

**1300 W 5th Street**  
**Architectural Style: Mediterranean Revival**  
**Our Lady of Peace School**

Built in 1948, the school had 2 additions, the Gymnasium to the east & perpendicular addition to the west. The school tower has buttressed corners, hip roof, & recognizes the Christian Trinity with the outlined triple recessed entry & the 3 arched windows above, now infilled. The corbelled brick pattern at the top, set on limestone brackets, reflect the windows below, & is repeated on the Gym. The school has a gable roof. The 5 windows per bay, & 2 windows at both ends, are partly infilled & have limestone sills. The continuous limestone banding above the lower level windows & across the school entry is repeated on both additions, unifying the educational complex.



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**Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church**

The history of Marshfield's youngest Catholic Parish began on a Spring day in 1946, when 20 acres of West side land was purchased from John Schmidt by the Most Rev. A.J. McGavick, Bishop of LaCrosse for the site of Our Lady of Peace. By April of 1947, Rev. Water Dillenburg was assigned to be its first pastor, and that first year was filled with activities that build communities: planning the physical building of the Church/school/rectory complex to be located on the corner of Columbus and 5th Street. Energy was also spent organizing the men (Holy Name Society) and women (Rosary Altar Society) and looking ahead to the needs of a growing parish.



*Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church*  
*Photo from Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church website.*

On June 12, 1949, just eight years after his ordination, Fr. Dillenburg dedicated the new Church/School, in a celebration that included an address by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen.

The School opened on September 7, 1949, with an enrollment of 176 children from grades 1-8. The faculty was made up of five School Sisters of Notre Dame.

By the Spring of 1951, work was begun on the rectory, for Fr. Dillenburg had been living in temporary quarters since 1947: the Umhoefer home as well as the school building. This was also the year that Columbus High School was constructed in a joint project among all three Marshfield Parishes. By 1954, the nuns had a permanent address in the convent next to the



*Our Lady of Peace Catholic Elementary School  
Photo from Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church website.*

school. (See the story of Columbus High School.)

A fire in the Church's Christmas Creche (January 5, 1960) forced Mass to be moved to the Columbus High auditorium for two months, until the Church was re-decorated.

At the Parish meeting on January 26, 1963, two important events occurred. The mortgage for the church/school was paid off, and the decision was made to build a new Church. On June 12, 1966, the new structure was dedicated.

With a seating capacity of 850, the buildings design and structure met the worship needs of its families, as well as offering facilities for fellowship on the basement. Fr. Walter Dillenburg serve the parishioners at Our Lady of Peace until his death on January 12, 1980.

Rev. Francis Wavra was assigned to be the Parish's second pastor, taking the position in March 1980. He guided the Parish through the school addition, and was an inspirational leader until his death on March 12, 1993.

Rev. James Logan had been an associate pastor at OLP from 1967 to 1970 and the parishioners celebrated his return as Pastor in June 1993 to the present. Currently, there are 1,085 families in the parish. The school runs classes for pre-kindergarten through grade 6. The Parish also supports Holy Family Middle School (grades 7&8) and Columbus High School (grades 9-12).

Story submitted by Mary Pat Swamy, for the Marshfield History Project, "The Marshfield Story, 1872-1997: Piecing Together Our Past", pg. 123.

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# Parish Construction Bids To Be Scanned April 28

(See sketch on Page One)

Sealed proposals for the construction of a grade school and an auditorium will be received by Our Lady of Peace Catholic Parish here up to 3 o'clock Wednesday afternoon, April 28, according to the Rev. Walter Dillenburg, pastor of the parish.

Bids will be received separately for general construction, heating, ventilation, plumbing and electrical wiring, and after the time set for closing, the bids will be opened by Father Dillenburg, the trustees, and the advisory board of the parish.

Plans and specifications on general construction may be obtained from Oppenheimer and Obel, Wausau architects, while local bidders on ventilation, plumbing, heating, and electrical wiring may obtain plans and specifications from Father Dillenburg.

## Proposed Structures

A certified check for 5 per cent of the bid price or a bidder's bond in the full amount of the price must accompany the bids and the trustees, board of advisors, and Father Dillenburg reserve the right to reject any and all bids or to waive any irregularities in the bids submitted.

The proposed new school will be a one-story building of brick construction, approximately 171 x 60 feet. There will be eight classrooms on the first floor, two of which will be used as quarters for the Sisters of Notre Dame, a Milwaukee Order, who will teach at Our Lady of Peace School. There will also be a full basement under the school building which will provide social and activities rooms and kitchen and dining room facilities.

## Parish Started in 1947

The auditorium, on which construction bids will be accepted up to 3 p. m. April 28, will be 100 x 51 feet in dimensions, one-story, and of the same brick construction as the school. The auditorium will serve as a temporary place of worship until a new church can be constructed. Father Dillenburg said today that he hopes work on the new school and auditorium

will be started soon.

Our Lady of Peace Parish was established here June 21, 1947, by the Most Rev. John P. Treacy, coadjutor bishop of La Crosse, and the Rev. Walter Dillenburg, former assistant at St. John's Catholic Parish, was named pastor.

The new building of our Lady of Peace Parish will be constructed on 20 acres of land on the west end of Fifth street. The land was purchased by the Very Rev. Michael Kelnhofer, pastor of St. John's Parish, on authority of the Most Rev. A. J. McGavieck, bishop of La Crosse in 1946. It was pointed out at the time of the purchase that the 20 acres of land will provide for future expansion of the parish facilities, which will include an athletic field and a Central Catholic High School.



**NEW PARISH BUILDINGS**—Bids for the construction of the proposed auditorium and eight classrooms of Our Lady of Peace Parish on W. Fifth street, shown in the architect's drawing here, will be opened after 3 p. m. April 28, the deadline for all bids. The sealed proposals will cover the general construction and four separate bids will be taken on heating, plumbing, ventilation, and electrical wiring.

The building pictured here on the left is the proposed auditorium, which will be used as a temporary church and the remainder of the structure to the right comprises the eight classrooms, two of which will be used by the Sisters of Notre Dame as living quarters. The Rev. Walter Dillenburg, pastor of the parish, said he hopes construction of the new buildings will start this summer. (See story on Page 3.)

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10 Apr 1948, Sat • Page 1

# NEW PARISH PLANS CEREMONY SUNDAY

## Vicar General of Diocese to Conduct Laying of Cornerstone

The laying of the cornerstone of Our Lady of Peace School Building will take place on W. Fifth street Sunday afternoon beginning at 3:30 o'clock.

The ceremonies will be conducted by the Very Rev. C. W. Gille, vicar general of the Diocese of La Crosse. The Very Rev. Michael J. Kelnhofer, pastor of St. John's Catholic Church and dean of the Wood County Deanery, will give the welcome address.

The Rev. Edmund Cramer, pastor of Sacred Heart, has been chosen to present a history of the development of the two Catholic churches in Marshfield from their establishment to the present day.

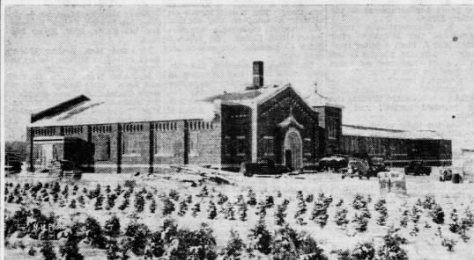
Concluding remarks are to be made by the Rev. Walter J. Dillenburg, pastor of the new parish.

The public is invited to attend the ceremonies.

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27 Jul 1948, Tue • Page 1

### Year's Major Projects Here



Our Lady of Peace Church and School

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31 Dec 1948, Fri • Page 6

# Vicar General of Diocese to Hold Sunday Rituals

The Very Rev. C. W. Gille, vicar general of the Diocese of La Crosse, will conduct the ceremonies in the laying of the cornerstone of the new Our Lady of Peace School Building Sunday afternoon, beginning at 3:30 o'clock.

Also included on the program will be a welcome address by the Very Rev. Michael J. Keln-

hofer, pastor of St. John's Catholic Church and dean of the Wood County Deanery, the history of the two Catholic Churches in Marshfield by the Rev. Edmund Cramer, pastor of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, and remarks by the pastor of the new parish, the Rev. Walter J. Dillenburg.

Construction of the new building was begun May 18. Thus far, the foundation and the walls up to and including the first floor windows have been completed.

The public is invited to attend the ceremonies at the building site on W. Fifth street.

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**CORNERSTONE LAYING**—The Very Rev. C. W. Gille, vicar general of the Diocese of La Crosse, is shown reading the prayers preparatory to the laying of the cornerstone of the new Our Lady of Peace School Building yesterday afternoon. Approximately 250 persons were on hand to witness the ceremonies, which included the blessing of the stone, a short history of Catholicism in Marshfield, by the Rev. Edmund Cramer, an address by Father Gille, and remarks by the Rev. Walter J. Dillenburg and the Very Rev. Michael J. Kelnhofer. Pictured (left to right) are Father Dillenburg, pastor of the new parish; Father Kelnhofer, St. John's pastor; Father Gille, Father Edmund Cramer, pastor of Sacred Heart Church; the Rev. Arthur Dresen, assistant pastor at St. John's; the Rev. Frederick Furster, chaplain at St. Joseph's Hospital; and the Rev. Anthony Fischer, Stratford.

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02 Aug 1948, Mon • Page 11

# Church Dedication on Sunday



**READY FOR DEDICATION**—Dedication ceremonies are scheduled Sunday for the new church and school building of Our Lady of Peace parish, located on W. Fifth street. A day and evening program of activities is planned and an open house throughout the entire day will give visitors the opportunity of inspecting the \$281,000 structure.

Another milestone in Marshfield's spiritual life will be marked Sunday when Our Lady of Peace parish formally dedicates its new church and school on W Fifth street.

The day-long activities will begin at 10:30 a. m. when the Most Rev. John P. Treacy, D. D., bishop of the La Crosse Diocese, will conduct the blessing ceremony. The bishop will be the celebrant at a Solemn Pontifical High Mass in the new church at 11 o'clock.

A dinner will be served in the commodious school basement from noon to 2 p. m., and 15 minutes later a series of dedication day addresses is scheduled.

From 3 to 4 o'clock, the Civil Air Patrol Band, under the direction of Lt. Anton Kraemer, will present a concert through the courtesy of the musicians' local, and this will be followed by a cafeteria supper for which serving will continue until 7 in the evening. Activities will be concluded with a public card party.

#### Open House

The parish will hold open house throughout the entire day to give all visitors the opportunity to inspect the structure. The "Little Theater Off Times

Square." in the church basement will provide a continuous free motion picture showing during the afternoon and evening. The film, which will be of particular interest to children, is "The 39 Steps."

Participating in the Pontifical High Mass will be the Rev. C. W. Gille, Wisconsin Rapids, vicar general of the diocese, assistant priest the Very Rev. M. J. Kelnhofer, Marshfield, deacon; the Rev. Edmund Cramer, Marshfield, subdeacon Rev. Norman Thomas, Athens, deacon of honor, Rev. Wenzel Multerer, Marathon, subdeacon of honor; Rev. James Finucane, La Crosse, secretary for the bishop, first master of ceremonies; Rev. Norbert Dall, Marshfield, second master of ceremonies; and Father Kevan, O.F.M. Cap., Marathon, preacher.

Taking part in the afternoon program, which will be held outside if weather permits, will be Fred A. Rhyner, master of ceremonies; Mayor Arthur J. Reeths; the Rev. Fr. Cramer, the Very Rev. Fr. Kelnhofer, the Rev. Walter Dillenburg, pastor of Our Lady of Peace, and the Most Rev. Bishop Treacy.

On the program is a song by A. A. Frymark, who will be accompanied by Miss Ulamae Knutson, pianist.

#### History of Parish

Overcrowding of facilities of the two older Roman Catholic Congregations here, St. John's and Sacred Heart of Jesus, resulted in the official decree of erection of the new parish on June 21, 1947.

Antedating the decree by two months was the official appointment of the Rev. Walter J. Dillenburg to the Our Lady of Peace charge on April 17, and the purchase, a year earlier, of 20 acres of land on W. Fifth street for the location of the parish buildings.

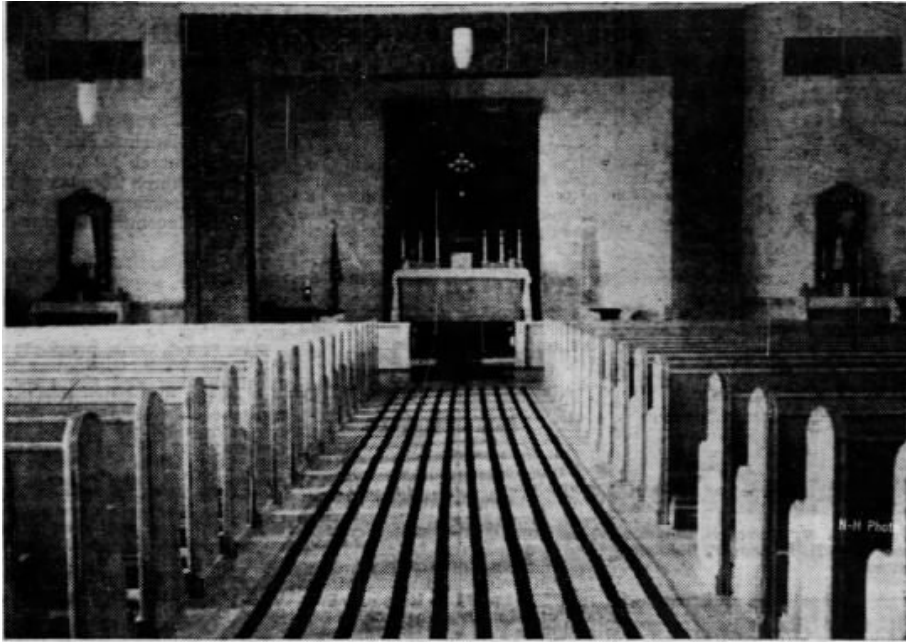
The Rev. Fr. Dillenburg, who had served as assistant pastor at St. John's prior to his appointment as an Army chaplain during World War II, came here from his parish at Owen to organize the new congregation.

The first mass for the new congregation was held at the Knights of Columbus Hall on July 26, 1947, and the hall continued to serve as the church for the parishioners until Feb. 20 of this year when the first service was held in the new building.

#### Bids \$281,000

Contracts were let for the project on April 28 last year, and firm bids of \$281,000 were accepted. Ground-breaking ceremonies were conducted May 18.

The one-story, L-shaped build-



**VIEW OF CHURCH INTERIOR**—Main and side altars are shown in this view of Our Lady of Peace Church which will be dedicated Sunday. The church has a seating capacity of 430. Altars and pews are of blond-finished oak and the other woodwork is natural-finished birch. Windows in the church are of hammered cathedral glass.



**ONE OF NEW CLASSROOMS**—This view shows one of the four classrooms in the new Our Lady of Peace School, which has accommodations for 240 pupils. Seats and desks are adjustable and each classroom has clothes closets. Two other classrooms have been fitted as temporary quarters for the sisters who will teach the grade school.

panel. In the choir room is an electric Mason-Hamlin organ.

Altars and pews are of blonde-finished oak, and the floor is natural-finished maple. The woodwork, in the church and throughout the remainder of the large structure, is finished in natural birch. Walls are decorated in ivory and white.

#### Capacity of 430.

The church has a seating capacity of 430. It has three exterior entrances—the main entrance on the north, one on the east, and another on the west fronting a parking lot with space for 100 cars. A double interior entrance connects the church with the school.

When a separate church, to be erected west of the present building, materializes, according to the long-range plan, the present church will be used as an auditorium.

The remainder of the first floor of the building, 170 feet long and varying in width from 60 to 72

feet, houses six classrooms, with accommodation for 240 pupils, and lavatory and office facilities.

Four of the classrooms will be used for teaching eight grades while the remaining rooms have been so designed as to provide five bedrooms, and kitchen, living, and dining rooms for the sisters, as well as a storage room. Classrooms and sisters' quarters are finished with acoustically treated plaster.

#### Asphalt Tiling

All floors are finished with asphalt tiling, with each floor enhanced by a different design and color scheme. A white tiled wainscot has been installed in the corridor of the school and in entrances to both the school and church.

The basement dining and meeting room extends the length of the school and will easily accommodate 400 persons. There is also a large clubroom seating 150 persons.

ing is a three-purpose unit—church, grade school, and convent for the teachers who will have charge of the school to open this coming fall—to serve the parish, which now numbers about 300 families.

The entire building of brick construction, is designed in a

architecture.

The 104x51-foot church has a vaulted ceiling, baptismal and mothers' room, two built in confessionals, hammered cathedral glass windows, and sacristies. The choir is unique in that it is adjacent to the altar and separated from it by a lattice-work

multitude of built-in cabinets.

The large boiler room, set several feet lower than the rest of the basement, has an exterior entrance. Here are housed, too, the central units for the system which air-conditions the entire building.

The church's facilities include automatic Bernardian carillon bells which can also be operated manually. The unit is the equivalent of five bells of 3,500 pounds each.

#### Church Committees

The general contractor on the project was the Hoffman Company, Appleton. Heating and ventilating was handled by the L. L. Felker Company, Marshfield, and the electrical work was done by the K and M Electric Company, also of this city. The Central Plumbing and Heating Company, Wausau, handled that portion of the project.

The parish advisory board is comprised of Joe Radtke, Earle Leu, L. L. Felker, Dick Schneider, George Sternweis, J. P. Weber, Ray T. Finucane, Jack Hobelsberger, and Mrs. Rudy Binzel.

Rosary Society officers are Mrs. Earle Leu, president; Mrs. Joe Stadler, vice-president; Mrs. Richard Koch, treasurer, and Mrs. La Vern La Merè, secretary.

Holy Name Society officers are Earle Leu, president; Joe Stadler, vice-president; Robert Felker, secretary, and Jerry Heinzen, treasurer.

Trustees of the congregation are Fred A. Rhyner and Elmer J. Martin.

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10 Jun 1949, Fri • Pages 1 & 6

## Parish Schools Start Next Week

### Our Lady of Peace To Open First Time

Two Parochial Schools, St. John's and Immanuel Lutheran, will register next week for the fall term. Sacred Heart completed its registration at the close of the last school term.

Registration will be held at Immanuel Lutheran on Wednesday, Aug. 31, from 9 a. m. to 4 p. m., with classes scheduled to start Tuesday, Sept. 6.

St. John's will conduct registration Sunday, Aug. 28 for all those who did not enroll at the close of the last school term. With those students who are already listed, approximately 800 students are expected at St. John's in both the grades and high school. Classes will start on Wednesday, Sept. 7.

According to registrations completed at Sacred Heart in June, 325 will attend on opening day, Sept. 6. School will open with an 8 o'clock mass after which the group will receive assignments before dismissal for the day. On Wednesday, Sept. 7, classes will be held in the forenoon only, but on Thursday, Sept. 8 regular classes will be held.

Our Lady of Peace School, completed this spring, will open for children of the parish for the first time this fall. Previous registrations indicate about 175 will attend the school. Classes are scheduled to start on Wednesday, Sept. 7.

City school registrations were completed yesterday but enrollment figures were not available today.

There will be a general teachers' meeting at the Willard D. Purdy Junior High School on Sept. 6 with classes scheduled to start on Sept. 7 in the forenoon. The regular fall schedule will be resumed Sept. 8.

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## Local Schools Hold Regular Classes Today

The number of students attending the Marshfield city schools is 1,440, according to enrollment figures released by Supt. Glenn D. Tinkham's office today.

While more students are expected to be in attendance next week the figures today reveal 560 registered at the Senior High School, 330 at the Willard D. Purdy Junior High School, and 550 in the four grade schools.

At St. John's a total of 797 students are registered, including the high school and the grades, and at Sacred Heart 279 are enrolled in the grades.

Our Lady of Peace School opened for the first time this year with a total enrollment of 175 pupils. A bus is maintained by the parish to furnish transportation for the children living in the rural areas.

At the Senior High School a general assembly was held yesterday at which Prin. Gene Burnkrant explained the rules and regulations listed in the new "orange book." Instructions were also given on nominations for students to serve on the Student Council. The nominations must be completed by Monday and then campaigns will be conducted for the officers of the council.

During the summer months, it was reported, a number of letters were received by the Student Council from students in Germany who were the recipients of CARE packages sent by local students last spring.

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# Our Lady Congregation Sells Subdivisional Lots

An indication of local interest in new building opportunities is given in the announcement that 48 of 60 lots offered for sale near Our Lady of Peace Church Monday were sold the same day.

The property, which extends from Schmitt street on the east to the West City Limits road, and from Fifth street on the north to Adler street on the south, was offered in one or two-lot quantities by Our Lady of Peace Parish, which has an option on the property.

All lots have 66 feet frontages and are 190 feet in depth. Corner lots sold for \$8 a front foot and inside lots for \$7 a front foot.

According to an announcement of the sale Sunday, all lots have sewer facilities near by and water is also available.

This section of lots is under Class A Zoning, duplex houses are prohibited, nor may any

house be built for less than \$6,500 in the area. Crops on the property will belong to John Schmitt unless building operations are begun before they are removed.

Names placed on the master chart at Our Lady of Peace School, indicating an intent to purchase the lot, will be respected until May 15, after which the purchaser is expected to pay for the lot or lots in full.

The money so paid will be held in escrow at the Central State Bank until a nonprofit holding company can be formed. The deeds, abstracts and surveying can be completed, and the property purchased from John Schmitt.

Included in the purchase price of the lots are the deed, abstracts and surveying, and clear title to the lots is expected in from one to two months.

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## Duplex Convent Will Be Built

### New Construction Planned for April

School Sisters of Notre Dame teaching at Our Lady of Peace grade school and having living quarters there are to have a new duplex convent in which to live. Sisters teaching at Columbus High School will also occupy the proposed new structure, estimated to cost between \$106,000 and \$115,000.

The Rev. Mother Andrina and her council at the Milwaukee Mother House have approved the plan of the convent that will serve the two communities of School Sisters of Notre Dame.

The site chosen for the building which will have a 142-foot frontage is between the grade school and the high school on Van Ert street, and plans have been submitted to Donn Hougen, architect, Wisconsin Rapids, and Douglas O'Donnell in the local branch office of the Hougen firm.

The two-story structure in brick will have common rooms for each community, a common chapel and facilities for preparing and serving food on the first floor. The second floor will be divided into 32 cell-bedrooms.

The basement is to house the common heating unit, laundry, luggage rooms, a storage room, a

sewing room and a spacious recreation area.

Each of the second-floor rooms is to have running water and a small clothes closet for each nun. At the end of the corridor an ample porch will be situated above the common chapel.

Construction of the building is to start the first part of April. The new building will make it possible for the rooms now occupied at Our Lady of Peace School to be used for classrooms.

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**PROPOSED CONVENT**—Here is the architect's drawing of the proposed duplex convent which will house Sisters of Notre Dame teaching at Our Lady of Peace School and at Columbus High School.

The convent, 142 feet long, will front on Van Ert avenue, and the cost is estimated at \$106,000 to \$115,000. The architect is Donn Hougen, Wisconsin Rapids. Construction is expected to start in April.

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# Ground Broken For Convent at West Side Site

**\$162,438 Project  
Expected to Be  
Completed in Fall**

Ground was broken this morning for the construction of the new \$162,438 convent which will be used to house the Sisters who teach at Columbus High School and Our Lady of Peace Grade School.

The Rev. Edwin L. Knauf, pastor of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, officiated at the ceremonies which were attended by the students of both schools. Father Knauf blessed the land upon which the building will be constructed and then turned the first shovel of dirt.



**BREAK GROUND FOR CONVENT**—Work on the \$162,438 convent for Columbus High School and Our Lady of Peace Grade School and Church began officially at 9:30 o'clock this morning when the Rev. Edwin L. Knauf, pastor of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, turned the first shovelful of dirt. Watching the proceedings are, from left to right, the Rev. Richard Rossiter, the Rev. Constant Chilicki, the Rev. James Lane, the Rev. Bernard Schreiber, and the Rev. Walter Dillenburg. The new convent is being constructed on a plot of land between the church and the north end of the high school. (News-Herald Photo)

Others joining in the ceremonies were the Rev. Richard Rossiter, principal at Columbus High; the Rev. Constant Chilicki, Sacred Heart; the Rev. James Lane, Columbus High; the Rev. Bernard Schreiber, representing St. John's; and the Rev. Walter Dillenburg, pastor at Our Lady of Peace.

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Mass servers were Bob Gleisner, Omar Adler, and Dick Steckler. Boy Scouts in uniform for the ceremonies were Mike Mechler, John Leu, Dennis Kaufmann, Dennis Wiltgen, Mike Lee, and William Wagner.

Following a short talk by Father Rossiter, the Columbus Band played a selection to conclude the rites. The band also performed prior to the opening of the program.

The successful bids on the construction of the convent were announced by Father Dillenburg as follows: General construction (labor only) Wendelin Merkel, \$58,200; heating and ventilating, Lloyd L. Felker Co., \$18,621; plumbing, Fred Schrejner and Sons, \$19,590; and electric wiring and fixtures, K & M Electric, \$8,181.

Columbus High and Our Lady of Peace School and Church will buy the material which will go into the construction of the building. The cost has been set at \$57,846.

The building is expected to be ready for use in late October or early November.

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A heating permit for work estimated to cost \$18,000 was issued for the duplex convent under construction between Columbus High School and Our Lady of Peace School.

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12 Jun 1954, Sat • Page 3

## Permit Issued For Catholic Convent Here

A building permit for the construction of the new convent on Van Ert avenue to house Sisters teaching at Columbus High and Our Lady of Peace School was secured this week from Peter LeMahieu, building inspector.

Estimated cost of the project, according to the permit, is \$160,000. Ground was broken last Friday to officially begin the work.

It is to be a two-story building of brick construction fortified with steel supports. It is expected that the structure will be ready for use late in October or early November.

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01 May 1954, Sat • Page 7

## Sisters Invite Public to See New Convent

The School Sisters of Notre Dame of Columbus High School and Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church are inviting residents of Marshfield and Central Wisconsin to visit their new convent Sunday afternoon, Dec. 18.

Open house will be held between the hours of 1:30 and 4:30 o'clock. Sisters and students will be available as guides to show visitors through the new building.

The new convent is located on Columbus avenue, between Columbus High School and Our Lady of Peace School.

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15 Dec 1954, Wed • Page 10

## Blaze Badly Damages Lady of Peace Church

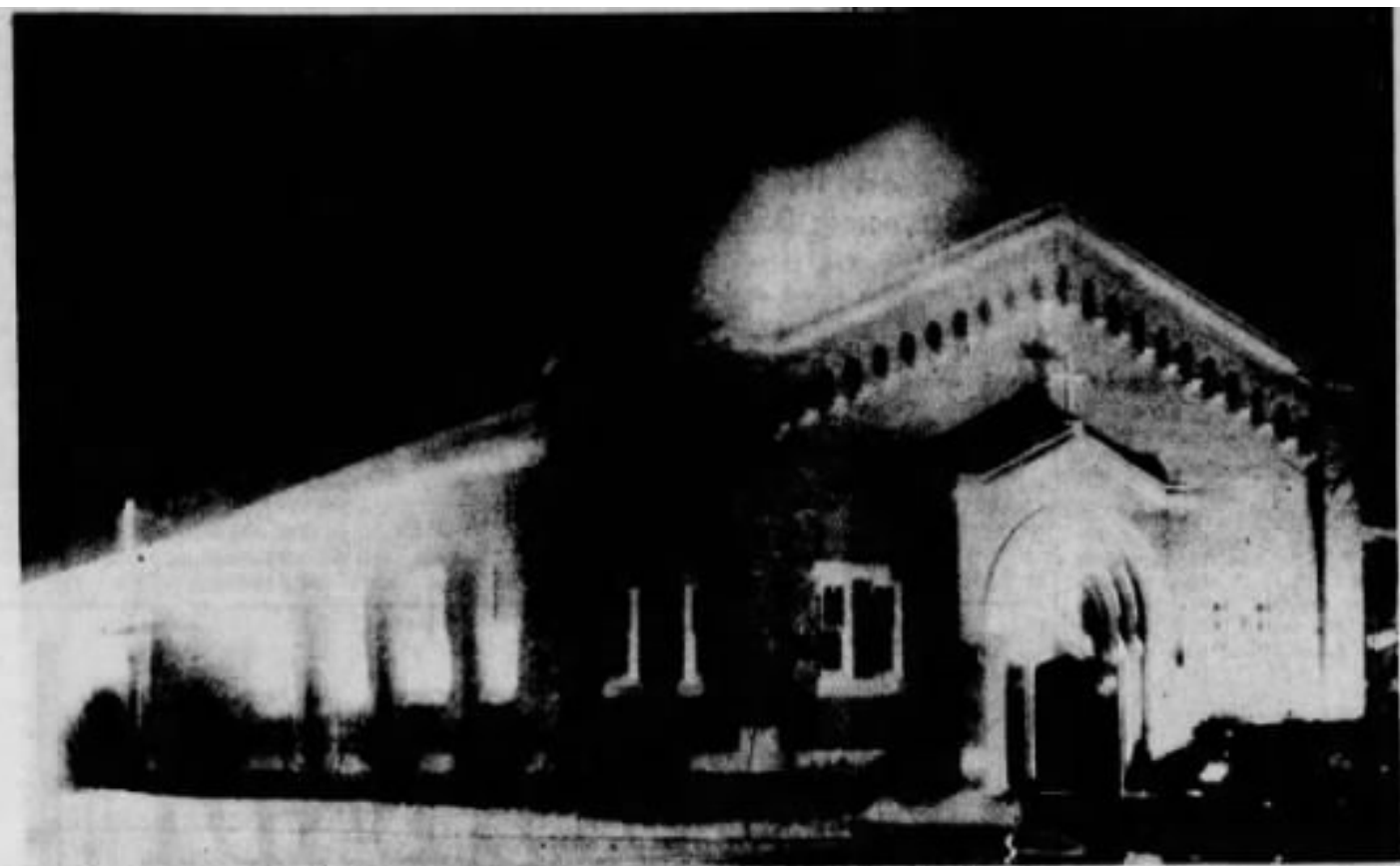
### Marshal Checks \$25,000 Fire In Edifice Here

Boy Observed Near Crib Where Flame Apparently Started

A state fire marshal was called to Marshfield today to investigate the blaze which badly damaged the interior of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church early Tuesday evening.

Fire Chief Verlyn Ziegahn estimated damage from the fire, which was discovered about 5:45 p. m. by a passing motorist, at between \$20,000 and \$25,000.

The Rev. Walter J. Dillenburg, pastor of Our Lady of Peace par-



**SCENE OF DISASTROUS BLAZE**—Smoke and emergency lights Tuesday evening. Both shifts of firemen, using four hose lines, brought combined to cast an eerie glow about Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church, where firemen battled a blaze in subzero cold which caused the fire, believed to have started in a Christmas crib, under control quickly, but not before extensive damage was done. (News-Herald an estimated \$20,000 to \$25,000 loss to the interior of the church Photo)

ish, said the loss was 100 per cent covered by insurance.

The blaze, confined to the sanctuary and nave portions of the church, started in the section to the right of the altar, where a large Christmas crib was located.

Fire badly charred the area, and crept up into the ceiling and acoustical tile and insulation. The first few pews at the front of the church were badly charred from the fire about the creche and from the burning tile which fell from the ceiling.

There was considerable smoke damage and water damage elsewhere in the church.

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Father Dennis Stanchik, assistant priest at Our Lady of Peace, was in the church at about 5:30 o'clock Tuesday evening to obtain two surplices prior to leaving with Father Dillenburg to conduct 40-hour devotions at St. Joseph's Hospital.

There were no signs of fire at that time and the Nativity scene lights were not turned on.

However, he reported, when he left the building there was a boy in the church in the area where the fire started.

A scant 15 minutes later Mr. and Mrs. Walter Schirpke, 1212 S. Central Ave., driving by, noticed "an unusual light in the church."

Schirpke went inside to investigate, discovered the blaze and raced to the rectory, where the Rev. James Lane, an instructor at Columbus High, turned in the alarm at 5:46 p. m.

Father Lane then hurried to the church to save the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle on the altar. Flames lighted his way but the smoke was so intense that he was driven from the building.

Moments later, accompanied by two nuns who attempted to fan the smoke from about him, Father Lane was successful in his efforts.

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Both shifts of Marshfield firemen responded to the automatic second alarm. When the first of four trucks arrived at the scene, the building was "as red as it could be inside," Capt. Elmer Schreiber reported.

Four hose lines were laid, two from the hydrant at W. Fifth street and Columbus avenue.

Windows on the east side of the church were cracked and broken from the intense heat, and firemen, hampered by smoke, used oxygen breathing equipment to get at the blaze.

Two holes were opened in the roof for venting purposes.

Within 10 to 15 minutes after the first stream of water was played on the conflagration, the fire was under control. The first equipment to return to the station was logged in at 8:30 p. m.

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A fire watch was maintained at the church throughout the night. There were no incidents and the final team of watchers left at 7:30 o'clock this morning.

The blaze did not disrupt class schedules at Our Lady of Peace School, where it was "business as usual" for pupils today.

Father Dillenburg said this morning that daily Masses will be conducted at 6:15 and 7:10 a.m. in the convent, and the daily 11:15 a. m. Mass will be held in Columbus Auditorium.

At least for the next two Sundays, the 6:30, 7:45, 9, 10:15 and 11:30 Masses will be in Columbus Auditorium.

Confessions will be heard on Saturday as usual in the church, he reported.

The first Mass was celebrated in Our Lady of Peace Church which, with the school and without equipment, cost \$281,000, in February, 1949, and the church was dedicated in June that year.

[Marshfield News-Herald](#)

[Marshfield, Wisconsin](#)

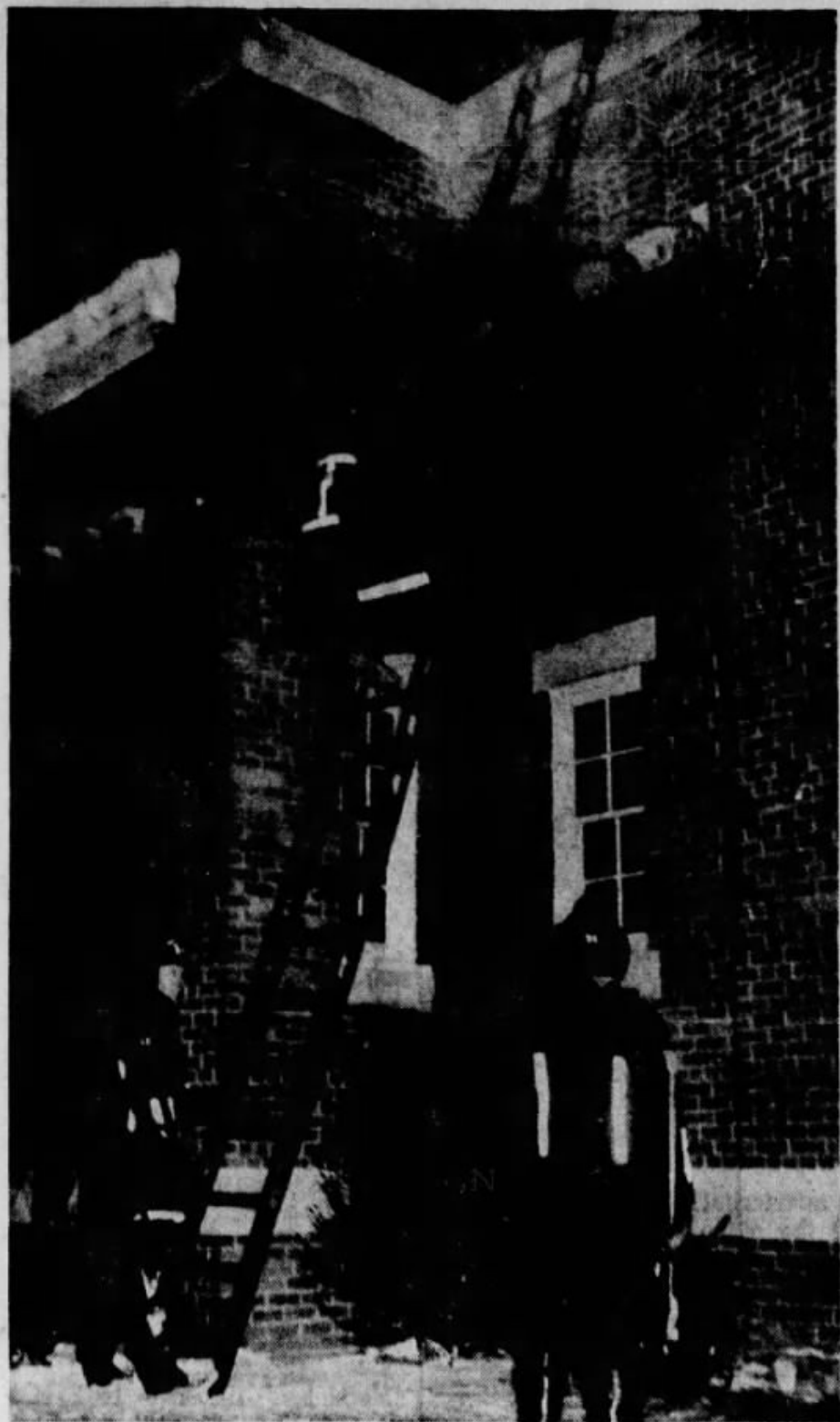
06 Jan 1960, Wed • Pages 1 & 14

**HOT CARGO** — Firemen were called to the Our Lady of Peace School at 12:40 o'clock this afternoon when rubbish in a city packer-type garbage truck ignited. The firemen accompanied the garbage truck to the city landfill when the burning rubbish was dumped.

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**FIGHT CHURCH FIRE**—Marshfield firemen are shown here as they climbed to the roof of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church last night to vent the smoke which hampered fire-fighting operations in the structure. (News-Herald Photo)



**CHURCH PROJECT GETS UNDERWAY —** Work has started at the site for the new \$400,-000 Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church on W. Fifth street between Our Lady of Peace School and the parish rectory. This picture was taken from Fifth street. Columbus High

School is shown in the background to the right, with the grade school at far left. A building permit for the construction of the church is expected to be taken out next week, said Adolph Frank, building inspector. (News-Herald Photo)

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[Marshfield, Wisconsin](#)  
 22 May 1965, Sat • Page 3

**SUNDAY EVENT**

# Our Lady of Peace Plans Open House

An open house at the new Our Lady of Peace Church, 1412 W. Fifth St., will be held Sunday afternoon, Nov. 13.

The event, to which the general public is invited, will be held from 1:30 to 5 p.m., according to the Very Rev. Walter J. Dillenburg, pastor of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church since the parish was founded 20 years ago.

Guided tours will be offered, and refreshments will be served to the visitors.

The \$350,000 church was dedicated at ceremonies June 12 by the Most Rev. Frederick W. Freking, bishop of the La Crosse Diocese.

At that time it had been decided to delay the open house event, when area residents would have the opportunity to inspect the ultra-modern structure until such time as landscaping and parking lots were completed. The time is now.

The cost of the new church had been placed at \$450,000 for

THE MARSHFIELD NEWS - HERALD, Marshfield, Wis. 7  
 Friday, November 11, 1965

the building and \$100,000 for furnishings.

Our Lady of Peace parish had its inception in April 1946, when 20 acres of land was purchased on the city's West Side. Father Dillenburg was named pastor April 17, 1947, and the formal decree of erection of the first church was issued June 21 that year.

Until a church could be built, services were held in the old Knights of Columbus Hall. Ground for the original church and present school was broken May 18, 1948, and the first ceremony, a nuptial Mass, was held in the church Feb. 19, 1949. With the new church completed, the original building has been remodeled for use as the Our Lady of Peace School gym-

nasium.

The new church is of a cruciform design, a plan which, with the new Catholic liturgy encouraging greater participation in the Mass, enable members of the congregation to gather around and near the altar of sacrifice. The total seating capacity is 850.

An open bell tower is one of many unique features of the structure. Each of the three bells is dedicated to one of the Catholic parishes here.

Assisting Father Dillenburg in parish duties are Father William Matzek and the Rev. Thomas Eiten, the latter also an instructor at Columbus High.

Phone Classified Ads to 384-0111

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# Open House



## OUR LADY OF PEACE NEW CHURCH

1412 West Fifth Street, Marshfield, Wisconsin

Sunday, November 13th

from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Guided Tours Will Be Conducted

Refreshments Will Be Served

The Public Is Cordially Invited



# OLP breaks ground for addition

By MARY POLZIN  
Of the News-Herald

Groundbreaking ceremonies for a \$400,000 addition and renovation project at Our Lady of Peace School were held Tuesday afternoon.

Construction, which is being done by Schueller Construction Inc. of Marshfield, will include the addition of six classrooms and replacement of windows and doors in the older section of the building. The addition, which will run parallel to the church, will extend south from the west end of the building, toward Columbus High School.

The scheduled completion date is Aug. 14.

According to the Rev. Francis Wavra, pastor of Our Lady of Peace Church, the additional space is needed because of projected increases in kindergarten-grade 8 enrollment for next year and the future.

Currently, about 282 students are enrolled and that figure is predicted to climb to about 300 next year. In 1980, the enrollment was about 196, Wavra said. However, the addition of a kindergarten to the program has accounted for part of the increase.

Kindergarteners currently meet for class at the convent, but the addition will allow room for the class to be moved back to the school, he said.

Wavra also said that he is anticipating that about 2½ staff positions will be added to the lower grades. There are currently 16 teachers, including five part-time positions and 11 full-time.

"We are looking forward to offering the opportunity to all families of the parish for Catholic education," Wavra said.

Construction of the existing school building started in May 1948. The dedication took place June 12, 1949, and the school opened for regular classes in September of that year.



School building project started

Participating in groundbreaking ceremonies for a \$400,000 addition to Our Lady of Peace School Tuesday afternoon were (from left) Sister Mary Ann Wutkowaki, principal; Clady Kryda, 1209 W. Fifth St.; Don Schueller of

Schueller Construction, Inc.; Michael Seelen, fund-raising co-chairman; the Rev. Francis Wavra, pastor of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church; Bill Draxler, Church Council member; and Roy Anderson, also of Schueller

Construction, Inc. The project, which will include the addition of six classrooms and some renovation on the old building, is expected to be completed Aug. 14.

(News-Herald Photo)

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Construction under way

Progress has been made this week on the foundation for the \$400,000 construction project at Our Lady of Peace School. Work on the school addition began two weeks ago and is expected to be completed in mid-August. The project includes the addition of six classrooms and some renovation on the old structure.

(News-Herald Photo)

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18 Apr 1987, Sat • Page 3

The major change at Our Lady of Peace School is the addition of six classrooms to the building, which will help accommodate the higher enrollment.

As of last week, enrollment totaled 300, compared to about 285 last year at this time.

Work on the project, which began in April, is expected to be done in about a week or so, according to Sister Mary Ann Wutkowski, principal. The actual planning for the project began about three years ago.

The new area will house the middle school classes, grades 6-8. Meanwhile, the kindergarten class, which was moved to Columbus Hall because of space limitations, will return to the school.

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Construction has students bagging it at Our Lady of Peace School. The lunchroom will remain under construction this week with the lunch program returning to normal next week.

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## Our Lady of Peace

# School has been serving children for 48 years

By Mary Friesen

Special to the News-Herald

The newest outgrowth from St. John's Catholic Church was the establishment of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church in 1946 when 20 acres of west-side land was purchased by the Diocese of La Crosse.

Ft. Walter Dillenburg was assigned as the first pastor in 1947 and a flurry of activities ensued.

Plans were made for a building to house a church, school and rectory on the corner of Columbus Avenue and Fifth Street.

A Holy Name Society for men and a Rosary Altar Society for women were formed.

By June 1948, Ft. Dillenburg dedicated the church and school building.

Classes began in September

with an enrollment of 176 children in grades 1 through 8.

One of the Sisters of Notre Dame, who taught at the newly established school, wrote on Sept. 7, 1949:

"A red-letter day for sure! Having met, successfully we hope, our 175 youngsters, we sat back, took a deep breath, and then prepared to 'launch out into the deep.'"

Five nuns taught the eight grades. One wrote in an entry dated Sept. 14-Oct. 2, 1949, "Normal routine - if there can be such in a pioneering community."

May 31, 1950, marked a historic event for Our Lady of Peace School. One nun writes in an entry under that date:

"Graduation and May Crowning. Nothing could be more beautiful!

The simplicity of it all gave it

"Graduation  
and May  
Crowning.  
Nothing could  
be more  
beautiful!"

SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME

true grandeur. Our graduates - in royal blue cap and gown - formed the guard of honor for the one who crowned May."

Construction on the rectory

began in the spring of 1951. In the meantime, ground was also broken for a new project, Columbus High School, as a joint effort between Our Lady of Peace, St. John's and Sacred Heart parishes.

The school was built on a 14-acre site just south of Our Lady of Peace Church.

During construction of the new high school, two-year high school classes were conducted in St. John's elementary school. Ft. Hugh J. Deery, pastor of St. John's, was appointed as the first principal.

The first graduating class was in 1952 with students coming from 10 Catholic congregations in Marshfield and the surrounding area. Marshfield's second high school was built to hold up to 600 students, included 27 classrooms, a gymnasium, locker rooms and showers, shops, a homemaker's room and a cafeteria. The gymna-

sium was designed to hold 1,500 people.

A Christmas season fire in 1990 destroyed the Creche in the Our Lady of Peace Church, forcing Mass to be celebrated in the Columbus gymnasium until repairs could be made.

The congregation then voted to build a new church in 1993.

The new Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church was dedicated in 1996 with a seating capacity of 850 people.

Ft. Dillenburg continued to serve the parish until his death in January 1980.

Our Lady of Peace School now houses children from kindergarten through sixth grade. Seventh- and eighth-grade students now attend Holy Family Middle School, supported by the three Catholic parishes in Marshfield.

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# Educational excellence continues in MACS

**W**hen guests visit our fine city, especially if they are considering a move to Marshfield, I tell them that they are fortunate that their choice is one that guarantees quality education for their children. It is obvious that all of the city's school systems are ones of excellence.

The Catholic schools and the city of Marshfield have "grown up together." St. John the Baptist School was founded in 1882. Many parishioners "put up" their farms and homes so that Catholic education would be available for their children. They would be pleased to know that after more than 100 years, their labors still bear fruit. Sacred Heart of Jesus School was established in 1917. Our Lady of Peace School began in 1949. In



**DEACON  
DANIEL  
HANNIG**

1952, Columbus Catholic High School graduated its first class.

Just two years ago, Bishop Raymond Burke of our La Crosse Diocese announced that all of Marshfield's Catholic schools would be "unified"

as one system. A year later, the schools realigned with grades preschool through three housed in the St. John's building. Grades four through six are at Our Lady of Peace. Columbus Catholic Middle School shares the Columbus building with the high school.

At Marshfield Area Catholic Schools (MACS), our students are immersed into a nurturing and intellectually challenging environment that helps them develop as people of faith and be prepared for the work world of the 21st century. The exceptional learning environment is designed and implemented by our experienced and dedicated staff. They are certified by the state of Wisconsin. Nearly one half of the high school teachers have a master's degree.

Parent involvement is the key to our success. A very active Parent Association provides communication, support and fund-raising. But the real magic occurs when parents and teachers partner to achieve academic goals. Many parents volunteer their time listening to students read or assisting in special projects. Being a MACS parent guarantees that one is part of the "MACS family."

Finally, to understand the true mission of the Marshfield Area Catholic Schools, one must keep in mind that ours is a ministry of faith. Our programs and practices emphasize the integration of Catholic values, virtues and traditions. Consequently, all of our students pray daily, attend regular school masses and engage in rigorous daily Catholic religion classes as we seek "to further the Kingdom of God."

**Deacon Daniel Hannig is president of Marshfield Area Catholic Schools.**

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## 50 Years Ago Today

Work almost has been completed on the Columbus and Our Lady of Peace convent located on Columbus Avenue between Columbus High School and Our Lady of Peace Church. Seventeen Notre Dame sisters currently living in St. John's convent and Our Lady of Peace School will move into the new duplex quarters on Dec. 23.

[Marshfield News-Herald  
Marshfield, Wisconsin](http://www.marshfieldnews-herald.com)

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## Our Lady of Peace, Souvenir of Dedication, June 12, 1949:

[https://  
www.marshfieldgenealogy.com/  
Souve-  
nir\\_of\\_Dedication\\_June\\_12\\_1949\\_  
Our\\_Lady\\_of\\_Peace.pdf](https://www.marshfieldgenealogy.com/Souvenir_of_Dedication_June_12_1949_Our_Lady_of_Peace.pdf)

## In Commemoration of the Solemn Blessing and Dedication of the Church of Our Lad of Peace, June 12, 1966:

[https://  
www.marshfieldgenealogy.com/  
Our\\_Lady\\_of\\_Peace\\_1966.pdf](https://www.marshfieldgenealogy.com/Our_Lady_of_Peace_1966.pdf)

## More early history on the Parochial Schools in Marshfield can be found in this article:

[https://  
www.marshfieldgenealogy.com/  
Marsh-  
field\\_Parochial\\_School\\_History\\_-  
\\_1956.pdf](https://www.marshfieldgenealogy.com/Marshfield_Parochial_School_History_-_1956.pdf)

## Additional information can also be found on this property at the Wisconsin Historical Society:

[https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/  
Records/Property/H1137558](https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Property/H1137558)