte; and Father Francois Martin, pastor of Isle Brevelle. Father Rebours is not listed among those present, for some reason he was absent from the parish until August of that year. The five who received the Sacrament of Confirmation on May 23, 1859, after the dedication ceremonies were: Joseph C. Couvillon, Armeline Gremillon, Clementine Couvillon, Eulache Dufour, and Antoinette Mayeux.

It has been alleged that the Bayou des Glaises Church was named St. Hyacinthe's to honor the patron Saint of Reverend Mother Hyacinthe, first Superior of the Daughters of the Cross at Cocoville. The explanation seems reasonable and is probably correct. Other early records erroneously name the Church "St. Thomas Church". This is obviously a mistake.

Upon his return to Cocoville in August, Father Rebours continued his mission trips to Bayou des Glaises, celebrating Mass in the new Church each Sunday, to the great joy and convenience of the people.

Chapter Five

CHURCH OF ST. HYACINTHE

1860 - 1882

BAYOU DES GLAISES

At his desk in the episcopal residence at Natchitoches, Bishop Martin finished writing, put down the pen and folded the document he had just confected. After addressing, His Excellency had the letter taken to the Poste, from whence it was destined to reach the Avoyelles.

It was February 2, 1860, the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin. The letter, bearing the signature and seal of Natchitoches' first Bishop, was the result of many hours of thought and deliberation. The decision, however, was made, and now it only had to be carried out.

Several days later, in the small rectory of St. Paul at Hydro-polis, a letter arrived on the Post from Natchitoches. It was ad-

dressed to Father Thomas Auguste Rebours, assistant priest of St. Paul's.

The news it contained was good. Father Rebours had the joy of seeing his desire come true. Bayou des Glaises had been formally erected into an independent parish, and the Bishop had selected him as first pastor of the small mission church there.

To the people on Bayou des Glaises, the news was indeed grand. It was the answer to their prayers and hopes of years past. On February 2, 1860, their prayers were answered. Now they must prepare a home for their pastor.

Such was the joy of both priest and people over Bishop Martin's decision to erect a permanent parish on Bayou des Glaises, covering the southern district of the Avoyelles.

Father Rebours was no stranger to the people of Moreauville. They had come to know and love him during the year he had served them from Hydropolis. The people remembered well, too, that Father Rebours was in great part responsible for their church of St. Hyacinthe. It was his work, encouragement, and leadership that had brought the vague desire into a picturesque reality.

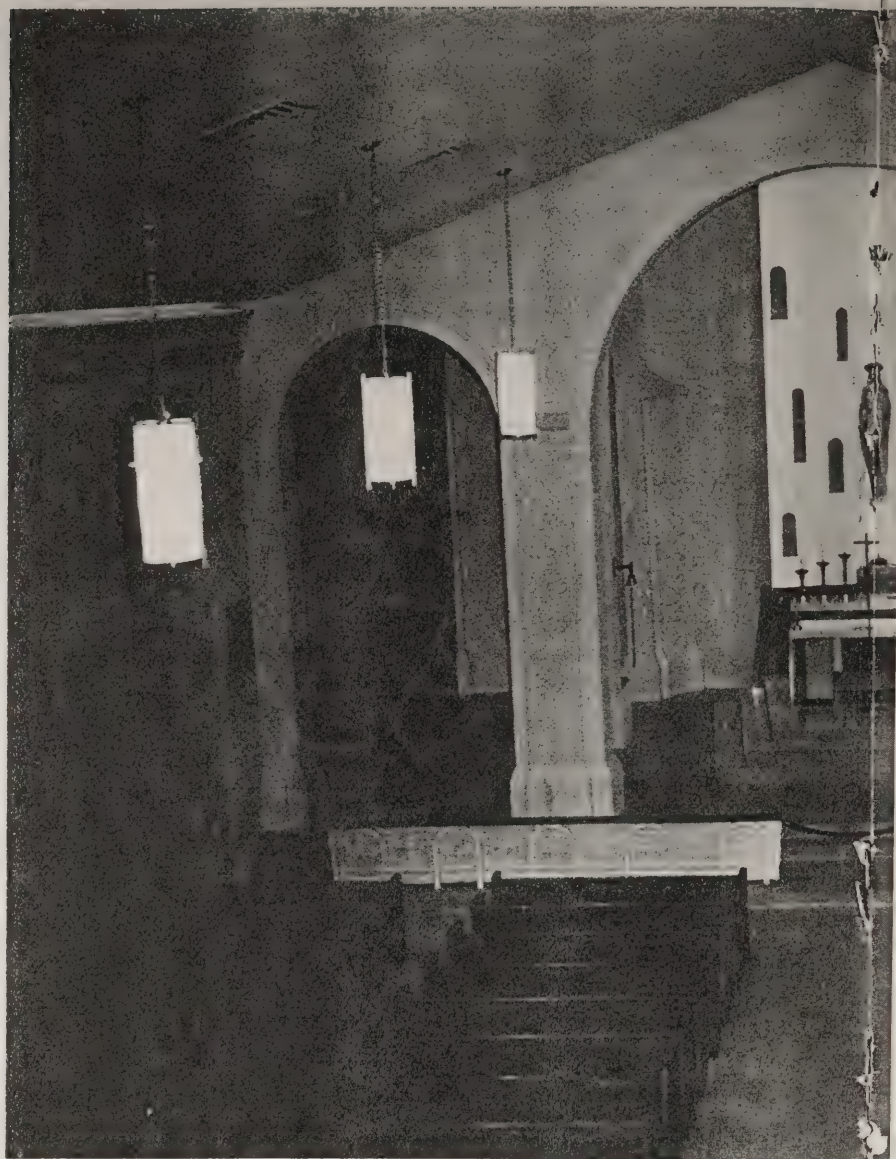
In February, 1860, Father Rebours moved to Bayou des Glaises and began the work of organizing there a parochial plant.

The new parish became the tenth parish within the Diocese of Natchitoches. In 1853, when Monseigneur Martin became Bishop of Natchitoches, there were only five parishes (and five priests) in all of North Louisiana: Natchitoches, Hydropolis, Cloutierville, Alexandria and Campti. In less than seven years, His Excellency had raised the number of parishes to ten (served by 13 priests), plus 7 mission chapels and 36 mission stations. Quite an accomplishment in such a short time.

The Moreauville parish, was, then, the first to be carved from the original Hydropolis Church. The only other parishes in the Diocese of Alexandria older than Sacred Heart in Moreauville are: St. Matthew's, Monroe; St. Augustine's, Isle Brevelle; Holy Apostles, Bayou Pierre (no longer existing); and Holy Trinity, Shreveport.

When the parish was divided, St. Paul's at Hydropolis was serving four mission stations, in addition to the new chapel on Bayou des Glaises. These stations were: Big Bend, Bayou Rouge, Isle des Cotes and Pointe Naigre.

Some time after Father Rebours moved to Moreauville, he assumed charge of two of these missions: Big Bend and Bayou Rouge. It is interesting to note that Big Bend has remained a mission



Sanctuary of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Moreauville, as it is to cost \$85,000. A new feature in the church is the double high altar. Constant Sacrament, because upon it will rest the Tabernacle with the Blessed Sacrament, in front of the Sacrament Altar, and upon it Mass will be offered by the priest in the Alexandria Diocese.



today. The entirely new sanctuary and renovated church cost the parish
constructed of Italian marble, one altar will be known as the Altar of the
Sacrament. The second altar, the "Mass Altar," will stand some feet
the priest facing the congregation. This is the first sanctuary of its



An interesting old photograph of the parish plant in the early decades of the present century. Note the present church, without steeple and dome. The building on the right is the second parish school house. It served the parish from 1910 until 1920, when the school was discontinued. The building was sold and moved to the public school where it is still in use today.

of its mother-church during the entire Hundred Years of the Bayou des Glaisses parish.

The first Marriage which took place in the new parish was that of Gali Laborde, son of Nezelle Laborde and Celina Gauthier to Miss Celina Firmin, the daughter of Joseph Firmin and Octavie Joffrion. The ceremony took place in St. Hyacinthe's Church on February 14, 1860, before Father Thomas A. Rebours. During the year 1860, there were 14 such ceremonies at the Church.

On March 6, 1860, Father Rebours recorded the first funeral in the parish Register, that of Catherine, an eighty-year-old slave belonging to Mr. Julien Berzat.

Unfortunately, the first volume of Baptisms for Moreauville have been lost. Thus, we are without baptismal records for St. Hyacinthe parish for the first eighteen years of its existence. Most probably these records were the prey of one of the parish fires.

One of Father Rebours' first projects was to erect a rectory

near to the Church in which he could live. To this end, in May, 1861, Father Rebours bought a plot of land adjoining the existing Church. Mrs. Aimee Joffrion, donor of the Church land, sold the arpent to Rt. Rev. Bishop Martin on May 30, 1861 for the sum of \$100.00.

During the year 1861, Father Rebours performed 12 marriages in the parish Church, and Father N. Levesque, the new assistant at Cocoville, performed one. During that same year, there were 47 funerals conducted with burial in the parish cemetery.

In 1862, Father Rebours continued the organizational work of his parish and the surrounding missions. During the month of June, Father Jean M. Beaulieu, pastor of Cloutierville, visited the parish as the guest of Fr. Rebours. His name appears as officiant at several funerals during June and July.

During the year 1863, Father Rebours was absent from his parish from May until December. Quite possibly Father Rebours made a trip back to France to visit his family and relatives, as his name does not appear in any of the registers during those months.

During the pastor's absence, the parish was administered by Father Mathurin Chapin. He had come to the Diocese with the Bishop in 1854 as a seminarian. On January 6, 1855, he was ordained a priest by Rt. Rev. Bishop Martin—the first priest ordained by the Bishop and the first ordination to take place in Natchitoches. Fr. Chapin's duties in the Diocese included service at Cloutierville and Hydropolis as assistant-pastor. In 1857 he had been appointed pastor of St. Mary's Church, Milliken's Bend (now in the Mississippi River). After Father Rebours returned to Moreauville, Father Chapin went back to his people at Milliken's Bend.

In February, 1864, another celebrated pioneer-priest of the Natchitoches Diocese visited Moreauville. His name appears in the Registers under several funeral entries. He was Father Pierre Felix Dicharry of Natchitoches. A native Louisianian, Father Dicharry was sent to Natchitoches in 1851. In 1854 he was appointed Vicar General of the Diocese, which title he held under three Bishops until the time of his death in July, 1887.

During the years of the War between the States, Moreauville and its people suffered the ill effects of the bloody fight as did everyone else. During the War years, since the young men were away on the battle-lines, the number of marriages in St. Hyacinthe Church dropped greatly. In 1861 there were only four.

In May, 1864, the fighting struck quite close to home. Con-

FATHER FERDINAND MARCAS,
Administrator of Sacred Heart
Parish from March until mid-
July, 1912. He was sent to
Moreauville by Bishop Van de
Ven after Father Gimbert's
death and remained until Fr.
Nothofer arrived.



federate troops moved into the area, and they were quickly followed by the Federals. The Convent of the Presentation at Hydropolis was endangered. The Sisters began taking the necessary precautions to preserve their few worldly possessions and the lives of their boarders.

On the morning of May 14th, Father Rebours left Moreauville to pay a call upon Father Julius Janeau at Hydropolis. Not finding him at the rectory, Father Rebours went to the Convent. But, no Father Janeau there either. He had taken the forty-five boarders and the Sisters to safety in the outlying woods.

Scarcely had he seated himself in the Convent parlor, when in came a negro boy with more news: "A soldier took your horse." Father Rebours ran out to try and catch the thief, but his efforts were in vain. Without any means of transportation home, Fr. Rebours returned to the Convent to re-assure the Sisters of their safety there.

Almost as he was speaking, the battle cry was shouted. The front yard of Presentation Convent became part of the battle-field. Shots were fired back and forth to the terror of the two remaining Sisters and Father Rebours.

With a terrific noise a cannon ball landed on the second floor of the Convent, and the trio quickly evacuated the building. For three hours they took refuge in the Convent bakery, hiding them-

selves behind the large oven. Under the oven were all the Church vestments and vessels, placed there the previous day for safety.

Once the firing ceased and all was quiet, the trio emerged from their hide-out. To their great surprise, they found Presentation Convent still standing, though its walls were riddled with bullets. Later Father Janeau returned from the woods with the Sisters and children, tired from a most exciting and unusual day. The Daughters of the Cross repaired to the Convent with their little charges, and Fathers Janeau and Rebours walked to the Rectory. After a visit together, Fr. Rebours probably spent the night at Hydropolis, having no way to return to Moreauville.

In 1865, poverty reigned supreme in the Avoyelles. The farms were without workers, the people were without food and supplies. The people turned to their pastor for help, and Father Rebours, in turn, pleaded with Bishop Martin.

Bishop Martin acted with haste by writing Governor Allen, then at Shreveport, in the name of the Avoyelles people. His petition brought results. In reply to the Bishop's request, we have this letter: "Your very kind and interesting letter was received. . . . Rest assured that I shall do all in my power to relieve the sufferings of our people in Avoyelles. I have already sent them a steamboat loaded with corn. I feel, however, that it will be difficult for this boat to reach its destination, as there is danger of capture below Alexandria. I have written to General Brickner to send a sufficient guard with the steamer in order that the starving people of that parish may not be disappointed, as I have promised them bread. If we are successful in this trip, I shall continue to send them corn and other provisions as often as possible. . . . Henry W. Allen, Governor of Louisiana, Shreveport, March 13, 1865."

From all over his Diocese, Bishop Martin was receiving requests, hearing of destruction, trying to comfort his people. One pastor asked the Bishop to dispense the people from the Lenten fast because in the whole town there was not a can of sardines, and because the people didn't have the money with which to buy sufficient groceries. At Natchitoches itself, the Bishop had his troubles. Father Gentile of Monroe had come for the new Holy Oils for that part of the Diocese. While in Natchitoches, his horse was stolen from the Bishop's stable by a Federal soldier, thus delaying him three months in his return to Monroe.

Federal soldiers at Natchitoches broke into St. Joseph's College there, taking possession of the buildings. Bishop Martin complained

to the officers at the Provost Marshal's Office, but not to much avail. If the days of the Civil War were gloomy, the days of the Reconstruction era were worse. But over the years, things began to look brighter. In 1865, with the boys returning from War, the number of marriages in St. Hyacinth's Church jumped from 4 in 1864 to a high of 28. In 1866 the number swelled to 44. With these new families settling in Moreauville and its vicinity, new life and development was in store for the people of Bayou des Glaises.

With the Reconstruction era, there came a great expansion and development in the Avoyelles. A new interest was taken in the erection of a parish at Marksville, and the dream became a reality. Back in 1860, shortly after Moreauville became an independent parish, the people of Marksville began a serious attempt to erect a new Church. However, the War between the States intervened, and nothing was accomplished. On December 5, 1867, the Marksville people met and decided to take immediate steps towards erecting the sorely needed Church. A large subscription was raised, and plans were drawn up for the new St. Joseph Church. In the beginning of May, 1868, work commenced. Work progressed commendably, and the new structure was completed in time for Christmas, 1868. On June 4, 1869, Rt. Rev. Bishop Martin, assisted by several members of his clergy blessed the new structure, dedicating it under the patronage of St. Joseph.

On the same day, Bishop Martin erected St. Joseph's into an independent parish, appointing Father Julius Janeau as first pastor of Marksville. In August, 1869, Bishop Martin appointed Father J. E. Chauvin as pastor of Saint Paul's, directing him to establish the parochial church in the town of Mansura. Thus, after almost seventy-five years the Cocoville parish was dis-membered, and now, where formerly there was but one parish, there now stood three: St. Hyacinthe's at Moreauville; St. Joseph's at Marksville and St. Paul's at Mansura.

With the erection of new parishes, Bishop Martin also established more missions and mission stations throughout the Avoyelles. Besides the Church at Marksville, Father Janeau was assigned the care of Pointe Naigre, Grand Cotes and Isle des Cotes, which places he visited on regular intervals. Since Father Chauvin at Mansura had to erect a Church, the Bishop left him free of mission work for the time being. From St. Hyacinthe's Church in Moreauville, Father Rebours was assigned a total of nine places to visit. They included: Bayou Choupik (which became an independent parish

in 1872), Bayou Jacques (Dupont parish today), Bayou Rouge Prairie (where a church was built in 1871), Spring Bayou, Indian Bayou, Enterprise, Big Bend, Bayou Dinde and Simmesport.

Besides the new and vast mission work, Father Rebours, in 1870, began another desired project: the opening of a Catholic School. Under the direction of some reputable and qualified members of the parish, the small school began operation in the fall of 1870. It was destined to function until the pastor's death.

In 1871, Bishop Martin, realizing the great burden and vast work by the Moreauville pastor, decided that St. Hyacinthe's parish needed an assistant priest. In late February, His Excellency assigned a newly ordained French priest as assistant to Father Rebours. He was Father Paul Emile Simon. Father Simon's connection with the parish will be seen in detail later, as he served as pastor of Moreauville from 1882 until 1894. From March, 1871, until March 12, 1872.

Short though his stay was, Father Simon lost no time in advancing the work entrusted to him. Under his capable tutorage, the missions of the Bayou des Glaises parish took on a new life and vigor. Within a few short months, one of them, Bayou Rouge Prairie, had its own Church, named in honor of the first martyr of Christendom, Saint Stephen. Father Simon listed himself as rector of this small church. Together with Big Bend, Bayou Rouge was one of the original missions of Cocoville, entrusted to Father Rebours in 1860 when he went to Bayou des Glaises. Throughout the War years, Fr. Rebours had continued his visits to this small community. Finally, under Father Simon the Church was erected and served regularly by the Moreauville clergy. St. Stephen's Church at Bayou Rouge remained in use through the year 1873; but from 1874 on it is never mentioned in any document.

Bayou Rouge Prairie was not enough to keep the energetic young priest busy. Another old mission center, Bayou Choupique, received his attention more and more. The people there were served from Moreauville beginning in 1870. They were anxious to have their own chapel in which to worship, and Father Simon took the necessary steps to bring their dream into reality. On March 12, 1872, while the chapel was under construction, Bishop Martin of Natchitoches made the necessary canonical move. In a letter addressed to "Reverend Paul Emile Simon, assistant at the Church of St. Hyacinthe" His Excellency broke the good news: "we give to you the pastorate of the Church of the Assumption of the

Blessed Virgin Mary in the civil parish of the Avoyelles". The letter ended: "May you always be a devout and zealous pastor."

On April 25, 1872, Rt. Rev. Bishop Martin visited the new parish and pastor, accompanied by the Avoyelles clergy. His Excellency blessed and dedicated the new edifice to the service of God to the great joy of the Bayou Choupique people. Present for the ceremony were: Fr. J. Janeau of Marksville; Fr. Thomas Rebours of Moreauville; Fr. Jean E. Chauvin of Mansura; and Fr. Paul E. Simon, "rector of said Church of the Assumption at Choupique". Signing the Register on that historic day were Arlien Junsonne, Symphroien Couvillion, M. E. Plauche, C. Gremillion, A. V. Moreau, Leonard Godeau, Francis Plauche, Evariste Rabalais, Jr., and J. Mille Ducote among others.

The erection of the Bayou Choupique parish marked a historic epic in the history of Catholicism in the Avoyelles. Bayou Choupique (the present-day Plaucheville parish) became the first "grand-daughter" of the original Hydropolis Church. St. Hyacinthe's at Moreauville and St. Joseph's at Marksville were its "daughter" churches. Thus 85 years after its establishment as an independent parish, the old Hydropolis parish saw the towers of the new churches of the "third generation" rising brightly above the plains of the Avoyelles prairie.

In 1874, Father Simon decided that for the greater convenience of his people, it would be better to re-locate the parish house of worship. Assumption Church of Bayou Choupique was dis-membered and brought to the small community then known as "Couvillionville" where it was diligently re-erected. On May 11, 1875, acting as delegate of the Most Reverend Bishop, Father Jean Chauvin, Dean of the Avoyelles, solemnly blessed the new Church, the "parish Church of Couvillionville".

On May 6, 1876, the name of the parish was officially changed from Assumption Church to the "Church of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows" (Notre Dame des Sept Doleurs). The decree changing the title was signed by Father Pierre F. Dicharry, administrator of the Diocese, pending the appointment of a successor to the late Bishop.

To replace Father Simon as assistant at Moreauville, Bishop Martin sent another young Frenchman. Father Isidore Queremais had come to Louisiana with Bishop Martin in 1870 when the Bishop returned from the Vatican Council. Together with Father P. Simon, he received the Diaconate in the Natchitoches Cathedral on November 30. He was ordained a priest shortly thereafter. In 1871 and

1872 he served as assistant at St. Francis Xavier Church, Alexandria, from whence he came to Moreauville in September, 1872. His stay in Moreauville was short, but the people came to love him for his zeal and kindness. In February, 1873, Bishop Martin asked Father Queremais to go to Shreveport as assistant to Father Jean Pierre at Holy Trinity Church. Little did the Bishop realize that he was sending this young priest to his death!

Early in September a terrible epidemic of yellow fever broke out in Shreveport. The people evacuated as quickly as possible, leaving only the sick and their devoted loved ones to care for them. Among those remaining were the priests of Holy Trinity, Fathers Jean Pierre and Isidore Queremais. The extreme heroism of these pioneer priests was equal to that of any of the early clergy during the days of the great persecutions. They knew well the dangers involved in ministering to the stricken, but never once did they shirk their duty.

The fever struck, and on September 15, 1873, Father Isidore Queremais, the former assistant of Moreauville, lay dying in the small rectory. Also burning with the fever, Father Jean Pierre made his way to Father Queremais' bed to administer the Last Sacraments and to comfort his confrere during those last moments. The following day, September 16, 1873, Father Jean Pierre col-

Moreauville during the tragic flood of 1912. Photo below shows the water as it looked in front of the Convent.



lapsed and died. His mortal remains were laid to rest next to those of Father Queremais. There was but one priest in the Shreveport area—Father Le Biler, chaplain of St. Vincent's in Fairfield. Although alone, Father Le Biler continued feverishly in the footsteps of his deceased confreres. Realizing the dire need for help he wired the pastor of Monroe to come to his assistance. Father L. Gergaud did. Together they struggled for several days—until—on September 25th. That morning Father Le Biler collapsed; Father Gergaud anointed him, and shortly afterwards he, too, died. That same night, Father Gergaud was stricken and had to retire to bed. He, in turn, wired Father Le Vezouet at Natchitoches. On October 1, after receiving Extreme Unction from the hands of Father Le Vezouet, Father Gergaud, the fourth martyr, died. Finally, on October 9, 1873, Father Francois Le Vezouet also gave up his life in service to the sick and dying of Shreveport—the fifth priest to die within three weeks! Such was the fate God had for Moreauville's second assistant-pastor, Father Queremais.

With the loss of five priests, Bishop Martin was unable to send a replacement to Moreauville, and Father Rebours, himself sick from over-work, was forced to direct the entire parish alone.

Among his projects in 1871 and 1872 was the establishment of a "priest-school" at Moreauville. Bishop Martin was ever zealous in the matter of Catholic Education for the youth of his Diocese. For the girls, Bishop Martin succeeded well enough in securing the Daughters of the Cross from Treguer, France, to establish a convent of their Order in his Diocese. Quite willingly these Sisters had come and established themselves at Cocoville, opening there their first American foundation, Presentation Convent. Unfortunately, however, the people did not fully realize the great service the Sisters were rendering, and accordingly did not give their full support to the Convent.

The Bishop was still faced with another problem: How to provide for the Christian education of the boys? There was neither sufficient funds to hire men to teach, although this had been done in some places; nor were there Brothers available to open the schools. After much thought, the Bishop came upon his own solution: the "priest schools". The pastors were to gather together the boys of their parish and personally impart to them the rudiments of knowledge. Father Rebours followed out the Bishop's plan.

In 1870, he had organized a school under the laity at Moreauville. But the year following, the school was under Father Rebours' personal attention, and so it would remain until the time of his

death. Although these pioneer parochial schools would never meet with present-day requirements and standards, they did serve their purpose in their own day in an admirable way.

After Father Rebours' death, the school disbanded and the youth of Moreauville were without a Catholic school until the coming of the Daughters of the Cross several years later.

From February, 1873, when Father Queremais left for Shreveport, Father Rebours was left alone at Moreauville. Besides St. Hyacinthe's Church, he was also serving the old missions of Big Bend, Bayou Dinde and Simmesport. Finally, in 1874, the work began to show on Father Rebours, and it was imperative that he take a rest from his parochial duties. Thus, from December, 1874, until February, 1875, Father Rebours was away from Bayou des Glaises in an effort to regain his strength and vitality. During his absence, Father Paul E. Simon of Couvillonville served St. Hyacinthe parish.

On September 29, 1875, just four days after the Golden Anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood, Rt. Rev. Bishop Auguste Marie Martin died. At his bedside in the small episcopal home at Natchitoches were all the priests of the Natchitoches Diocese, including Father Rebours of Moreauville. They had all gone to Natchitoches a fortnight earlier to make their Retreat, which ended on the Bishop's Anniversary Day. After laying Bishop Martin's worn body to rest in the floor of his Cathedral at Natchitoches, Father Rebours returned to Moreauville. There, together with his people, solemn services were conducted for the repose of Bishop Martin's soul. His Excellency had always shown a deep and personal interest in St. Hyacinthe's parish and its people. He had blessed its Church, erected the parish, visited Bayou des Glaises often for Confirmations. The people had come to love him as their Father, and his death was a loss to the Congregation.

A recapitulation of Bishop Martin's accomplishments between 1853 and 1875 is inspiring. At the time of his death, the Diocese numbered 14 independent parishes in comparison to the 5 in operation in 1853. From 2 mission chapels and no mission stations in 1853, the number had risen to 12 chapels and 32 stations in 1875. The priests serving the Diocese in 1875 numbered 18—a far cry from the original band of 5! Also, there were three orders of Sisters active in the Diocese with 8 schools, where formerly there was only 1 Order with their 1 school.

Father Pierre F. Dicharry, in a letter left by the late Prelate, was appointed as Administrator of the vacant Diocese, until such

time as the Holy See should appoint a new Bishop. On his shoulders fell the burden of directing the affairs of the Natchitoches Diocese and its numerous parishes.

In 1876, Father Rebours' health again failed him, and he was forced to curtail his activities. Big Bend, Bayou Dinde and Simmesport saw their pastor only occasionally. Likewise the boys' school at Moreauville did not meet regularly as formerly, because Father was unable to teach every day. In the beginning of August, Father Rebours had to go to bed. Little did he realize that he would never rise from that bed to resume his work. Later in August, Father Jean E. Chauvin of Mansura was called to take care of the Moreauville parish. On August 30, 1876, Father Chauvin heard Father Rebours' confession, brought him Holy Viaticum and gave him the last Anointings of the Church. In peace Father Rebours gave his soul back to his Creator and Judge.

On August 31, 1876, Father Rebours was buried at a Requiem Mass, celebrated by Fr. J. E. Chauvin, assisted by two other confreres, Fathers P. Simon and J. Janeau. The small church was crowded to over-flowing, as the people of Bayou des Glaisses came to pay their last respects to their beloved pastor and friend. Father Rebours' body was laid to rest in the parish cemetery, just outside the small Church he had built and served so faithfully for the past 16 years.

The funeral record of Father Rebours states that at the time of his death he was only 43 years and 8 months old. It is also

FATHER HENRI JACQUEMAIN, 1916-1942, tenth pastor of Sacred Heart parish. During Father Jacquemain's administration the 1910 church was completed and beautified. With his own hands, he built the main altar, decorated the sacristy ceiling and finished the church. He also finished the front of the church with its bell tower and large bell.



worthy to note that Father Rebours' death notice is the last entry in the first Funeral Register of St. Hyacinthe's Church of Bayou des Glaises. The book commenced on March 6, 1860, when the deceased priest had performed his first funeral as pastor of Moreauville. How little did he realize that his own death entry would seal and complete that Register!

Father Dicharry was duly notified of the death of Father Rebours. However, he was not able to send another to serve the Moreauville parish—simply because there were none.

The Administrator called upon Father Paul E. Simon, the pastor of Couvillonville, to serve as administrator of the vacant Moreauville parish until such time as another priest could be secured for that parish. In the year 1877, from Mater Dolorosa Church at Couvillonville, Father Simon was caring for Moreauville's St. Hyacinthe's Church, as well as the mission belt, including: Big Bend, Bayou Dinde and Simmesport. During that year in the combined parish there were a total of 133 baptisms.

In general, such was the condition of the Bayou des Glaises parish in 1877. The Natchitoches Diocese was already without a shepherd for well over a year; likewise the Moreauville people were without a pastor. All was quiet in expectation of the appointment and arrival of a new Bishop, who in turn, would be able to supply new priests for the Diocese and for the people of Bayou des Glaises.

Chapter Six

SACRED HEART CHURCH

1882 - 1908

In 1877, the Holy Father named the second Bishop of Natchitoches, Father Francis Xavier Leray, pastor of Saint Paul's Church, Vicksburg, Mississippi. On April 22, 1877, the new Prelate was consecrated Bishop by Cardinal St. Marc, in the magnificent Cathedral of Rennes, France. In mid-October of the same year, the Rt. Rev. Bishop arrived at Natchitoches and took formal possession of his Diocese.

Almost immediately Bishop Leray set out upon a visitation of all the Churches of the Natchitoches Diocese, including the vacant Moreauville parish. At once the Bishop realized the necessity of having a resident priest at Moreauville. Since the Bayou des Glaises

town was a more central base of operations, the Rt. Rev. Bishop authorized Father Paul E. Simon to move there, and minister to the Couvillonville people from that location. Thus, in 1878, Father Paul Emile Simon became the second pastor of Moreauville's Saint Hyacinthe Church.

Father Simon was no new-comer to the people of Moreauville. From February, 1871, until March 12, 1872, Fr. Simon had served as assistant to Father Rebours. After Father Rebours' death in 1876, he visited Moreauville regularly to care for the spiritual needs of the people. Thus, his return in 1878 as second pastor was warmly greeted by the parishioners.

When the late Bishop Martin visited Europe in 1869, en route to the Vatican Council, he made several stops in his native France to recruit more workers for his expanding Diocese. On the return to France at the close of the Council, the Rt. Rev. Bishop sailed with his new recruits for America. The band arrived at Natchitoches in August, 1870. Among those accompanying the Bishop were: Isidore Queremais (assistant at Moreauville and Yellow Fever Martyr); Francois Le Biler, already a priest and destined as Chaplain to the Daughters of the Cross and also a Yellow Fever Martyr; Ludovic Enaut (later pastor of Monroe); Joseph Aubree (first pastor of Many); and Paul Emile Simon—destined for Moreauville. On November 30, 1870, in ceremonies at his Cathedral, Bishop Martin conferred the Order of Deacon upon Rev. Mr. Simon and several of the others. Shortly afterwards, the Rt. Rev. Bishop promoted this same group to the priesthood. It was as a newly ordained priest that Father Simon was sent to the Moreauville parish in February, 1871.

As already mentioned, Father Simon left Moreauville in March, 1872, to found a new parish on Bayou Choupik, the first daughter church founded from Moreauville (the others would be Simmesport and Bordelonville). Mater Dolorosa Church of Placheville today is the former Bayou Choupik Church. It was from this assignment that Father Simon returned to become second pastor of St. Hyacinthe's in the beginning of 1878.

Besides his frequent visits to the Church at Couvillonville, in 1878, Fr. Simon was also attending the three Moreauville missions of Big Bend, Simmesport and Bayou Dinde. On November 14, 1878, Father Julius Janeau, the Marksville pastor, died, leaving St. Joseph's Church without a shepherd. As Bishop Leray had no priest to send in his place, Marksville was served on a temporary basis by the pastor of Mansura, Father Jean E. Chauvin.

FATHER (now Right Reverend Monsignor) **STANLEY J. DE KEUWER**, eleventh pastor, who served the parish from October 1942 to October 1952. At Father De Keuwer's urging the Daughters of the Cross returned to Moreauville and the present school was built. Monsignor De Keuwer is presently pastor of Immaculate Conception Church and Dean of the Natchitoches Deanery.



When Father Simon returned to Moreauville in 1878, the small frame Church of Saint Hyacinthe's was now beginning to show its age and use. St. Hyacinthe's was now completing its second decade of service to the people of Bayou des Glaises, and was growing too small for the expanding congregation.

Therefore, Father Simon realized that his first work must be that of erecting a new Church in the town of Moreauville, a more permanent and more glorious place of Worship. Accordingly, sketches were made and general plans drawn up for the new Church. Finally, in 1879, Father Simon could begin. For in that year, the Rt. Rev. Bishop relieved him of the Couvillonville Church and sent Father Lawrence Gallop as pastor there. He was able to spend his full energy and effort towards the erection of a new Church.

Scarcely had the pastor begun the plans for the new Church when various complaints began to arise. It was decided to re-locate the new Church, about fifty feet behind and two hundred feet to the right of the old Church. (The original Church stood in the drive-way of the present Rectory, with the cemetery on its left.) Other difficulties arose shortly after the Church began, and Father Simon became quite discouraged with the work.

Finally, in the spring of 1880, Father Simon decided to leave Moreauville. Rt. Reverend Bishop Leray, who had been sent to New Orleans the year before as Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese, stepped in. Since the people of Marksville were without a pastor, he sent Father Paul E. Simon as pastor of St. Joseph

Church, Marksville, late in May, 1881. As third pastor of Moreauville, Rt. Rev. Bishop sent a Father Charles Reynes. In the parish Registers his name first appears on June 5, 1880, when he signs as "reyne".

Father Reyne's pastorate was a short and rather unsuccessful one. Nothing much was done on the Church, as the people of the parish were still in dis-agreement with one another. Rather Reyne's contribution to the parish was to try and make them realize the necessity of their new Church and their duty to work together for its realization. It was a difficult task.

During his pastorate, the parish acquired another seven acres of land, adjoining the existing Church lands. On February 18, 1881, Father Reyne bought the seven acres from Mr. J. A. Boyer, who in turn had acquired it from the estate of his mother, the late Aimee Joffrion Boyer. The land was situated just south of the Church land (those originally donated in 1857 by Mrs. A. Joffrion) and facing Bayou des Glaises. On March 7, 1881, Father Reynes deeded the lands over to Rt. Rev. Francis X. Leray, Bishop of Natchitoches. The cost was \$1250.00.

By the fall of 1881, things were looking brighter. Work was to resume on the Moreauville Church, and Father Simon's dream was about to come true.

In the meantime, however, Father Reynes wanted to return to the Archdiocese of New Orleans, from whence he had come. Towards the end of 1881 he did leave, and was assigned to work in the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

Moreauville was again without a pastor, and seemingly there would be none to follow.

In November, the people decided to complete their Church and ask the Bishop for another pastor. By mid-November, a subscription of \$315 had been raised. The money was turned over to Father J. Chauvin of Mansura who was temporarily serving Moreauville from Saint Paul's. Since many others in Moreauville promised to contribute as soon as they saw work on the Church resumed, Father Chauvin turned the \$315 over to the carpenters and directed them to begin work immediately.

When the committee approached Father Chauvin with the subscription money, they also had another request to make. It was their desire that Moreauville again have its own resident pastor. Father Chauvin was directed to make this request in the name of the Bayou des Glaises people to Rt. Rev. Bishop Leray.

Some months previously, May to be exact, a lengthy petition

bearing the signatures of the Moreauville people was sent to Bishop Leray. The document requested that the Rt. Rev. Bishop re-appoint Father Paul Emile Simon as pastor of Saint Hyacinthe Church on Bayou des Glaises.

Late in November, a meeting was called in Moreauville to arrange for a new pastor. Mr. J. A. Boyer and Mr. C. H. Voorhies headed the committee of parishioners. The result of this meeting was a letter to Rt. Rev. Bishop Leray, then in New Orleans. In the letter, the congregation asked that their former pastor, Father Simon, be sent back to Moreauville. Among the reasons presented for this request, the Congregation stated that he was missed, and that since he had drawn up the plans for the new Church, he should see it to completion.

Meanwhile, at Marksville Father Simon heard of the meetings and decisions undertaken at Moreauville. On December 11, Father Simon wrote to Bishop Leray, asking the Bishop to re-appoint him to Moreauville. In his letter, Fr. Simon said: "Already I am in this country for eleven years, where I have undergone much misery. Two things have kept me here: My ambition to build the Church at Moreauville, and the friendship of Father Chauvin. . . . If Father Chauvin had not restrained me, I would have already requested you, Monseigneur, to permit me to go back to France."

The letter continued: "I did not live at Bayou des Glaises for nearly ten years for nothing . . . the condition in which my old parish finds itself causes me much sorrow . . . Monseigneur, do you want to make an important parish once more contented and happy? Do you want to give back to one of your priests . . . peace and a new courage? Well, then, Monseigneur, you have only one word to say: Permit me to go back to Moreauville on January 1. The whole population would be in joy . . . Monseigneur, give back the old shepherd to his old sheep. . . . P. E. SIMON, priest."

Since work on the new Church was again underway, Bishop Francis Leray, towards the end of December, 1881, transferred Father Simon from St. Joseph's at Marksville to St. Hyacinthe's at Moreauville. Fr. Simon made an official notice of this in the parish Registers.

"In the year, 1882, on Tuesday the 4th of January, I returned to my former parish of Moreauville with the assent of Monseigneur Francis X. Leray, Administrator of the Diocese of Natchitoches, P. E. Simon."

To replace Fr. Simon at Marksville, the Rt. Rev. Bishop appointed Father Oliver Bre, a French priest from Brittany. Father

Bre had come to the Diocese of Natchitoches with Bishop Martin in the 1860's. In 1869 he was appointed pastor of St. Augustine Church, Isle Brevelle. He served Saint Joseph's Parish, Marksville, from the beginning of 1882 until 1885, when he transferred to the Archdiocese of New Orleans. After serving at Chataignier and Franklin, Father Bre returned home to France in 1898, his health broken. He died in his native land on March 10, 1907.

The year 1882 proved to be a very happy one for the people of Moreauville. Encouraged by the return of their former pastor, the people gave generously to the building fund for the new Church.

On Palm Sunday, April 2, 1882, despite the terrible rains and high water, Father Simon conducted the traditional Palm Sunday ceremonies in old Saint Hyacinthe's Church. The only thing different that Sunday was that it would be the last Sunday on which the Congregation would assemble in the old Church. Holy Week, with its ritual and ceremonies, proceeded as usual, and on Holy Saturday morning, Father Simon celebrated the last Mass in the old Church building.

That day and night it rained continuously, and the already dangerously-high banks of Bayou des Glaises continued to swell. By Holy Saturday night, the water was touching the front steps of the old Church. During the night the waters remained dangerously high. Easter Day dawned, and all Moreauville was covered in water. Everything was flooded.

The day awaited so long and desiringly by the Congregation had finally come. The new Church was ready and was to be used for the first time that Easter morn. Despite the high waters and the flooded conditions, Father Simon was determined to conduct the Easter Services within the new structure. The appointed time arrived, Father Simon vested, and in the presence of about 150 of his parishioners, he celebrated the first Mass within the new Church of Bayou des Glaises.

In his own words, Father Simon gives us an account of that memorable day: "1882, 9th of April, Easter Sunday, during the great flood in which Moreauville was entirely covered with water, I, the undersigned pastor of the parish, have celebrated the first Mass in the new Church. There were about 150 persons present, having landed at the foot of the steps at the left hand side of the Church. P. E. Simon."

Although the new Church was used on Easter Sunday, it was not yet fully furnished. The furniture from the old Church had

been moved into the new structure until the debt could be paid and new furnishings ordered from Europe. Since Bishop Leray was now residing in New Orleans working full time with the temporal administration of that Archdiocese, the new Church was not blessed immediately. In fact, six years were to elapse before Bishop Leray's successor would solemnly dedicate the new structure to the service of God.

With the erection of the new church building, the name of the parish was changed from Saint Hyacinthe's to Sacred Heart Church. During 1882, Father Simon performed 73 baptisms, in comparison to the 29 administered the year previously. He also resumed the care of the missions at Big Bend, Bayou Dinde and Simmesport.

On April 15, 1883, feast of the patronage of Saint Joseph, "for the first time in the new Church of Moreauville" 55 children made their First Holy Communion. On hand to assist Father Simon was Father Lawrence Gallop, pastor of Plaquemine.

In 1885, the Diocese of Natchitoches received a new Shepherd in the person of Reverend Antoine Durier, pastor of Annunciation Church, New Orleans. During the last days of 1884 the Papal Letters of appointment reached Father Durier in New Orleans. As the Diocese had been without a Bishop for a long time, the new Bishop was urged to receive his consecration as soon as possible. On St. Joseph's Day, March 19, 1885, at St. Louis Cathedral, New Orleans, Bishop Antoine Durier was consecrated. Consecrator was Monseigneur Francis Leray, Archbishop of New Orleans, and former Bishop of Natchitoches. Bishops Gallagher of Galveston and Neraz of San Antonio were the co-consecrators. Shortly thereafter, Bishop Durier reached Natchitoches and took formal possession of his Diocese.

Bishop Durier spent the year 1885 visiting all the parishes of his large Diocese, observing the existing conditions and administering Confirmation to the large groups of both young and old who had been prepared for the Sacrament.

Father Simon spent 1886 trying to complete and furnish the magnificent new Church of the Sacred Heart. Late in the fall, the people of Moreauville gave two large fairs to raise funds for a large bell. The local paper, The Marksfield Bulletin, announced that "the fair to be given by the white people will take place on Wednesday the 10th of November, but should the weather be threatening or bad, it will be postponed until the next day. The colored people will give their fair on Saturday, the 13th of Novem-

ber." The fairs were evidently a success, because the new Sacred Heart Church got its large bell.

Finally, in the year 1888, the new Church was solemnly dedicated. Father Simon has left us a short record of that joyous day: "On Tuesday, the 30th of May, there took place the blessing of the new Church and Bell of the Sacred Heart. The ceremony was performed by Monseigneur Antoine Durier, Bishop of Natchitoches, assisted by Fathers A. Andries, Vicar General; Jean B. Gentile, pastor of Shreveport; Jean E. Chauvin, pastor of Mansura; Lawrence Gallop, pastor of Plaquemine; and Paul E. Simon, pastor of Moreauville. The godmother and godfather for the new bell, by joint election of the Catholics were: Mr. Eugene Gauthier and Mrs. Jules Gremillon. The bell weighs 3500 pounds and was given the name Ermantine, baptismal name of the godmother."

During the year 1888 Father Simon baptized 116 persons, and in the year following the number increased to 131.

Late in 1889, Bishop Durier established another independent parish in the Avoyelles, that of Our Lady's Assumption at Cottonport. Father Retchain was named first pastor of the new parish.

In the early spring of 1890, the long awaited altars for the new Church arrived in Moreauville. Within a short time the huge crates were opened, and the altars were installed in the Sanctuary of the Church. They were of Gothic style, painted white, and with the slender towers so typical of the style. On Holy Saturday, April 5, their installation was completed, in preparation for Easter.

On Easter Sunday, 1890, eight years after the building had been completed, the Holy Sacrifice was offered upon the new altars for the first time.

On January 15, 1894, Father Paul Emile Simon recorded his last Baptism as pastor of Sacred Heart Church of Moreauville. Sometime shortly thereafter he left the parish, and accepted a post in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. In July, 1898, Fr. Simon became pastor of Immaculate Conception Church, Washington, La., but his stay there was to be short. At the end of September he took sick, and finally went to New Orleans for treatment.

On Wednesday, November 16, 1898, Father Simon died in his hospital room at Hotel Dieu in New Orleans. He was buried from St. Louis Cathedral, New Orleans, on November 17, 1898. His body was laid to rest in the clergy tomb in old St. Louis Cemetery No. 2 at New Orleans. His tomb-stone bears the following inscription: "Here rests the Reverend Father Paul Emile Simon, born at Fougères Isle, Vilaine, France, on the 12th of December,



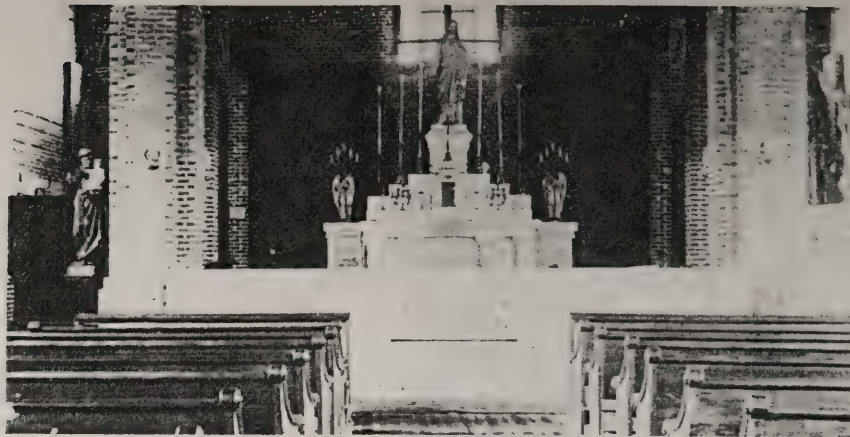
FATHER WILLIAM O'HANLON, thirteenth pastor of the Moreauville Church. Father served Sacred Heart from 1956 until 1959, when he was appointed pastor in Shreveport.

1847, and died at New Orleans, 16th November, 1898. Pray for him!"

Father Simon had given almost all his priestly life to the service of the Moreauville congregation. His first assignment as a priest was that of assistant to Fr. Rebours, 1871-1872. After Father Rebours' death in 1873, he served the parish until in 1878 Bishop Leray appointed him pastor of Moreauville. Again, from 1882 until 1894, he directed the affairs of Moreauville, erecting the magnificent Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the town. His life had been one of service well spent in the Lord's vineyard.

As successor to Father Simon, Rt. Rev. Bishop Durier sent Father Constantine Arnaud, a young French priest. Father Arnaud had come to the Natchitoches Diocese in 1886 with the Rt. Rev. Bishop. Before leaving Nantes, France, he had been ordained a sub-deacon. On May 4, 1887, Bishop Durier promoted him to the Sacred Order of Deacon, and four days later, May 8, he was ordained to the Priesthood. The ceremonies took place in Immaculate Conception Cathedral, Natchitoches, with Rt. Rev. Bishop Durier as the ordaining Prelate. Ordained with Fr. Arnaud was another young Frenchman, Father A. Piegay, who was destined to spend his priestly life, 1887-1939, serving the Church of Natchitoches.

In June, 1887, Father Arnaud was assigned as assistant-pastor of Holy Trinity Church, Shreveport, where he remained until February, 1890. During this time, he served the mission stations of Minden and Benton from Holy Trinity. In 1890, the Bishop sent



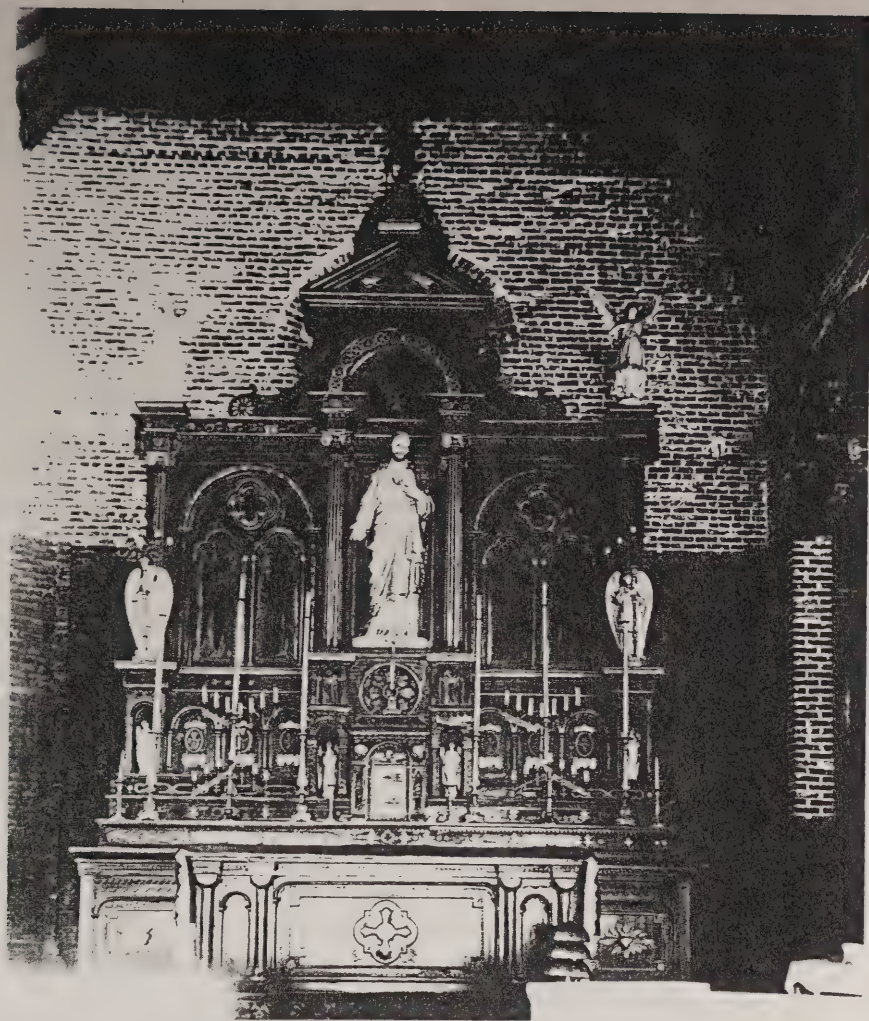
Interior of Sacred Heart Church at the time of its completion and blessing by Bishop Van de Ven in December, 1910. Note the statue of St. Anthony in the Gospel nave. It is one of the few remnants of the 1898 Church, having been carried from the burning church by Mr. A. Coco.

him as pastor of the Church of the Nativity at Campti, La., where he remained until appointed to Moreauville.

Father Arnaud arrived in Moreauville early in March, 1894, and his first entry in the parish Registers appears on March 9th. In 1895, Father Arnaud made a trip to France to visit his family. During his absence from the parish, he was replaced by Father Francis Grosse. The missions that year were Big Bend and Bayou Dinde.

When Father Arnaud returned from France, he brought with him more ornaments for the embellishment of the Church. Since the Church was in excellent condition, Father Arnaud began to direct his thoughts to a parochical school. But, Easter Sunday, 1897, changed everything!

About noon on Easter Day, April 22, 1897, the beautiful Church which had taken Father Simon so many years to build and embellish, burned to the ground. The smoldering ruins were a terrifying sight to all the people of Moreauville, especially to Father Arnaud. The Church was in excellent condition, and could have served the congregation for decades to come. Easter Sunday, 1897, was another day the Congregation would never forget. Just 15 years previously, on Easter Sunday, 1882, despite the flood, 150 people had gathered for the first Mass to be celebrated in the new Church. Then, just seven years before, on Easter Sunday, 1890, the newly imported Altars were used for the first time. Then,



Sanctuary of Sacred Heart before its plastering in the early 1930's. The altar is the one designed and built by Father Jacquemain. The dome atop the altar inspired the present dome atop the church. Originally the church was to have two towers, but Father Jacquemain decided on one dome to match that of the altar.

came Easter Sunday, 1897, when the congregation attended their last Mass in their Sacred Heart Church.

In December, 1897, Father Arnaud, discouraged by the loss of the Church, requested a transfer. Bishop Durier acceded to his request, and on December 4, he signed the parish Registers for the last time.

It was three months before the Rt. Rev. Bishop was able to send another priest to Moreauville. The Bishop's choice was Father Constantine Brahic. He had come to the Natchitoches Diocese with Bishop Durier from his native France. On August 31, 1895, the Bishop had ordained him a priest in ceremonies at the Natchitoches Cathedral. From 1896 until the beginning of 1898, he had served as pastor of Nativity Church, Campti. In early February, 1898, he was appointed pastor of Sacred Heart Church, Moreauville, where he was to remain until December, 1905. His later appointments included the pastorate of Plaquemine, December, 1906, to March, 1912, and that of Marksville, March, 1912, to September, 1915.

Father Brahic set to work immediately to erect a new Church for the parish. After calling a meeting of the parishioners, it was decided to re-build Sacred Heart on the same plan and in the same place of the former Church. Work began, and before too long, the walls and roof were standing. In such a state the Church was destined to remain for many years, until Father Grosse completed it in 1906 and 1907.

In 1899, Father Brahic was absent from his parish from June to December for a visit back to his home in France. On his return he brought with him many of the necessities for the furnishing of the new Sacred Heart Church. During his absence, Father J. B. Limagne took care of the parish for him.

In 1886, the year after his installation as Bishop of Natchitoches, Rt. Rev. Durier issued his first pastoral letter to the flock of his Diocese. The letter was strong in its tenor, the directions were clear, strict and mandatory. In part, the letter read: "Using all the authority with which we are invested, we prescribe strictly that a Catholic school be established near every Church." In 1887, and again in 1888, the Bishop stressed the importance and necessity of establishing a Catholic school in each parish of the Diocese.

To this end, many of the Avoyelles parishes opened their own schools, as soon as Sisters were available. On February 2, 1887, Immaculate Conception Convent was opened at Mansura under the direction of the Daughters of the Cross. It was the second

Convent school in the Avoyelles, the first being Presentation Convent at Marksville. The school remained in operation until 1923.

In September, 1898, the Daughters of the Cross opened another school, Saint Anthony's Academy, at Cottonport. Father Demoliere, the pastor, had been instrumental in the Sisters coming to Cottonport, and establishing there a grade and high school. In 1917, the Sisters closed the Cottonport School.

During Father Arnaud's pastorate at Moreauville, the first plans for a Catholic school came to the fore. However, before anything definite was done, the Church burned and Father Arnaud left Moreauville. Father Brahic was bent on opening the school in accord with the Bishop's directions.

Father Brahic visited Reverend Mother Eulalie at St. Vincent's in Shreveport, and begged her to send Sisters to Moreauville to begin the school there. The people wanted the Daughters of the Cross, and they wanted their school to open in September, 1899. Rt. Rev. Bishop Durier put in a good word with the Sisters, and despite their dire lack of subjects, the Daughters of the Cross accepted the new School.

In August, 1899, Sister Theresa and Sister Agnes left St. Vincent's to make arrangements for the new school. Plans were drawn up for the school, and a contract was let. The school building was promised for December. Meanwhile, Mr. Amedee Boyer of Moreauville placed a vacant house he owned at the Sisters' disposal. The first Convent school of Moreauville opened in this house during the second week of September, 1899. Although its furnishings were primitive—boards placed upon dry-goods boxes for desks—the classes were well conducted and well attended.

Building materials were slow in arriving, and the dead-line was not met. Meanwhile, Mr. Boyer had rented his house, and the Sisters were forced to close their school. The building was finally completed early in the spring of 1900 and Sisters Theresa and Agnes returned to Moreauville. The attendance was up to 115 pupils, and Mother Eulalie sent an additional two sisters to staff the School. The new Convent and school was dedicated to Saint Francis De Sales, founder of the Daughters of the Cross.

Superiors of the Convent in its pioneer years were: Sister Theresa, 1899-1904; Sister St. Yves, 1904-1906; Sister St. Joseph, 1906-1909. Sisters who taught in the early days of the school included: Sisters Agnes, Magdalen, Chantal, Angela, Dolores, Placide, Mary Angela, Joachim and Anselma.

Besides the standard courses offered in all schools, the Sisters

at St. Francis de Sales, also gave their charges courses in the following branches of learning: physiology, orthography, elocution, music, embroidery, painting and physical geography. In addition to the day school, the Sisters also operated a small resident school for girls at the Convent.

In May, 1900, Rt. Rev. Bishop Antoine Durier deeded over to the Daughters of the Cross the plot of ground upon which their Convent and School had been built. In the deed, His Excellency said: "This donation is made for the consideration of the desire I have to encourage the Sisters in the work of education."

The people of Moreauville did all in their power to help the Sisters establish themselves and to make St. Francis de Sales Convent a success. In October, 1903, Dr. and Mrs. George R. Fox gave a "fete champetre" for the benefit of the Convent and School. For two nights their elegant home was thrown open to the people of the Avoyelles who enjoyed music and dancing as well as refreshments. The spacious grounds were well decorated for the occasion and were illumined with hundreds of Chinese lanterns.

In later years, when the Convent was undergoing severe financial difficulties, Mr. Thomas Lemoine supplied the Convent with groceries, milk and butter, free of charge. Other staunch friends kept the Sisters supplied with fresh vegetables and other necessities.

For the boys of the parish, there had been no school since the days of Father Rebours. After his death in 1876, the "priest school", mentioned earlier, was closed. Father Brahic took steps to alleviate this situation. The parish bought a two-story building, remembered by the title "the boys' college".

The Professor was a native of Virginia, well versed in the classical studies and sciences. During a business trip to New Orleans in 1891, a Moreauville merchant, Eugene Gauthier, met the tall, red-haired and bearded Professor in a hotel lobby. At the merchant's invitation, Henry Gordon Lewis decided to come to Moreauville and open a Boys' College there. Shortly thereafter the Professor arrived and an old abandoned house was converted into a two-room school. While the professor was teaching in one room, a student acted as monitor in the adjoining room. Later the professor moved the school into another building which was called "The Boys' College". The school was well received from its inception, and Professor Lewis taught all the subjects, including Religion. The older boys helped to supervise the younger ones. After some years the professor took sick, and later he left Moreauville to be-

come assistant-principal of the public school at Marthaville, Louisiana. It was at Marthaville that the Professor died, but according to his own wish, the body of Henry Gordon Lewis was brought back to Moreauville and laid to rest in the parish cemetery.

In September, 1903, Bishop Durier divided the Moreauville parish, establishing a new parish in the Town of Bordelonville. Father Regis Gimbert was appointed first pastor of the new Church, and performed his first baptism in the new parish on October 2, 1903.

Shortly after the turn of the century, the village of Moreauville had grown sufficiently to warrant its incorporation. On March 30th, 1904, William W. Heard, Governor of Louisiana, signed the proclamation declaring the village of Moreauville incorporated.

On April 5, 1904, the Town Council of Moreauville met for the first time in Dr. T. L. Longarre's store. Present for the meeting were: Dr. T. L. Longarre, mayor, and the following aldermen: Dr. G. R. Fox, Dr. John H. Boyer, and Jules G. Couvillon. At the May 3rd, 1904, meeting, the Council amended a section of the Police Ordinance to read: All hogs running in the corporation without rings in their noses shall be impounded by the Marshal and a fee of fifty cents per head shall be imposed, and if it is not paid within three days, they shall be sold at public auction."

In December, 1904, Albert Dufour replaced Dr. Fox as an Alderman.

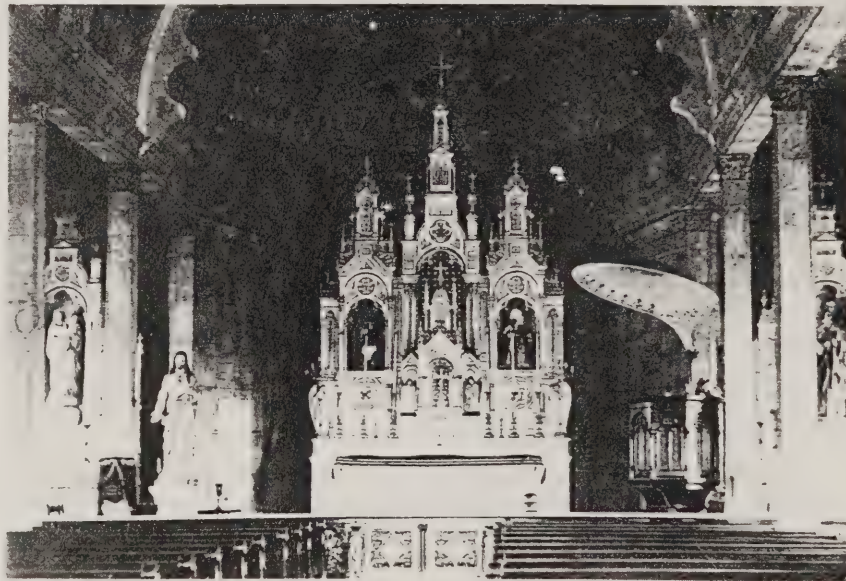
Among the other early decisions made by the Town Council, in January, 1906, a tax was levied for the purpose of erecting public roads in the Town. The tax was levied on all males, ages 21-60, at the rate of \$1.00 per year. The following taxes were levied on vehicles: fifty cents a year for two-horse wagons and buggies. Twenty-five cents a year was the tax on road carts and bicycles. Automobiles were taxed five dollars per year.

In an election held April 10, 1906, Dr. S. D. Porter was elected mayor of Moreauville. Shortly after this election, the question of prohibition came to the fore in all its heat. A special election was held on August 10, 1906, in the public school house. The results: 5 votes cast for prohibition and 31 against it. A re-vote was called, and on January 1, 1907, the people of Moreauville cast 24 votes for prohibition and 28 against. Thus Moreauville remained "wet".

In the 1908 elections, R. N. Dufour was elected mayor, and H. N. Gremillon, L. V. Mayeux, and S. D. Porter were elected Aldermen. In 1910 Jules G. Couvillon was elected to the mayor's



Third parish church of Moreauville, 1898-1908. This structure was built on the same plan as the 1882 church, with only a few minor changes in the steeple. The building on the right is the Convent Hall, part of the original school plant completed in 1900. Below is the interior of the 1898 church with its magnificent Gothic altar.



chair, to be replaced in 1913 by R. N. Dufour. The 1918 elections brought the following officers: Dr. G. R. Fox, mayor, and C. L. Gauthier, W. A. Marcotte and Ulger Bordelon, Aldermen.

In 1903, Rt. Rev. Bishop Durier was stricken with paralysis and was confined to bed. On February 28, 1904, His Excellency died in the episcopal house at Natchitoches. His funeral was conducted in the Natchitoches Cathedral, and at his request, his body was sent to Shreveport for burial in the cemetery of the Daughters of the Cross.

On August 10, 1904, the Holy Father appointed a successor to Bishop Durier. He was Father Cornelius Van de Ven, a priest serving in the New Orleans Archdiocese. On Nov. 30, 1904, in ceremonies at St. Louis Cathedral, New Orleans, Fr. Van de Ven was consecrated a Bishop. The new Bishop was born on June 16, 1865, at Oirschot, Holland. After his ordination, May 31, 1890, he came to the New Orleans Archdiocese to exercise his priestly ministry.

One of the first difficulties which Bishop Van de Ven had to settle was the parish boundaries between the parishes of Bordelonville and Moreauville. In May, 1905, the Bishop visited St. Peter's Church at Bordelonville and confirmed 146 people there. It was the first such ceremony in the new parish's history. On May 31, the Bishop blessed the new school of that community, staffed also by the Daughters of the Cross.

As late as November, 1905, several of those living on the parish boundary were still unwilling to separate themselves from the Moreauville parish and help support their own Church of St. Peter at Bordelonville.

In December, 1905, after a very successful pastorate of almost eight years, Father Brahic was transferred to another post in the Diocese. At the same time, Rt. Rev. Bishop Van de Ven sent Father Francis Grosse as the next pastor of Sacred Heart Church. His first entry in the Registers appears under date of December 21, 1905.

The new pastor was a native of the Diocese of Metz in France, and had accompanied Bishop Durier to America in 1887. On July 16, 1888, he was ordained a priest by the Rt. Rev. Bishop in the Natchitoches Cathedral. Immediately after ordination, Fr. Grosse was sent as assistant at Vidalia, La. In August, when the pastor of Vidalia left, Father Grosse was appointed pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Church in that town. He remained there until October, 1889, when he was named pastor of St. Augustine's

Church, Isle Brevelle. In 1894 he was named pastor of St. Joseph's in Marksville. He remained at this post until December, 1905.

Father Grosse found Sacred Heart Church still unfinished upon his arrival in the parish, and his contribution to Moreauville was the embellishment of the Church. Father Brahic had contented himself with the erection of the bare necessities—walls and roof—to establish a Catholic school for his parish. Now, with the school on its own feet, the Church was to be completed and decorated.

On April 22, 1906, Rt. Rev. Bishop Cornelius Van de Ven visited Moreauville and administered Confirmation to 198 persons in Sacred Heart Church. During his visit to the parish, the Bishop noted the closing of the Boys' College, and the fact that the Convent attendance had dropped to 30 pupils. However, in the fall of 1906, a new Boys' College opened in Mansura, where the Moreauville boys could attend classes. This college was under the direction of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. The College continued in existence under the name of St. John's College until 1914.

By the end of 1907, Father Grosse had completed the new Sacred Heart Church. Again, the people were quite happy with their House of Worship, embellished in much the same manner as was Father Simon's church of 1882.

Among the projects undertaken by Father Grosse was the building of a cat-walk between his house and the Church sacristy. Due to heavy rains, the walk-way was often-times muddy and consequently Father would dirty his shoes and trail mud into the Church. For this reason, Fr. Grosse had the cat-walk built, three feet above the ground, extending from the end of his front porch to the sacristy door.

On Sunday morning, August 2, 1908, Father Grosse died. That morning when he arose he was feeling very bad. But since it was Sunday, and the people were already coming for Mass, Father Grosse arose and dressed himself. He walked from his bed-room across the front porch of his house and over the cat-walk to the sacristy, still feeling bad. When the time came, Father donned the Mass vestments and prepared to celebrate Mass. Suddenly he was seized with a heart attack, and fell to the floor. He never reached the Altar. Shortly thereafter the Church bells began to toll, announcing the death of Moreauville's pastor.

The Rt. Rev. Bishop was notified, and he came to Moreauville to perform the funeral rites. Father Grosse, a native of France, was born September 8, 1865, and was only 43 years old at the time of his death. He was the second Moreauville pastor to die in



Some of the early Avoyelles pastors: top row, left to right, Fr. J. Roman, S. M., pastor of Cottonport; Fr. Francis Grosse, sixth pastor of Moreauville; Fr. Regis Gimbert, seventh Moreauville pastor; Fr. H. Benezit, Bordelonville. Bottom row: Fr. Berriet, S. M. from Cottonport; Fr. A. Anseeuw, Mansura; and Fr. J. B. Limagne, Placheville and Marksville pastor.

office. His body was laid to rest in the parish cemetery, next to that of Father Thomas Rebours.

Immediately after the funeral, before returning to Natchitoches, Bishop Van de Ven appointed Father Gimbert as temporary administrator of Moreauville. One month later, the Bishop transferred Father Regis Gimbert from Bordelonville to Moreauville as pastor of Sacred Heart Church. At the same time the Bishop named Father H. Benezit as second pastor of Bordelonville.

On Christmas Day, 1908, tragedy again struck Sacred Heart Church. This time the blaze consumed everything: Church, School, Convent and Rectory. The fire broke out during the High Mass on Christmas Day. The fire was discovered at the Communion time of the Mass. The cry "The Church is on fire" created a panic, and the congregation rushed for the doors and safety. Within a short time the entire Church was ablaze. The cause of the fire seems to have been a candle which the altar boys used in lighting the charcoal for the censer.

A strong wind helped in spreading the fire to the Convent, School and Rectory. Within minutes these buildings were also on fire. The men of the parish did all they could to save furniture from the burning buildings. Some of the Church's statues were



The Boys College, as it is called by the old-timers. For several years this building was used by Professor Lewis for the education of boys. Later, after the 1908 fire, the Daughters of the Cross used the building for a convent and school.

saved, and remain to this day. Furniture from the school, and the Sisters' belongings from the Convent also escaped the fire. The exhumed furniture was placed upon the levee and in the road for safekeeping, until it could be moved to temporary quarters.

Father Gimbert's first Christmas proved to be quite an exciting one—but also a most sad and depressing day. Like the Christ-child whose feast was being celebrated, he and the good Sisters were without home and shelter that Christmas night.

Chapter Seven

THE NEW SACRED HEART CHURCH

1908 - 1961

The New Year, 1909, was not a bright one in the annals of Sacred Heart parish. As the New Year was ushered in, the Congregation found themselves without a Church in which to worship, and without a school for their children. Father Gimbert, the pastor, was without a home, and the Daughters of the Cross, who staffed the school, were without a convent.

Yet, within a very short time, the future began to look brighter. Father Gimbert gathered together the men of his congregation and asked their support and help in the work of re-building the entire parish plant. Co-operation came readily and cheerfully. Meanwhile, arrangements had to be made for the conducting of services. The first spot chosen was at Longbridge. Several of the old-timers recall how palmetto leaves were so fixed as to serve as collection baskets. The distance was rather lengthy for many of the Moreauville people, and before too long, Fr. Gimbert was searching for another place in which to offer Mass.

He decided to hold Mass in Moreauville itself, and for a while this was done in the home of Doctor Fox. The home was too small to accommodate the crowd, so before long Fr. Gimbert was again making other arrangements. This time he chose the old Boys' College, which was the sole remaining edifice of the parish plant. Until the new Church was completed in December, 1910, the old college was utilized as the Moreauville Church. Several members of the present congregation remember receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation from the hands of Bishop Cornelius Van de Ven in the temporary church housed in that old building.

Father Gimbert engaged Theodore Grune as architect of the new church. Within a short time the elaborate plans were submitted to the pastor for his approval. According to the architect's drawing, the new Sacred Heart Church was to be made of brick, to eliminate the future possibility of fire.

The front of the new edifice was to have two brick towers, one at each end of the building, much in the style of the old Basilicas of the City of Rome. Above the three front entrances was a large circular window of stained glass. The full plans, however, were never to be carried out.

Due to the expense and lack of sufficient funds, it was decided

to build only the shell of the church at the time, and to complete and adorn it at a later date. Early in 1910 bids were let on the building and preparations made for the work. At that time it was decided to re-locate the Church—on its present site—to the right and rear of the former buildings. Since the new site was formerly the school site, arrangements had to be made to secure a new site for the school. To effect this, His Excellency, Bishop Van de Ven bought the lot where the present Church stands from the Daughters of the Cross on April 29, 1910 for the sum of one thousand dollars. On the same date, and for the same sum, Bishop Van de Ven sold another plot of Church land to the Daughters of the Cross for their new school. This site is that of the present school and convent.

In the fall of 1910, when Bishop Van de Ven returned from his visit to the Holy Father where he gave his report on the condition of his Diocese, a change was made in the location of the Diocese. His Holiness, Pope Pius X., signed the decree changing the name and location of the Diocese of Natchitoches to that of the Diocese of Alexandria. St. Francis Xavier Church in Alexandria was named the new Cathedral.

Work progressed according to plan on the new Sacred Heart Church, and by the end of November, 1910, the new building was ready for occupancy. The solemn dedication of the new Church was scheduled for December 15, 1910. His Excellency, Most Reverend Cornelius Van de Ven, Bishop of Alexandria, officiated at the dedication ceremonies. Immediately following the blessing of the new building and its ornaments, Bishop Van de Ven celebrated a Solemn Pontifical Mass of Thanksgiving. Assisting the Bishop were: Father Stedman, pastor of Gretna, and Father A. Bloome, pastor of Hessmer, Deacons of Honor; Father R. Gimbert, the pastor, as deacon; and Father Fazin, Cottonport, sub-deacon. Father Cummings, S.J., who had preached a triduum in preparation for the big event, was present for the ceremonies, besides other priests of the Diocese: Father Limagne, Marksville; Father Roman, Cottonport; and Father Benezit, Bordelonville. Bishop Van de Ven preached the Dedication sermon.

Conjoined with the dedication of the new Church was the celebration of the silver jubilee of ordination of Father Regis Gimbert, the Moreauville pastor. Because of the work of rebuilding the parish the actual day of the pastor's jubilee had passed without any celebration. Thus, on the occasion of the blessing of their new Church, the people of Sacred Heart Parish showed their

love and devotion to Father Gimbert by also celebrating his Silver Jubilee. As a sign of their affection for their pastor, the Children of Mary gave Fr. Gimbert a loving cup as a memento of the day.

Within a short time, Father Gimbert had done wonders in the parish. Besides the new brick Church, he had also erected a new frame rectory, the present one. A school had also been erected as well as an adjoining convent for the Sisters. Before too long, they were able to leave the crowded and congested rooms of the old Boys' College and re-assemble their classes in a new school building.

In the early days of 1912, Father Gimbert became sickly, and it was evident that he needed the help of a specialist. On Monday, March 4, 1912, Father Gimbert took the train for New Orleans to see a doctor. He was accompanied on the trip by Father J. Bazin, S.M., pastor of St. Mary's Church in Cottonport. Upon arrival in the Crescent City, they checked in at the Cosmopolitan Hotel. The next day, Tuesday, Father Gimbert kept his appointment with the doctor. The diagnosis was serious. The specialist advised Fr. Gimbert he was suffering from "Bright's Disease" and a heart condition, and ordered him to take a six weeks' rest.

That night, Father Gimbert had supper with one of the New Orleans priests, Father Kavanagh. At ten o'clock he returned to the hotel and retired for the night. Shortly after retiring he became seriously sick, and Father Bazin rushed to the downtown Jesuit Church to get the Holy Oils to anoint Father Gimbert. Around midnight, Tuesday, March 5, 1912, Father Regis Gimbert died. He was only 51 years old.

His remains were accompanied to Moreauville by Father Bazin. On Thursday, March 7, 1912, Bishop Van de Ven celebrated the Solemn Mass of Requiem for Moreauville's deceased pastor. Father A. Anseeuw, pastor of Mansura, served as assistant-priest; Fathers J. M. Bazin, S.M., and J. Roman, S.M., as deacon and sub-deacon; Father Martin B. Sice, master of ceremonies. Father Gimbert's body was laid to rest within the walls of the present Church, the edifice he worked so hard to build. His body rests in the sanctuary of the Church, on the left hand side, beneath the floor in front of the Blessed Mother's shrine.

With the sudden death of Father Gimbert, Bishop Van de Ven was at a loss for a priest to fill the vacant parish. Within ten months, Bishop Van de Ven had lost three of his priests, and during that same period he had received no new priests into the Diocese. On May 25, 1911, Father Hippolite Benezit, the pastor

of St. Peter's Church, Bordelonville, had died, leaving that Church vacant. On January 27, 1912, St. Joseph's Church, Marksville, was left vacant with the death of Father J. B. Limagne.

For a month, Sacred Heart Church was without a resident priest. Finally, at the beginning of April, Bishop Van de Ven sent the young Father Ferdinand Marcas as temporary administrator of the parish. Father Marcas was stationed at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria, where he had assumed his duties as second assistant in February, 1911. His stay in Moreauville was short-lived, for in the beginning of May, 1912, he was recalled to the Alexandria Cathedral.

Finally, in July, 1912, the Rt. Rev. Bishop appointed the ninth pastor of Sacred Heart, Father Michael Paul Nothofer. The new pastor was a native of Cologne, Germany, where he was born on November 5, 1880. After completing his studies in the American College at the University of Louvain, Belgium, Fr. Nothofer was ordained a priest on July 16, 1905. After visiting his family, the new priest left Belgium for Louisiana in the late summer in 1905. He did not reach the Diocese until All Saints Day, November 1, because of a delay in St. Louis due to a yellow fever epidemic. His first appointment was that of assistant-pastor of St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria, where he served the missions of Colfax, Boyce, and Lecompte.

In 1907, Bishop Van de Ven assigned Father Nothofer as pastor of St. Patrick's Church, Lake Providence. He remained there until 1912 when he was named Moreauville pastor. Father Nothofer did not arrive in Moreauville until mid-July, as he did not wish to leave Lake Providence until the completion of his mission chapel of St. Agnes at Tallulah, La.

During Fr. Nothofer's pastorate, the Moreauville band of mission churches and stations was revived. Leading the list of regular missions was Big Bend, with its small chapel. As time permitted, the zealous pastor also visited the following stations: Bayou Jaune, Odenburg, Woodside, Bordino, Jacoby, Voorhies, Hamburg, Simmesport, and Grand Bayou. At these places, he would celebrate Mass in private homes, baptize infants, perform marriages, and instruct the people.

On January 9, 1914, Father Nothofer had Sacred Heart parish incorporated according to the laws of Louisiana. The legal title of the parish is "Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church of Moreauville, Louisiana."

In the summer of 1915, Bishop Van de Ven relieved Father

Nothofer of the Moreauville parish, assigning him as pastor of St. Francis Cathedral in Alexandria. After serving in that capacity for five years, Fr. Nothofer returned to Avoyelles in 1921, as pastor of St. Paul's Church, Mansura.

In 1930, Bishop Van de Ven named Fr. Nothofer as one of the Diocesan Consultors. His Holiness, Pope Pius XII., honored him with the title of "Right Reverend Monsignor." At the time of his death, Monsignor Nothofer was "pastor emeritus" of St. Paul's, Mansura.

To replace Father Nothofer at Moreauville, Bishop Van de Ven sent Father J. Girard. However, Father Girard's stay was quite short. His last entry in the Moreauville Registers is dated September 26, 1915. Thus, Sacred Heart parish was again without a pastor. As the shortage of priests in the Diocese of Alexandria was accute, the Rt. Rev. Bishop could not assign another pastor to the vacant church.

However, in October, 1915, the Bishop made a temporary arrangement until he could find a priest for the post. A Jesuit, Father Paul Louvet, was preaching missions in the various parishes of the Diocese. Bishop Van de Ven requested his Provincial to allow Father Louvet to remain in the Diocese until he could find a pastor for Moreauville. The Jesuit Provincial at New Orleans acceded to the Bishop's plea, and Father Paul Louvet, S.J., was assigned as temporary administrator of Sacred Heart Church.

Although his stay was short (October, 1915 till the beginning of March, 1916), Father Louvet set to work immediately both in Moreauville and on the vast mission band which was attached to the parish. His efforts for the congregation included the religious instruction of the people, visitation of the sick and aiding the needy. During his short administration, Father Louvet succeeded in erecting a small chapel for the people of Bayou Jaune. When completed, this chapel was dedicated to Saint John Francis Regis, a Jesuit Saint. On February 16, 1916, the pastor of Bordelonville, Father Bernard Regis died. Since Bishop Van de Ven was unable to fill that vacancy, Father Louvet was asked to care for the needs of the Bordelonville congregation in addition to his parish at Moreauville. At the same time, another mission, Bayou Sara, was added to the already long list.

The great problem facing Father Louvet during his stay in Moreauville was the parochial school. Attendance had dropped and the Sisters were having a hard time making ends meet. The new buildings were completed and paid for, but the tuition was not

sufficient to take care of the Sisters and the up-keep on the school. Father Louvet turned to the parishioners and begged their continual support of both the school and convent by donations of money and food. For the time, the crisis seemed passed.

At the end of February, 1916, Father Louvet was recalled by his Superior, and the parish was again left without a leader. It is worthy of note that Father Louvet is the only member of a religious order to serve Sacred Heart parish since its inception over a century ago. All the other priests who have served Sacred Heart, or its predecessor, St. Hyacinthe, were members of the Diocesan Clergy.

In March, 1916, His Excellency, Bishop Van de Ven came across a French priest who had been expelled from Mexico during the persecution in that country. Since this priest was without a parish to serve, the Rt. Rev. Bishop pleaded with him to come to the Alexandria Diocese. However, the priest had other ideas: he wanted to return to Mexico and resume his work there. Finally, he agreed to the Bishop's plan—he would come to the Alexandria Diocese until such time as he could return to Mexico.

Early in March, 1916, then, Bishop Van de Ven appointed Father Henri Jacquemain as "temporary pastor" of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Moreauville. Little did the Bishop or Father Jacquemain realize that this "temporary pastorate" would last for 26 years—the longest in the parish's history!

Sacred Heart Parish Plant in 1909. Note the present Rectory and Church and the old Boys College. The present parish school stands on the site of the old college.



Father Jacquemain was a native of the Nancy Diocese in France. As a young boy he had begun his studies for the priesthood in the Seminary of that Diocese. Later he completed his studies at the Sorbonne in Paris, where he specialized in Philosophy, Theology, Law and Music. The Archbishop of Nancy ordained Father Jacquemain to the priesthood in 1896, assigning him as curate of a small country parish in the Nancy Diocese. In 1904, Fr. Jacquemain left his native land and journeyed to Mexico to undertake missionary work in that country. From 1904 until 1916 he labored zealously among the Mexican people, whose language he had mastered. Finally, in 1916 the Mexican Government passed a law expelling all foreign priests from the country, and Father Jacquemain took refuge in the United States.

Father Jacquemain's contribution to Moreauville was the completion and beautification of the new church. At the time he took over the parish, the church was still unfinished. A temporary altar was being used, and the ornaments of the church were very few. Besides a statue of the Sacred Heart and the Blessed Mother, the only other statue was that of Saint Anthony, which had been rescued from the burning church by Mr. Fulgence Coco. Those statues remain in the parish today.

Father Jacquemain decided to erect a new main altar, two side altars, plaster the inside of the church, add a sacristy to the rear of the building, complete the facade and ornament the interior as originally planned. To this project, he devoted the greater part of his time and energy for a period of sixteen years. Father designed the altars himself, basing them upon the designs he had seen in the churches of Europe. As he would walk through the streets of Moreauville, he gathered any wood he could find, regardless of its condition. With these planks, he fitted together the three altars, with the help of the carpenters of the parish. With the completion of the altars, Father's attention was directed to the work of completing the sacristy addition to the rear of the church.

A new design was made for the facade, differing greatly from the original plans drawn by the architect. Instead of having the two towers originally intended, Father Jacquemain designed the existing tower, with its dome matching the dome above his new altar. The single tower was erected and the front bricked and beautified. All that remained was the completion of the interior. To this end, Father Jacquemain made two trips to his native France to purchase the necessary ornaments and vestments for the restored church. In June, 1924, he left Moreauville for the first

trip, and Father Peter Besselaar of Bordelonville served the congregation during his absence. Again, in June of 1930, as the work was culminating, Father M. S. Sice replaced Fr. Jacquemain during his visit to France. Among the ornaments purchased on this later trip were the Stations of the Cross, a gift of Mrs. E. J. Beridon, Jr.

Finally, in 1934, almost twenty-five years after the devastating fire of 1908, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church was completed to the joy of both the pastor and the people of Moreauville.

On Tuesday, May 22nd, 1934, the newly completed church was again dedicated to the service of God. The officiant was the new Bishop, Most Reverend Daniel F. Desmond. Bishop Cornelius Van de Ven who had blessed the building after its construction in 1910 had gone to his eternal reward in May, 1932, and the Holy See had appointed as the new Bishop of Alexandria, His Excellency, the Most Rev. Daniel F. Desmond. The celebration marked a great day in the annals of the parish, and to thank God for the blessing of the completed church, Father Henri Jacquemain offered a Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving, assisted by Father V. G. Couvillon (now deceased) as deacon, and the Rev. Milburn J. Broussard (now Rt. Rev. Monsignor Broussard) as sub-deacon. Master of Ceremonies was Father J. V. Plauche (now deceased). Music for the occasion was rendered by the parish choir, with Mr. E. Gauthier Coco as organist. Among the other members of the clergy present there were: Rev. Maurice Schexnyder of Baton Rouge, presently the Bishop of the Lafayette Diocese; and the Very Rev. Henry Vander Putten, pastor of Marksville and Dean of the Avoyelles.

In 1920, the parochial school was closed, due to its increased drop in attendance. The small number of children and the insufficient funds caused the Mother Superior of the Daughters of the Cross to recall the Sisters and place them in other schools where they were more needed. Shortly after the departure of the Sisters, the old school building was sold to the public school and moved there where it remains in use today.

Among the missions served by Father Jacquemain during his pastorate, Big Bend remained the chief mission point. Other new stations included: Evergreen, Red Fish, and Wayside in 1916, and in 1917 Rosewood and Tilden.

Beginning in 1922, two ladies of the parish assumed the position of teaching catechism to the children. These two ladies were Miss Rose Gremillion and Miss Corinne Gremillion. They would gather the children in the church and instruct them in the teachings of Christ and His Church. These two devoted ladies continued this



FATHER ALFRED CHLEBOWCZYK, present assistant pastor of Sacred Heart Parish. Since his coming to the parish in August, 1960, Fr. Alfred has won the affection of the people of Moreauville and Big Bend.

work of teaching for a period of thirty years—the first Confraternity of Christian Doctrine workers in Sacred Heart parish!

In 1942, Father Henri Jacquemain resigned his pastorate of Sacred Heart and retired to a private home in Moreauville. In 1952, because of continued ill-health, Father Jacquemain entered Cabrini Hospital in Alexandria, where he lingered till his death on April 12, 1956. His funeral was conducted from the Maryhill Seminary Chapel, Pineville, and his mortal remains were laid to rest in the clergy cemetery at Maryhill.

To replace Father Jacquemain, Bishop Desmond chose the pastor of Plaquemine, Father Stanley J. De Keuwer. He became Moreauville's eleventh pastor in October, 1942. A native of West-outré, Belgium, Father De Keuwer was ordained a priest at Louvain on July 8, 1923. Upon arrival in the Alexandria Diocese, he served for three years as assistant-pastor of St. Joseph's Church at Marksville, before becoming pastor of Plaquemine in 1926.

Among his accomplishments in Moreauville during the decade he served as pastor was the erection of an independent parish for the colored people of Moreauville. Our Lady of Sorrows parish was formally established in 1946 and placed under the care of the Holy Ghost Fathers.

In 1948, at Father De Keuwer's urging, the Daughters of the Cross returned to Moreauville to re-open the parochial school which had been closed since 1920. Since the old school building had been sold and moved away, Father De Keuwer and the people of

Moreauville had to erect a new building to house Sacred Heart School.

In February, 1957, His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, named Father De Keuwer a Domestic Prelate, with the title of Right Reverend Monsignor. His Excellency, Most Reverend Charles P. Greco, present Bishop of Alexandria, has also named Monsignor De Keuwer as one of his consultors and a Synodal Judge. In October, 1952, a decade after his arrival in Moreauville, Monsignor De Keuwer was transferred from Sacred Heart to the pastorate of Immaculate Conception Church at Natchitoches.

During Monsignor De Keuwer's pastorate, the following priests served as assistant-pastors of Sacred Heart Church: 1948-1950, Fr. A. Molenschot; 1951-1952, Fr. J. M. Germain; 1952-1953, Fr. M. Hannon.

The next pastor to serve Sacred Heart parish was Father John Peeters. During his pastorate, 1953-1956, Father Peeters enlarged the present school building by extending the auditorium and adding a rear wing with two additional classrooms. In the summer of 1956, His Excellency, Bishop Greco named Father William O'Hanlon as thirteenth pastor of Sacred Heart parish. Father O'Hanlon came to Moreauville from St. Louis Church at Glenmora. In August of the same year, the Bishop appointed a new assistant to Moreauville in the person of Father Gustave Bergeron. After three years at Sacred Heart, the Bishop transferred Father O'Hanlon in November, 1959, to St. Theresa's Church in Shreveport.

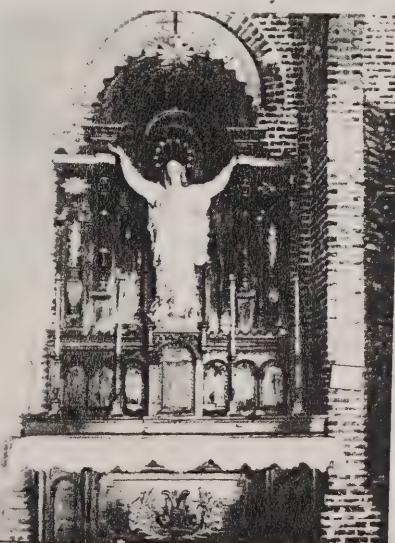
It was on November 19, 1959, that the present pastor, Father John M. Timmermans, was named to Sacred Heart parish. Ordained in 1952 at Den-Bosch, Holland, Fr. John came to America in 1954 and served for two years as assistant at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Alexandria. In 1956 he became assistant at St. Catherine's Church, Shreveport.

With the centennial year at hand, Father undertook the vast work of restoring and repairing the fifty year old church building. A meeting was called of all the parishioners, and they gave their full support to the project. The renovation began in the spring of 1961, as soon as the plans were drawn up and approved. The renovation included installation of steel trusses in the roof and replacing of the Ludovici tile on the roof. Terrazzo floors throughout the church, suspended acoustical ceiling, air-conditioning, new baptistry and confessionals, sand-blasting of the exterior, painting and an entirely new sanctuary completed the restoration.

Two bells were placed in the tower of the church. One bears the inscription: "Donated to Sacred Heart Church at Moreauville, La., by the Young Men of the Congregation, A. D. 1914." This bell is named "Ave Maria, Gratia Plena" ("Hail Mary, full of Grace"). It has a 32 inch diameter and weighs 1100 pounds. The second bell was moved to the Moreauville Church from the mission chapel of St. Catherine's at Big Bend. It is 34 inches in diameter, and has a G tone. Mr. Leonard Gauthier, assisted by several men of the parish, made the automatic ringer and toller for the two bells. A plate on the electric device bears the date of its completion, May 30, 1961.

Today, on the occasion of its belated centennial celebration, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, with its up-lifted face and renovated interior, stands as a memorial to the faith and the devotion of its fourteen devoted pastors and as a testimonial of the love and thanksgiving of the thousands of souls who have come closer to Almighty God during the past hundred years through the Church of Bayou des Glaises.

As the people witness their Bishop, Most Reverend Charles P. Greco, solemnly consecrate the new marble altars on Saturday evening, October 28th, they will realize that their sacrifices and donations have made possible this glowing tribute of stone as a centennial gift to their God whose sacrifice will be offered each morning upon these new altars. Likewise, on the morning following, as Bishop Greco offers the solemn Thanksgiving Mass on the new altars, the people of Moreauville will join with him in thanking God for the manifold graces that have come to them and their families through their parish, the Church of Bayou des Glaises. And as they thank God for the glorious century past, their hearts will also beg the same continued blessings for the century to come, the second century of the Church on Bayou des Glaises.



Side Altar of the Blessed Virgin. The altar was designed and built by Father H. Jacquemain. At the foot of this altar, along the side wall of the church is the grave of Father Regis Gimbert who erected the present structure.

L'ENVOI

Easter Sunday has become a memorable day in the annals of the Centennial Parish. For, on Easter Sunday 1882, the second parish church was used for the first time; in 1890, the new altars were first used; in 1897, the second church burned. Finally, on Easter Sunday, 1961, hundreds of men of the parish assembled at the Church to remove the pews from the venerable structure. A temporary Church was set up in Sacred Heart School Auditorium. Many of the pews were moved there; the rest were stored in the old Coco Brothers Wholesale Warehouse which was loaned the parish by Cleo Gauthier, Jr.

Behind the Easter 1961 "coup de main" was the pastor, Father John Timmermans. In October, 1960, he erected the Memorial Altar in the parish cemetery. On All Saints Day it was dedicated at ceremonies at which the American Legion participated. On All Souls Day, 1960, Masses of Requiem were offered in the cemetery, assisted by hundreds of parishoners.

The next step was the Church renovation and restoration. The parishoners responded enthusiastically, and over \$25,000 of the \$85,000 spent came in as memorial gifts. With the Church completed, the parishoners turned their attention to the Centennial celebration.

To kick-off the celebration a grand throng attended the "Centennial Dame Contest" held in the Moreauville High School Gym on Sunday night, October 22nd. Over fifty contestants in centennial attire competed for the title. Four visiting judges selected seventy-year-old Mrs. Lewis O. Bordelon as "La Belle Dame" of the centennial. She presided over the giant parade which passed through the streets of Moreauville immediately following the Solemn Pontifical Mass on Sunday, October 29th. Mr. Emmet Paul Gauthier was her escort for the parade and parish festival which climaxed the Centennial Day in Moreauville.

Joining Sacred Heart parish in its centennial were the Daughters of the Cross who staffed the parish school from 1899 to 1920, and again since 1948. On Sunday, October 22nd, a delegation of 33 Sisters held a re-union at Sacred Heart Convent. On the Centennial Day another large delegation attended the Pontifical Mass to thank Almighty God for the graces wrought through Sacred Heart Church of Bayou des Glaisses.

Nihil Obstat: Fr. Marvin Bordelon, Censor

Imprimatur: + Charles P. Greco, D. D.
Bishop of Alexandria



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