

# Atlanta Catholic Centennial

## Introduction

OUR CITY'S CENTENNIAL: 1837 - 1937  
CATHOLICISM IN THE EARLY DAYS

This history of the Catholic Community of Atlanta, from its beginning through 1937, was published as a series of articles in the Saint Anthony's Parish News, Volumes 6 and 7, 1937-8. The first installment appeared in July 1937 as part of Atlanta's centennial celebrations.

The importance of this work by T. J. O'Keefe, the founding editor of this unique monthly is two-fold. It is the only printed history of our community from the earliest days, and it corrects oversights made by other writers (see Appendix).

May this be an interim testimonial to the big-heartedness and Catholic spirit of those who made Saint Anthony's Parish News, through the years.

My personal thanks to Sister Mary Carmel Najjar, C.S.J., who typed this manuscript.

Father John C. Kieran  
Saint Anthony's  
April 30, 1972

## Conception and Birth

The year 1837 saw the location of Atlanta actually determined by the driving of a stake at what is now the southwest corner of the junction of Central Avenue and Wall Street. This location was chosen by Stephen H. Long, Engineer-in-Chief of the authorized Western and Atlantic Railroad in compliance with an act of the Georgia Legislature and signed by Governor William Schley in December, 1836.

It is doubtful whether the Governor or any of the legislators had the slightest idea that they had ordered the selection of a site for a town, let alone the metropolis of Atlanta, when they ordered a point selected for a railroad junction. It is also very doubtful if any of them knew within a dozen miles of where the junction would be located.

Let us read what they ordered in the act, -- "a railroad communication as a State work, and with the funds of the State, shall be made from some point on the Tennessee line near the Tennessee River, commencing at or near Rossville, in the most direct and practical route to some point on the South-eastern bank of the Chattahoochee River, which shall be most eligible for the extension of branch railroads thence to Athens, Madison, Milledgeville, Forsyth and Columbus, and to any other points which may be designated by the engineer or engineers surveying the same as most proper and practicable, and on which the legislature may hereafter determine. Provided that no sum greater than three hundred and fifty thousand dollars shall be appropriated annually to the work contemplated by this act unless a future legislature shall otherwise direct."

This act was amended the next year: -- "That the Western and Atlantic Railroad shall continue from the southeastern bank of the Chattahoochee River, to some point, not exceeding eight miles, as shall be most eligible for the running of branch roads thence to Athens, Madison, Milledgeville, Forsyth and Columbus, and that the same shall be surveyed and located by the engineer-in-chief, upon the ground most suitable to answer the purposes herein expressed."

The Central of Georgia Railroad runs along the crest of a ridge from Macon to Atlanta without crossing even a creek. The Atlanta and West Point runs along the southeastern edge of the Piedmont Plateau which ends in a ridge forming the southeastern boundary of the Chattahoochee Valley for over fifty miles before crossing a small creek. The Georgia Railroad follows the edge of the Piedmont Plateau in the opposite direction. The ridge makes a sharp eastward turn at the site of the old Union depot and the Georgia railroad follows it to beyond Stone Mountain. The Western and Atlantic runs along the crest of a ridge between Procter and Peachtree Creeks to a high bluff at the Chattahoochee River bridge. In addition to this natural convergence of high ridges, the location of Atlanta is the most practical northern point for traffic around the southern end of the Blue Ridge Mountains. You might say that God formed this spot for a city when the mighty powers of natural forces formed its topography.

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## Names of the city

After the location of the railroad junction it was called Terminus, but it was two years before a house, intended for a home, was built. John Thrasher built a house in 1839 and used it for a home and commissary. It was on Marietta Street where the Federal Reserve Bank now stands, and was not much better than the shanties that had been used by the railroad hands.

For the next three years only a few people made the new settlement their home. In 1842 the first child, Julia Carlisle, was born. Also in this year the first railroad engine entered Atlanta. It was brought from Madison, Georgia, on a wagon drawn by sixteen mules. The Western and Atlantic Railroad had been completed from Terminus to Marietta and on December 24, 1842, the engine, pulling a box car, made the trip from Terminus to Marietta, Georgia. In 1843 the settlement was incorporated and was named Marthasville, after the youngest daughter of former Governor Wilson Lumpkin. The people of the village did this to honor him because of the interest he had shown in the new town.

To those who visioned a great city the name of Marthasville did not seem appropriate. The Georgia Railroad from Augusta to the new town was completed in 1845, the first train running through from Augusta to Marthasville September 15, 1845. This event led to the changing of the name of the fast growing town. We will quote Mr. Richard Peters:

Atlanta, Georgia  
May 9, 1871

Mr. W. R. Hanleiter –

Dear Sir:

In answer to your note, asking me to give you some information relative to the naming of Atlanta, I will state that in the year 1845, J. Edgar Thompson, Esq., the present distinguished civil engineer and railroad king, was chief engineer of the Georgia Railroad. Atlanta was then known as Marthasville. At that date I was the superintendent and resident engineer of the finished portion of the road, from Augusta to Covington, and it became part of my duty to arrange the freight lists and to notify the public of the opening of the road from Covington to Marthasville.

I was not satisfied with the name given, a point that, even at that early day, had become somewhat notorious by the Hon. John C. Calhoun, who, on passing through to the Memphis convention, prophesied a great city in the future. I wrote to Mr. Thompson, who then resided in Madison, asking him to think of a name that would suit the place better. His reply was, in substance, as follows: 'Eureka -- Atlanta, the terminus of the Western and Atlantic Railroad. Atlantic, masculine; Atlanta, feminine -- a coined word -- and if you think it will suit, adopt it'. I was delighted with the suggestion and in a few days issued the circulars adopting the name, and had them generally distributed throughout Georgia and Tennessee, and at the next session of the Legislature, the act of incorporation was changed by inserting Atlanta in place of Marthasville.

Yours truly,  
Richard Peters

The depot was named Atlanta and the name grew in use and popularity and was adopted by the people of Marthasville and on December 29, 1847, the Legislature passed an act incorporating the City of Atlanta. And our city has continued to be -- ATLANTA.

While we have outlined the official conception in 1835 and 1836 of a railroad junction, and the city's birth in 1837 by actual location of the point called Terminus, we should remember there were people living in what is now Atlanta earlier than 1837. Hardy Ivy bought a farm in 1833, the southwestern corner being a little to the east of the present intersection of Pryor Street and Edgewood Avenue. He built a log cabin about three-quarters of a mile east and somewhat to the north of this point, his house being within the original city limits of Atlanta. He built his house about 1833 and became unintentionally the oldest inhabitant within these first city limits.

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Actually the first community of settlers inside the present city limits were right here in West End about two blocks from the present location of St. Anthony's Church, and it was from this settlement that Atlanta received its first popular, if not official, name -- Whitehall.

Our original citizen of West End was Charner Humphries. He built White Hall House, a public inn, on the block now bounded by Lee, Oak, Whitehall and Zachry Streets. Although this section was not annexed to Atlanta until after his death, he was possessed with what was known in later years as the "Atlanta Spirit." He was progressive and was the first person in this region to paint his house. His inn was a two-story building and was painted white. White Hall was built between 1825 and 1833. Militia Musters were held at this settlement. In 1837 at a committee meeting of Georgia Baptists appointed to organize Mercer University, Whitehall was suggested as a location because of the convergence of the future railroads and travel at this point it was believed would develop into a large commercial center. The suggestion came near to adoption. This community which developed into West End was outside the original one-mile radius which marked Atlanta's original city limits and was not annexed until November 20, 1893.

This city was called Atlanta when it was officially Marthasville; it was called Whitehall when it was officially Terminus, so we will list its name in the order of their popular use: Whitehall, Terminus, Marthasville, Atlanta.

## Early Catholic missionaries

Many of the earliest settlers of Atlanta were railroad men. They comprised men of various religious beliefs. Many of them were Catholics. Missionary priests from Augusta and Macon followed the construction of the railroads from their beginning and administered to the spiritual needs of the Catholics. Father John Barry afterwards bishop, and Father Gregory Duggan working from Augusta, Georgia, and Father Francis Shannahan working from Macon, Georgia, are known to have done missionary work among the early Catholics and it was probably one of these who celebrated the first Mass in Atlanta. Some claim that Father Barry celebrated the first Mass in the house of Patrick Lynch or Michael McCullough in 1845. Others claim that Father Shannahan celebrated the first Mass in the house of Patrick Lynch.

Other missionary priests who, it is believed, did work in the service of the Master in this new settlement were: Father Timothy Bermingham of Columbus, Father Peter Whelan of Locust Grove, Father John Graham of Columbus and Macon, Father J. J. O'Connell of Macon, Father J. F. O'Neill, Sr., and Father Edward Ouigley of Savannah. Their work and their parishes covered a vast amount of territory and the boundaries were not definitely outlined.

For a priest to offer Mass in a house or residence in a community where there is no church is nothing unusual, and to the pioneers who were undergoing the hardships and strain of the early days the need for recording the dates of the first services in any location were deemed unnecessary. To them the fact that they had the opportunity to attend divine services was enough. The zeal and nobility of the above mentioned missionary priests is reasonable proof that Mass was celebrated here before 1845.

Documentary history of Catholicity in Atlanta commenced with the record book Register of the Catholic Church of Atlanta and the counties which may be attached to that mission. The first date is August 9, 1846, which records the baptisms of George Washington Shipley, Sarah Lavinia Shipley and Mary Divers. The Rev. Father John Barry, V. G., administered the sacraments. Sacraments administered at the residence of Mr. Terence Doonan. His residence was on the east side of Whitehall Street between Alabama and Hunter Streets at about where the old Nunnally's Candy Store was located. An old square top piano was used as an altar. Later Mr. Doonan built a residence on the west side of Whitehall Street a little north of Garnett Street (now Trinity Avenue). An old book cabinet which now belongs to Miss Katherine Lovette was also used as an altar in these early days before the construction of a church. Mr. Terence Doonan was one of the civil engineers who built the Georgia Railroad from Augusta to Atlanta. Father Barry, V. G., left the book containing the early records of the church in his care.

## Early church edifices

In 1845 a one-room house was built on what is now the northeast corner of Pryor and Houston Streets which was used as a school during the week and as a house of worship on the Sabbath. It was a union church, Sunday school and school

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house and open to the use of all denominations. This was, you might say, Atlanta's first church building. It is stated by one historian that, "The Catholics held their first public services in 1848, in the school-house, the Rev. Mr. Quinn officiating." However, this has not been verified.

The years 1847 and 1848 saw the construction of the first church buildings to be used by the different religious denominations. In fact, it would appear as if each wished to construct the first church. To the Baptists goes the honor of starting the first church, but the Methodists claim the honor of the first dedication. The Methodists dedicated their first church in March, 1848, where the Candler Building now stands. The Baptists dedicated their first church on July 5, 1848, at the present north corner of Walton and Forsyth Streets where the Federal Building or "old post office," as it is called, now stands. The Episcopalians built the fourth church on the east corner of Washington and Hunter Streets. It was completed in 1849. The Presbyterians organized January 8, 1848, but did not build a church until several years later. It was dedicated July 4, 1852. It was built where the Federal Reserve Bank now stands.

The Catholics erected the third church building in Atlanta on the spot where the present Immaculate Conception Church now stands at the corner of Loyd (now Central Avenue) and East Hunter Streets. The lot on which the church was built was on the south corner of Loyd and East Hunter and was of an area of approximately one acre. It was conveyed from Daniel McScheffrey to Ignatius Reynolds, Bishop of Charleston, and his successors in office for church purposes for \$300.00. The deed was dated February 23, 1848, and was recorded August 9, 1848. The church was built in 1848 or early in 1849. That the Catholics of Atlanta were preparing to build a church even earlier has documentary proof. As early as June 23, 1847, Terence Doonan conveyed to Bishop Reynolds an acre lot for the site of a Catholic Church. This was located in Block 17, Lot 4, of Atlanta.

## First to organize

Although the Baptists and Methodists occupied and used their churches a few months earlier than the Catholics, it would appear that the Catholics were the first denomination to organize their church in Atlanta.

The Episcopalians held their first services in Atlanta in the house of Samuel G. Jones in 1846. In all probability either then or soon after that date their church in Atlanta was organized, because on April 13, 1847 Samuel Mitchell donated a lot for their church at Washington and Hunter Streets. Their first missionary rector was Rev. John J. Hunt, who served from 1847 to 1849.

The First Baptist Church of Atlanta was organized in January, 1847. The first pastor was a missionary, Rev. D. G. Daniell. He served from 1848 to 1850.

The Methodists organized Wesley Chapel in 1847. It became a regular appointment of the Decatur circuit. Rev. Anderson Ray, Sr., and Rev. E. W. Spear, Jr., were the preachers in charge during the first year.

The Presbyterians organized the Presbyterian Church of Atlanta, January 8, 1848. Rev. J. S. Wilson of the Decatur Presbyterian Church was the first minister. He served for five years.

There were a number of Jewish families in Atlanta as early as 1847 but they had not organized a congregation. Divine services were held in the homes of the different families. A number of years later the Hebrew Benevolent Society was organized and became the Hebrew Benevolent Congregation in 1867.

The Catholics were well organized in August, 1846. An old book still in existence, Register of the Catholic Church of Atlanta and the counties which may be attached to that mission, contains entries of baptisms on August 8, 1846; marriages August 11, 1846, and other valuable information. The first convert to Catholicism recorded was Elizabeth Mann, who was baptized October 16, 1846. This written evidence proves the Catholics of Atlanta were well organized in 1846. Father John Barry was the missionary priest in charge from 1846 to 1849 and Father John Francis Shannahan from 1849 to 1850. Father J. F. O'Neill, Jr., was the missionary priest in charge in 1850 and on February 13th, 1851, was appointed as resident pastor of the Atlanta church by the Right Reverend F. X. Gartland, Bishop of Savannah.

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## [Priests of the early days](#)

Some of the priests who served at the first Catholic church after Atlanta became a separate parish in 1851 until the dedication of the present Immaculate Conception Church on December 10, 1873, besides its first resident pastor, Father J. F. O'Neill, Jr., were Father J. F. O'Neill, Sr., an uncle of the pastor, Fathers James Hasson, P. J. Kirby, Thomas O'Reilly, M. Cullinan, H. P. Clavreul, Terence Scollan, John B. Duggan, William Quinlan and John McCarthy.

To cover the magnificent work of these men would require more space than we can give, however, we cannot pass Rev. Father Thomas O'Reilly without a word. In 1861, Father Thomas O'Reilly was appointed pastor of the Atlanta Catholic Church and missions. He remained pastor throughout the period of the War Between the States. Throughout the period of the war, Father O'Reilly and his assistants rendered loyal service to the Confederacy. They were also true priests and in the performance of the duties of their sacred office, they knew no distinction between Northerner or Southerner. It was but natural that as pastor of the Catholic Church in Atlanta he should soon become acquainted with Catholics in the Federal Army who attended the church during their occupancy of Atlanta. He never lost an opportunity to intercede for Atlanta and its inhabitants and secured for them many favors. The aid and assistance that he rendered Atlanta was perhaps greater than any other man of that period.

In the autumn of 1864, when the order was given by the Federal commander to destroy Atlanta, the Catholic Church, the Second Baptist Church and the Central Presbyterian Church were on the block bounded by Washington, Hunter, Loyd (now Central Avenue) and Mitchell Streets. The City Hall which was also used as the Court House occupied the block where the State Capitol building now stands. St. Phillips Church occupied the east corner of Washington and Hunter Streets. The Trinity Methodist Church at that time was on Mitchell Street and faced the block where the Capitol building now stands between Washington and McDonough (now Capitol Avenue) Streets. It was through the intercession of Father Thomas O'Reilly with the Federal commander that all of these important structures as well as all the residences and other structures in this area and facing it were saved.

Father O'Reilly was one of the most beloved citizens of Atlanta. He died at Virginia Springs where he had gone to try to restore his health which had been fast failing him. The train bearing his body arrived in Atlanta on September 9, 1872, and was met by the largest crowd that had ever gathered at the Union Depot. Many of the men were crying as were the women and children. He is buried beneath the altar of the present Immaculate Conception Church, which at that date was under construction. Father O'Reilly was only 41 years old at the time of his death.

Father William Quinlan, a frequent visitor of Father Clark at St. Anthony's Church, celebrated Mass in the first Church when a young priest. He was assistant pastor in 1873. In 1876-7-8, and again from 1907-15 he was assistant pastor at the present Immaculate Conception Church. Father Quinlan died in Atlanta June 3, 1933, after sixty-two years of service in the holy priesthood. St. Anthony's was privileged and honored to have his sacred remains lie in state in our church until their removal to Savannah for burial.

## [Atlanta in two dioceses](#)

When Terminus was first definitely located in 1837 it was in the diocese of Charleston, S.C. This See, established July 12, 1820, included South Carolina, North Carolina and Georgia. Right Reverend John England, the first Bishop of Charleston, was still the shepherd of the Catholics who were scattered through this vast territory. Bishop England died April 11, 1842, and was succeeded by Right Reverend Ignatius A. Reynolds, who was Bishop of Charleston until his death on March 9, 1855. In 1839, Bishop England stated there were but eleven priests in Georgia. There is no record that Bishop England was ever in our city. But Bishop Reynolds was in Atlanta and dedicated the first Immaculate Conception Church. On February 22, 1848, he administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to a class of twelve.

The new Diocese of Savannah was created in 1850 by Pius IX and its first bishop, Rt. Rev. F. X. Gartland, was consecrated on September 10, 1850. Atlanta then became a part of the new See of Savannah. Bishop Gartland was in Atlanta in June, 1854. He confirmed a class of nineteen on June 28, 1854. Immediately afterwards he returned to Savannah where an epidemic of yellow fever had broken out and in less than three months he had succumbed to that dread disease while caring for the members of his flock.

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The second Bishop of Savannah was the Right Reverend John Barry. When Father Barry was performing noble work in the little town of Atlanta he was pastor of Augusta and the missions attached and he was also Vicar General of the Diocese of Charleston. After the creation of the new See of Savannah he was made its Vicar General in 1853. After the death of Bishop Gartland he was administrator of the diocese and on August 2, 1857, was consecrated Bishop of Savannah. Bishop Barry was in Atlanta in 1858, and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to a class in the first church, which he did much to organize and which he served as a missionary. He only lived two years after his consecration as bishop. He died November 21, 1859.

Before the completion of the new church three other bishops were appointed to the See of Savannah. Right Reverend Augustus Verot served from 1861 to 1870 during the trying period of the war. Right Reverend Ignatius Persico, afterwards cardinal, from 1870 to 1872, and Right Reverend William H. Gross, C. SS. R., who dedicated the present Immaculate Conception Church was consecrated April 27, 1873. He was Bishop of Savannah until 1885.

## Other parishes and churches

To undertake the construction of the present Immaculate Conception Church after the devastation wrought by the War Between the States and the losses suffered by the citizens required an abounding faith in the future of Atlanta. This grand token of love for our Divine Master that was wrought in the building of this church, which was commenced in 1869, has not been surpassed in this city to the present day.

The first break in the single parish of Atlanta occurred on February 28, 1880, when Sts. Peter and Paul parish was established. It consisted of a congregation of between two and three hundred people. The church was built on an elevated lot on Marietta Street at a point which would approximately face Jones Avenue. Father P. H. McMahon was the first pastor.

Due to a number of reasons it was deemed advisable to make a change in this parish. In 1897, Bishop Thomas A. Becker established the Sacred Heart parish and put it in charge of the Fathers of the Society of Mary. The Sacred Heart church was built and the dedication took place on May 1, 1898. The old parish of Sts. Peter and Paul was discontinued. New boundary lines were established between the Immaculate Conception and Sacred Heart parishes. The Sacred Heart Parish included practically all of the north half of Atlanta. The first pastor was Rev. Father William Gibbons.

St. Anthony's parish was established in 1903. It included the section known as West End. Rev. Father O. N. Jackson was the first pastor. The original congregation was composed of less than fifty people including children. The first chapel was composed of three rooms of an old frame house which was purchased with money raised by the parishioners. The balance of the house was used for the study, office and residence of the pastor. This building, which at one time or another has served for every purpose required of a parish building, was finally abandoned on the completion of the new rectory and its occupation in December, 1936. It was demolished only last month after thirty-four years of good use by the parish.

Through continuous and devoted work the pastor and his parishioners raised money to build the basement of the present church. The basement was dedicated June 13, 1911, by Rt. Rev. Benjamin J. Keiley, D. D. Steps were soon taken to raise money to complete the church but due to the outbreak of the World War they were discontinued and the church was not completed until many years later. It was dedicated by Most Rev. Michael J. Keyes, D. D., on January 14, 1924.

The Sacred Heart parish grew to the extent that the congregation was too large for the church, so in 1936 plans were made for a new parish. On April 11, 1936, Bishop O'Hara purchased the old Ku Klux Klan headquarters at 2699 Peachtree Street. The first Mass was celebrated August 15, 1936, at 1:30 P. M., daylight saving time. A portable altar was placed on the porch and the congregation was on the lawn where chairs had been placed for their accommodation. The first Mass was celebrated by Very Rev. Joseph E. Moylan, V. F. A portion of the first floor was remodeled into a pretty chapel. Other rooms were used for study, office, meeting rooms for parish societies and residence for the parish priests. Plans were soon drawn for a church and school and these are under construction at the present date.

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On April 15, 1937, Atlanta was made a co-Cathedral city with Savannah, changing the name of the diocese to Savannah-Atlanta. Christ the King parish was chosen by our bishop, Most Rev. Gerald P. O'Hara, as his Atlanta residence. The new church when completed will be a co-Cathedral church.

The ground for the new church and school was dedicated October 25, 1936, by Bishop O'Hara. The parish of Christ the King was taken from the northern portion of Sacred Heart parish, the boundary being Chattahoochee River to Southern Railway, along Southern Railway to Rock Springs Road and thence north to Wildwood.

When our former Bishop, Rt. Rev. Benjamin J. Keiley, was a young man finishing his theological studies in Rome, Italy, one of his college-mates was a young Syrian, who, in after years, became Father Paul Azar.

About 1911 a young Syrian residing in Atlanta, Mr. Thomas Najjar, saw the need of a Maronite Syrian Church for his countrymen in Atlanta. He wrote Bishop Keiley regarding their needs and the Bishop promptly gave the spiritual care of the Georgia Syrians to his old friend, Father Paul Azar. Services were first held in a small chapel on Butler Street near Grady Hospital.

With the increase in membership a house was purchased at the southeast corner of Fort and Hunter Streets. In the fall of 1919 part of this residence was remodeled into St. Joseph's Church. Father N. Aitallah was then pastor. The present pastor is Father Paul Risk. Bishop O'Hara celebrated Mass there shortly before leaving for the Eucharistic Congress last December.

In 1912 Our Lady of Lourdes Church was erected by Father Ignatius Lissner, S. M. A. Father Lissner is the Provincial of the Lyons African Missionaries in the U. S. A. Bishop Keiley had given this order entire charge of the Negro Catholics in Georgia, and his church was erected for the colored Catholics of Atlanta. Services were held in an adjoining house during construction of the church.

The number of colored Catholics in Atlanta are few in proportion to the Negro population, but there have been some colored Catholics here even during slavery days. At the old Immaculate Conception Church, there is recorded as early as "August 13, 1851 -- Frederick Gabriel Fitzgerald, slave of Ellen Fitzgerald, baptized."

Father Lissner, S. M. A., is in Atlanta now while Father F. J. Weiss, S. M. A., the pastor, is on a vacation. Father Lissner was a good friend of Father Jackson and stayed at St. Anthony's quite often when he first came to Atlanta. He has served forty-six years in the priesthood.

## Catholic chapels

In addition to the Catholic Churches briefly outlined there are at present a number of Catholic chapels in Atlanta where Mass is celebrated either daily or weekly.

Two of these are on Federal Government property. At Fort McPherson Mass is celebrated every Sunday for the benefit of the Catholics and any others who desire to attend, at this Military Reservation. The Marist Fathers of the Sacred Heart Parish are in charge of this post. For those unfortunate inmates of the United States Prison who desire to have spiritual solace to aid their weary days of confinement and to help make them good citizens on their release, a chapel is provided for services. Mass is celebrated here every day. Rev. Father Herman J. Deimel is chaplain. Father Deimel is well known in St. Anthony's parish where he was formerly assistant pastor. Father Deimel, we are happy to say, still makes St. Anthony's rectory his residence.

At St. Joseph's Infirmary a beautiful chapel has been erected for the benefit of the Sisters of Mercy who operate this hospital, also for the nurses and for patients who desire and are physically able to attend divine services. Mass is celebrated here every day by the Marist Fathers of the Sacred Heart Church, the hospital being only two blocks from the Sacred Heart Church.

There are four convents at present in Atlanta which have private chapels for the convenience of the nuns who teach the parochial schools in their respective parishes. These chapels are for the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament at Our Lady of Lourdes Convent; Sisters of Mercy at Immaculate Conception Convent; Sisters of St. Joseph at Sacred Heart Convent; and Sisters of St. Joseph at St. Anthony's Convent. Mass is celebrated in these chapels by arrangement with the pastors of the parishes in which they are located.

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The Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart have been given charge of Christ the King parish school and in all probability it will not be many months before they will also have a chapel in their convent.

## The Diocese of Savannah-Atlanta

The progressive stages by which the Savannah-Atlanta Diocese gradually acquired its present status from its former existence as part of the American Missions in the vicariate of the London District is probably not known by all of our readers.

The history of Catholicity in the Thirteen Colonies is most interesting. During Colonial days the Vicar Apostolic of the London District held jurisdiction over the American colonies. About thirty priests attended the faithful who were found chiefly in Maryland and Pennsylvania, hence we find the beginnings of ecclesiastical organization in Catholic Maryland.

The last Vicar-Apostolic of the London District before the American Revolution was Dr. Richard Challoner, Bishop of Debra who was consecrated January 29, 1741. He died in January, 1781. His coadjutor, Right Rev. James Talbot, consecrated Bishop of Birtha, August 24, 1759, was actively in charge of the spiritual welfare of the Catholics in the Colonies at the time of the Revolution. When the Colonies declared their independence of England the intercourse between the London Vicariate and the Catholic priests and people of the thirteen colonies ceased.

At the solicitation of the American clergy, after peace had succeeded war, Pope Pius VI appointed Father John Carroll, a missionary priest and a native of Maryland, Prefect-Apostolic on July 23, 1785. His jurisdiction as a Prefect-Apostolic did not include the whole of the United States. Indian Missions in Maine, New York and the present state of Ohio, and settlements in the present states of Michigan, Indiana and Illinois were under the charge of the Bishop of Quebec. Florida, a part of which state was in later years included in the Diocese of Savannah was not at that time a part of the United States. It was under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Santiago de Cuba.

The clergy of the new Republic, about thirty in number, assembled at White Marsh under date of March 12, 1788, to send a petition to the Holy Father asking for the appointment of a Bishop for the new republic and suggesting Baltimore as the See. The Holy Father received the petition and granted that the clergy propose the priest for this exalted dignity, the first bishop for the new republics. Father John Carroll received 24 of the 26 votes. Pope Pius VI, on November 6, 1789, erected the See of Baltimore and appointed Father John Carroll the first Bishop. He was consecrated bishop in the chapel of Lulworth Castle, England, on August 15, 1790.

The See of Baltimore embraced the territory of the new republic, the church grew rapidly, new Sees were erected. The Catholics in the Southern states solicited the appointment of a bishop. The Diocese of Charleston, embracing North and South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, was erected June 12, 1820. The first Bishop of Charleston was the Right Rev. John England. He was consecrated September 21, 1820, in the church of St. Finbar, in the City of Cork, Ireland. The See of Charleston was erected by Pope Pius VII.

The Seventh Provincial Council of Baltimore, during the second private session of the Council on May 8, 1849, at the request of Bishop Reynolds, second Bishop of Charleston, petitioned the Holy See to erect the See of Savannah. Pope Pius IX erected the Diocese of Savannah. The papal document, Exigit Pastorale Munus, erecting the See of Savannah, is dated July 19, 1850. Right Rev. Francis Xavier Gartland, the first Bishop of Savannah, was consecrated on September 10, 1850, in Philadelphia. The Diocese of Savannah then comprised the State of Georgia and Florida east of the Apalachicola River. It covered an area of about 90,000 square miles. In 1857 the Holy See severed Florida from the Savannah jurisdiction. The See of Savannah embracing the State of Georgia.

Under date of January 5, 1937, the Holy See changed the name of the title of the See to the Diocese of Savannah-Atlanta. This decree was solemnly promulgated by Most Rev. Michael J. Curley, Archbishop of Baltimore, on the night of April 15, 1937, in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Savannah, Georgia. Most Rev. Gerald Patrick O'Hara, D. D., J., U. D., our present bishop, is the first bishop of the Diocese of Savannah-Atlanta. Before his appointment as Bishop of Savannah, His Excellency was auxiliary bishop of Philadelphia. He was consecrated Titular Bishop of Heliopolis on May 20, 1929, and was installed as Bishop of Savannah on January 15, 1936. The Savannah-Atlanta Diocese comprises the same territory as the recent Savannah Diocese, the State of Georgia.



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Part of the first construction work done in the city of Atlanta, the building of railroads, was done by Catholics. From its earliest days, Catholics have contributed their share toward the building of the city. In material structures, in education, in spiritual advancement, in the making of the highest type of citizenship they have helped make Atlanta a metropolis. They are justly proud that Atlanta on her centennial becomes a Cathedral City.

## Catholic worship and early conditions

To obtain a suitable lot on which to build and to erect a small wooden frame church from roughly sawed and roughly planed lumber by the Catholics of Atlanta in 1847 in 1848 required more sacrifices and more effort than would be required to build a handsome stone church today. The Catholic citizens of those early days possessed a strong faith in both their religion and in their newly born city.

The sacrifices and hardships undergone; the difficulties and obstacles overcome; the welcome sight of a visiting missionary; the joy of participating in the holy sacrifice of Mass is best told by one who lived in Atlanta at that time.

The first priest ordained from Atlanta was Rev. Father J. A. Doonan, S. J. In April 1909, he dictated the following personal recollections of "The Early Days of Catholicity in Atlanta" to his nephew, Rev. John B. Doonan, S. J. It is through the courtesy of this family, one of the oldest and most respected families in the city, that we are enabled to publish these "Personal Recollections."

"In 1846, my father, Terence Doonan, removed his little family from Augusta to establish business and a home at the terminus in the DeKalb County of the Western Atlantic and Georgia Railroads, then known as Marthasville, named from the daughter of the Governor of the state, the present site of the flourishing city of Atlanta. He carried with him a promise from Augusta's saintly pastor, Father John Barry, in later years the second Bishop of Savannah, that he himself would occasionally attend the religious wants of the family, a promise for many years faithfully redeemed. Of the Apostolic spirit of Father Barry, aglow with the charity of Christ, evidence is furnished by the fact that he took under his roof, housing and supporting them, numbers of orphan boys, left homeless and unprotected after the fearful cholera epidemic in the decade '30. To consuming zeal this good priest united personal sanctity, the outcome of a true spirit of prayer and love of mortification.

"Tradition has it that before our arrival Mass had been said in Atlanta for a little band of Catholics employed in the construction of the railroad -- the celebrant, a missionary, whose name has not come down to us. Our first house, a frame building on Whitehall Street, between Alabama and Hunter on the site on which Nunnally's now stands, was one of the earliest erected in the village. In this unpretentious home all the early Masses, previous to the erection of the first Church, were offered and the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance administered. An ordinary bureau placed in front of the wooden mantle over the fireplace served as an Altar. In those primitive days pageants were unknown. Occasional parades of Masons and Odd Fellows furnished to a child's eye the only attractive display in reach; so that on a Sunday morning, when I saw offering Holy Mass at my mother's bureau a priest robed in red vestments, the splendor of his appearance cast under a shadow the glitter of the dazzling Masonic regalia and perhaps caused the first stirrings of the desire some day to don a similar glowing garb.

"Not for several years had the handful of Catholics in Atlanta the services of a resident pastor, meanwhile being dependent, thanks to Father Barry, upon the administrations of occasional visiting priests. These ordinarily were the guests of my father's family. To my brother and myself, despite what seemed an infliction -- the protracted night prayers invariably recited by the priest for his assembled flock -- such visits were warmly welcomed as they furnished an excuse for the two of us to make a house to house visitation of the few Catholic families to announce the ever gladsome tidings of Mass to be said the next morning in our house. For such welcome news recompense was immediate and abundant in jacket-pockets stuffed with cakes and apples. The arrival in the home of perhaps the first piano introduced into Atlanta was welcomed not so much for the prospective pleasure of music to be drawn from it as for the suggestion immediately made when taken from its packing-case: 'What a fine altar it will make!' a holy use to which it was ever afterwards put until the opening of the first frame church.

"Of the holy men who served Atlanta's little flock in those early days, three bore the name of O'Neill, two -- uncle and nephew -- having the same Christian name, Jeremiah F., familiarly though respectfully distinguished as 'Old Father Jerry'

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and 'Young Father Jerry.' The elder of these two priests was a missionary, cast in the true mold of a hero. Seemingly immune from fatigue under labor however hard and protracted, the strength of this septuagenarian apparently waxed more vigorous under the hardships and privations of his truly apostolic life. He was a very ready speaker, given to polemical rather than devotional sermons. More than once I was sent from the sacristy to survey the congregation and report approximately upon the number of Protestants present. Upon the percentage reported I found by experience depended the length of the sermon. Both uncle and nephew were men of fine culture, for their opportunities well versed in philosophy and theology, and for their day exceptionally good linguists and musicians. The elder was an excellent performer on the flute, the younger on the violin and flute also. His musical attainments served the elder missionary in good stead on a journey through North Carolina with John England, the first occupant of the see of Charleston. Journeying through the western country of the old North State, largely populated by Scotch Presbyterians, Bishop England and Father O'Neill halted at sunset before the cabin of one of the mountaineers, asking hospitality for the night, and supper. They were met with refusal. With his ready Irish wit, Father O'Neill pleaded with the mountaineer for a supper for their horse, adding with a twinkle in his eye, 'The beast is a Papist only under compulsion.' As one of the stable hands led the horse to his supper, Bishop England walking under the pine trees began the recitation of his office, Father O'Neill meanwhile, seated on the woodpile beside the cabin door, played upon his flute *The Last Rose of Summer*. His success confirms the statement of one of England's master singers, 'Music hath charm to soothe the savage breast.' For as he replaced his flute within the pocket of his outer coat, the farmer turning to Bishop England said. 'Mister, if you make your man play that over again, you can both have supper and beds here tonight.'

"As has already been said, Father Jerry, senior, was a ready speaker. Precise truth seems to demand a qualification of this statement. He was ever ready to begin, but by no means equally ready to conclude his sermon. In illustrations of this distinction another incident of his missionary labors in Georgia may be recorded. He had arranged to receive into the Church a certain Mrs. Taylor; and announced that the ceremony of Baptism was to take place before the celebration of High Mass in the country school house, where he was to conduct Divine Service. On the given Sunday, in due time, Father O'Neill appeared before a congregation largely non-Catholic, which filled the principal room of the little school house. Turning to the kneeling neophyte and those present he said that he would explain in a few words the ceremony which they were about to witness. He began at 10:30 A. M. and as usual became oblivious to the passing of time. The expectant congregation had all but despaired witnessing anything in the shape of ceremony or ritual, when the venerable missionary producing his watch remarked, a benignant smile playing upon his countenance, 'It is now past the hour when it is permitted me to begin the celebration of Holy Mass, but if you will come next Sunday, Good Friends, we will try again and hope to get through.'

"The younger Father O'Neill was the first resident pastor of Atlanta, and for several years a beloved member of our household, in which his presence by each and every member thereof was regarded as a benediction. Under his supervision was erected the first frame church of Atlanta, to which the title of Immaculate Conception was attached, even many years before the definition of that dogma. Circumstances attending the dedication of this humble temple remain indelibly impressed upon my memory. Bishop Reynolds, the successor of the immortal England in the see of Charleston, then exercising jurisdiction over both the Carolinas and Georgia, had come to Atlanta, accompanied by several of his priests for the dedication. On arriving in our home he discovered, when he opened his trunks, that he had failed to place therein a copy of the Pontificale, containing the ritual for the functions to be performed. It must be remembered that in those days the telegraph was an unknown servitor of man, and our modern express service had yet to be perfected. To procure in season the missing Pontificale, it was necessary to call into requisition the services of two brothers, Irish Catholics, Sheridan by name, locomotive engineers on the Georgia railroad. At that time this railroad ran two trains in the twenty-four hours, one by day and one night. The engineer of the day run to Augusta, was directed to go at once on his arrival in that city to the parsonage, secure the missing volume and give it to the care of his brother for the night run back to Atlanta. I perfectly recall how on the morning of the day set for the dedication, Bishop Reynolds and attendant priests, surrounded by members of the family, stood on the rear porch of the Whitehall Street house, straining eyes to catch the first glimpse of white steam rising from Mr. Sheridan's locomotive, and the quickly delivered mission entrusted to myself to hurry down by the pathway through the woods, since supplanted by the Temple Court and other of Atlanta's prominent buildings, to the car shed, get the desired book and place it into the hands of the Bishop.

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“The little frame Church, neither in its interior or exterior, could lay claim to any beauty. Rudely constructed pews, untouched by paint, unrelieved by cushions, filled the main floor of the edifice; said being made of roughly planed pine boards having its only suggestion to the title of ornamentation in the frequently recurring pine knot-holes. One of these holes was responsible in after years for the suspension of a marriage ceremony. The groom on the occasion referred to, was, as is still the wont of grooms in similar cases, a victim of considerable nervousness; and as he extracted from his pocket the wedding ring, he fumbled it and let it fall. The eyes of the interested congregation watched it rolling in dangerous proximity to one of the pine knot-holes, through which before it could be rescued it fell, necessitating the retirement of the writer, then an acolyte, to crawl beneath the Church and recover the missing symbol of conjugal fidelity.

“How meagre were the facilities for equipping even so modest a church as that first erected in Atlanta may be inferred from the fact that the first holy water font was fashioned by a tinsmith from a model cut in cardboard furnished from our home. Another incident illustrative of primitive conditions may be recalled. I was serving Mass in the little church, young Father O'Neill our pastor and our house guest being the celebrant, the congregation consisting exclusively of my mother; when the celebrant at the offertory removed the veil from the chalice, he discovered that there was no host upon the paten. Signaling to me, he bade me inform my mother of the fact. She in turn ordered me to hurry home and have my aunt bake a host for the need. This was done at the ironing board by the deft use of two flat irons, one inverted, its handle placed between two bricks set on their edge. A spoonful of flour paste dropped upon the heated iron was then baked by having the second iron superimposed. Ordinarily this process had to be repeated several times before a host of the required whiteness and unscorched could be trimmed for the Holy Sacrifice. Naturally both my aunt and myself were eager on this occasion to secure one such. Yet for myself I contrived to suppress all useless anxiety and futile hurry by the reflection, 'Nothing can be done at the altar till I get back with the host.'

“Among the prominent members of the congregation of those early days, a few cherished names still linger in my memory: the brothers Lynch, three or four, two of whom had large families; William Mann, our next door neighbor on Whitehall Street, my godfather, his estimable wife and four sons. Most eminent among our little flock was Mrs. Daniel Dougherty, a lady held in high esteem for many amiable qualities not less than for her stalwart Catholicity. One of my earliest services as an acolyte for a ministering priest in Atlanta was as an attendant to the administration of the last rites to the father of Mrs. Dougherty, a Mr. Connelly, a venerable and staunch Catholic of the primitive Irish type. On the occasion of my last visit to Atlanta, Mr. Connelly's great-great-granddaughter helped to furnish music at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in the old convent, which used to adjoin the Church of The Immaculate Conception. So memory carries me back along the line of five succeeding generations. The Malones and the Cannons were also devout and faithful members of the congregation.

“The first visit of Savannah's first Bishop, Right Rev. F. X. Gartland, was a noteworthy event in the Catholic circles of Atlanta. It occurred in the spring of '51 or '52. For many days his coming an event eagerly looked for particularly in our home, where he was to lodge as a guest, furnished the general topic of conversation; it was, too, an occasion of no little preparation in Atlanta's solitary place of Catholic worship. He arrived shortly after midnight; the pastor of the church though in consequence that he would not rise at an early hour for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, and had therefore made no preparation for his escort to the church. The writer early in the morning at play on the sidewalk before our home saw descending the stairway an ecclesiastic, a stranger to his eyes, of very gracious and imposing presence. Approaching the boy, who immediately concluded that this must be the Bishop, the stranger asked him if he could serve Mass and knew the way to the church. Both questions answered in the affirmative, the Bishop and the child, not a little elated at the importance thus suddenly thrust upon him started together for the church, which stood then on the same site as it does today on the corner of Central Avenue and Hunter Street. Knowing that in view of the approaching episcopal visit, preparations under the care of the ladies of the congregation directed by the pastor had been in process for several days, the prospective acolyte was anxiously cherishing the hope that the new Bishop would find everything entirely to his taste and in strict accord with the rubrical requirements. No slight jar was given these same hopes, when on entering the church the first object to catch the eye was an article of altar linen lying upon the floor at our feet, where evidently it had been accidentally dropped by some busy workers the night before. Stooping to pick it up, I made the best apologetical explanation that my disturbed feelings would permit. Needless to say the incident was not referred to by either the Bishop or his acolyte when at the breakfast table an hour later both met the pastor and the lady director of the Sanctuary Society.”

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## Early schools

In 1837 when Terminus was first located there were no Public Schools in Georgia. Private schools and Denominational schools were the means employed outside of private homes and tutors for the education of the children.

From its birth until 1845 we find no record of schools of any kind being operated in the new settlement. It seems it was customary in the early days of this city to call private schools by the name of "Academies," regardless of what they taught or how advanced were the studies taught.

In 1845 a lady by the name of Miss Martha Reed opened a private school in a small shanty built where the new Municipal Garage is now located. (The Municipal Garage is located on the Georgia Railroad, between Martin and King Streets.) This was probably the settlement's first school. She ran this schools for several years.

The Union Church and School, a picture of which appeared in our July edition was generally regarded as the first school. It was built in 1845. A number of boys who later became prominent Atlanta citizens attended it. Professor McGinty was the first school teacher. He was succeeded by Professor A N. Wilson. This schools was a log building about 15 by 30 feet and was located about the present northeast corner of Pryor and Houston Streets.

In 1847 Dr. N. L. Angier, a prominent man of his day, erected a building and opened a school. The building was unfinished on the inside. It did, however, have a school bell, which formerly was an important part of a school building. Following is an advertisement, which appeared in Southern Miscellany of December 4, 1847, for Dr. Angier's Academy. The last line in this ad must be a typographical error (or did they make them at that time?), where it says "Atlanta, October 23, 1846." The Southern Miscellany did not start publishing in Atlanta until July 2, 1847, although it had been published in Madison, Ga., for six years previous, and also Dr. William N. White, the principal, did not come to Atlanta until October 20, 1847.

From these early beginnings the Schools and Academies increased in number and size as the town grew into an important city. Atlanta Military Academy, Atlanta Medical College and Atlanta Female College were some of the early beginnings of a higher and more varied education in Atlanta, which boasts today of some of the finest educational institutions in the country.

## Public schools

The originals constitution of the State of Georgia adopted in 1777 stated that schools should be erected in each county and supported by the State. It was ninety-one years later at the Constitutional Convention of 1868 that the establishment of public schools was made mandatory. Professor Gustavus J. Orr prepared the laws for the State School System and was appointed first State School Commissioner.

The City of Atlanta took under consideration the establishment of public schools in 1852, but due to divided opinion the project was not successful. Six years later on September 10, 1858, a public meeting was held and a committee petitioned the City Council to establish public schools. Again it was not successful.

On September 24, 1869, Alderman D. C. O'Keefe introduced a resolution in the City Council to investigate the establishment of public schools. A committee was appointed and on November 26, 1869, Council adopted the resolution to establish public schools. One December 10, 1869, a board of education was appointed and on July 22, 1870, a bill was introduced in the State Legislature to permit the establishment of the public schools in Atlanta. It was approved September 30, 1870. On December 8, 1870, the proposal was submitted to the vote of the people and was approved. Work was quickly commenced on school buildings and by January, 1872, three schools buildings were completed. Mr. B. Mallon, of Savannah, was appointed Superintendent. One of the members of the first board of education was John H. Flynn, a prominent Catholic. He was also a member of the first investigating committee appointed.

Seven public schools were opened in 1872. Ivy Street Schools was the first public school opened in Atlanta. It was opened on January 31, 1872. Boys' High School, then at the southwest corner of Whitehall and Hunter Streets, was opened on February 1, 1872. Girls' High School, near the same location, but occupying a separate building, was opened

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on February 5. Crew Street School and Walker Street School were opened February 21. Decatur Street Schools opened February 27, and Luckie Street School opened February 29, 1872.

Although this was by no means a bad beginning for a new undertaking, the public school system has advanced until Atlanta has now one of the finest public school systems in the state. We all have visual evidence of these institutions in every part of the city, schools for both white and colored children.

Many of the most efficient teachers and principals in the public schools of Atlanta have been Catholic ladies.

In 1870 a census of school children between the ages of 6 and 18 years gave the number as 3,345 white and 3,129 colored children. The initial attendance when the public schools were established in 1872 was 1,844 children.

In the early days of the public schools of Atlanta there were no diplomas given to those who completed their high school course. They just finished their school course, took their books and left the school. At the exercises commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the public schools in 1872 the surviving members of the first graduating class of Atlanta Boys' High School were presented with diplomas.

## Catholic schools

The Catholic Church is not antagonistic to public schools, but the Catholic Church contends that no matter how efficient a public school may be, there is one element in the education of a child that is lacking. And that, the most important of all, his knowledge of God. Due to the various religious sects that exist in this country, it is not practical to teach religion in public schools. Therefore, Catholics pay their pro-rata share of taxes for public schools, and in addition pay for Catholic schools that their children may acquire a knowledge of God and a knowledge of other subjects in their proper relation to the Divinity.

“In 1873, Bishop Gross and prominent Catholic citizens of Atlanta attempted to obtain a division of school funds for the benefit of Catholic schools but the principle was held to be unsound and the petition was denied. The following year the petition of Bishop Gross for the establishment of Catholic schools by Council was likewise refused.” -- From the Story of the Immaculate Conception Parish, by Very Rev. Joseph E. Moylan, V. F.

In a recent issue of the Catholic Review an article regarding Catholic Schools contained the following interesting information: “Many citizens of the United States who are not members of the Catholic Church, and sometimes a few uninformed who are, wonder why Catholics maintain a separate system of public education for their own children. To some it seems that Catholics are deliberately running schools in opposition to the public schools. The tax-supported schools in their eyes are something pre-eminently American. Anything which dims their glory or casts the shadow of a doubt on their right to such a title is regarded as un-American and unpatriotic.”

“History does not bear them out. The founders of the nation never had any such idea. Catholic schools existed in American 200 years before anyone had any notion of such a thing as a public school and the United States existed as a nation fifty years before the public schools were generally accepted.” -- By Rev. Father Harold E. Kellar.

The Catholic Church has been a teacher and an educator for nearly two thousand years. Her educators are now and have been in the past second to none. The world today owes its thanks to the Catholic Church for much of its knowledge and much of value in its educational institutions. Public schools are efficient but they are not superior to Catholic schools.

## Catholic educators in Atlanta

Teachers in Catholic schools in Atlanta merge from religious to lay teachers and vice versa to the extent that it is rather difficult to entirely separate one from the other. There have been a number of Catholic schools, both parochial and others, taught by lay teachers. Lay teachers have assisted in teaching in schools operated by religious orders and other schools have been taught entirely by religious orders. Religious orders of nuns who have conducted schools in Atlanta are: Sisters of Mercy; Sisters of St. Joseph; Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart. Religious orders of priests engaged in educational work as a special vocation: Society of Mary.

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## *Early teachers*

In the days when Terminus was located, all of North Georgia was mission territory. Speaking of the early missionary days in Georgia and South Carolina, Rev. Father J. J. O'Connell says: "The clergymen became schoolteachers, even when the attendance was scarcely a half-dozen. Churches, schools, academies were established where needed, or wherever there was a prospect of patronage. In the ranks of the clergy was never found a money grabber. There never lived since the early ages a more detached body of men. They were homeless, penniless, often hungry and sick, and naked and unfriended." Further on Father O'Connell says it was generally with the Irish laborers that the priest found his accommodations. The first Catholics of this city were Irish laborers, so it is reasonable to believe that the first Catholic schools teachers were missionary priests.

The first Catholic lay school teacher who came to Atlanta of whom we have record was Mrs. Terence Doonan. Mrs. Doonan's residence in Atlanta began in 1846 when her husband moved here from Augusta, Georgia. Mrs. Doonan before her marriage was Ellen Barry. She and her sister, Elizabeth Barry, taught a school in Augusta before the Doonans located in Atlanta. Elizabeth Barry afterwards became Sister Isadore. In later years, after the War Between the States, Mrs. Doonan's daughters, Mary and Annie, assisted her in teaching their school. The Doonan school, at that time, was conducted in their home, which was located on the north corner of Whitehall and Garnett Streets. Mr. Doonan owned a greenhouse which was located on the corner and the house was a one-story wooden residence set back a considerable distance from Whitehall Street. Mrs. Doonan's daughter, Mary, married Mr. Charles Madden. Mrs. Mary Madden afterwards was organist at the Immaculate Conception Church for fifty years. Mrs. Doonan's daughter, Annie, entered the religious life in Baltimore, Maryland. She became a Visitation nun.

An early Catholic school was one taught by Mrs. Peavy in the sacristy of the first Immaculate Conception Church. She was succeeded in the work of teaching these classes by Miss Mittie Odena and Miss Louise Odena.

Adjoining the present Immaculate Conception Church property on Centrals Avenue, S. W., is a building known as the Red Men's Wigwam. Under present numbering system it is 160 Central Avenue, S. W. Since it was originally constructed this building has been altered and additions made to it several times, but the original building is still contained in the structure. The first building was a two-story brick building, almost square in construction, and was built on the west corner of the original Immaculate Conception Church property. It was built by Rev. Father Thomas O'Reilly, who became pastor of the Immaculate Conception parish in 1861. It was built for a Catholic School and was used as such until it was sold in 1901. Even today the outline of the original building can be easily traced by the difference in design, in material and in construction. The original window openings with their stone lintels are clearly recognizable though some have been filled in with brick. The difference in brick used in third floor walls is easily distinguished from those used in first and second floor walls. The store fronts that have been added on the street side and the comparatively new three-story addition in rear are of entirely different construction from the old building. The original building contained eight rooms.

In this building a Catholic school was taught by a number of lay school teachers, among whom were Professor P. D. Whelan, Professor T. S. Gillespie and Mrs. McKeon. This school was for both boys and girls.

## [The Sisters of Mercy](#)

With the closing days of 1866 the work of the Sisters of Mercy, the first organization of religious teachers in Atlanta, began in the historic building described above. Their teaching and other works, such as St. Joseph's Hospital, have continued with ever increasing vitality to the present day.

At the request of Bishop England the Sisters of Mercy came to Savannah and opened the present St. Vincent's Academy. Due to the large number of requests for Sisters of this organization they were unable to comply with his request until 1845, which was several years after his death. Rev. Father Thomas O'Reilly, who was pastor of the Immaculate Conception Church during the War Between the States, requested that a school be opened by the Sisters of Mercy in Atlanta. The Immaculate Conception Academy was established December 11, 1866. Mother M. Vincent Mahoney was the Superior. She had three assistants, Sister M. Jane Frances, Sister M. Stanislaus and Sister M. Angela. Sister M. Vincent came from Ireland.

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On the Sisters' arrival in this city, they were entertained by Mrs. John Ryan, who continued the same generous friend during her lifetime.

The Sisters conducted both a day school and a school for boarders. A day school has been conducted up to the present time. The boarding school was discontinued in 1924. Music is still taught. The Senior High School course was discontinued in 1918.

The girls' boarding school and day school were conducted in the Immaculate Conception Academy building. A part of this building was also used by the Sisters for their Convent.

Due to increased attendance the Sisters made an addition to the Immaculate Conception Academy building in 1882.

Some of the pupils who boarded at the Convent during the early days are now here, enjoying happy home life. Mother Vincent, the Foundress, and the other three Sisters who were the first to teach at the Immaculate Conception Academy, also many of the Sisters who taught afterwards, have long since gone to receive their reward after faithful service in the Lord's Vineyard.

## Boys' school established

In 1874 the Sisters of Mercy established a day school for boys on East Mitchell Street in the block opposite the present Atlanta City Hall building. This school was conducted in a four-room rented house that stood just to the rear of the old Second Baptist Church at Mitchell and Washington Streets. The school building faced Mitchell Street.

This school was opened in 1874. Sister M. Regis, Sister M. Frances and Sister M. Rose were the first teachers. Sister M. Rose is the only one of the three who is still in this world. She is stationed at St. Vincent's Academy in Savannah, Georgia. Sister M. Elizabeth, who celebrated her diamond jubilee as a Sister of Mercy on October 2, 1937, taught in this school in 1875, 1876 and 1877. This school for boys was conducted on Mitchell Street up until 1885.

From 1885 until 1889 the Boys' School was conducted by the Sisters of Mercy in the basement of the present Immaculate Conception Church building. The teachers were Sister M. Bonaventure, Sister M. Mechtilde and Sister M. Athanasius. All of these Sisters have departed this life.

About this time some of the hardy pioneer qualities of Atlanta Catholics must have begun to be dissipated by the conveniences of a metropolitan city. The school children's parents began to complain that a basement was an inappropriate place to conduct a school, so the school was closed in 1889. Sister M. Rose, at that time Superior of the Immaculate Conception Convent, made several attempts to secure a building that would be suitable for a school, but received little encouragement or co-operation, so the project was abandoned, much to the regret of those interested in Catholic education.

## Convent moved to Washington Street

In 1901 the Immaculate Conception School and Convent were moved from Central Avenue to a new location at the northwest corner of Washington Street and Woodward Avenue. The lot is large and elevated. The building facing Washington Street is the convent and was known as the old "Marsh House." It is an old building, but the best of materials and expert artisans made it superior to many buildings erected at the present day. This property was purchased by the Sisters at a cost of \$20,000. The old school house on Central Avenue was sold to the Red Men's Fraternal Organization. They remodeled the building, constructing stores on the street side and making a number of lodge halls and offices of the balance.

When the school was moved to Washington Street, Sister M. Irene Murphy was the Mother Superior. After twenty-three years the boarding school was discontinued. The day school, which is the Parochial school for the Immaculate Conception Parish, is conducted in a large building erected by the Sisters in 1901 and completed in 1902 in the rear of the Convent building. The school building faces Woodward Avenue and is directly across the street from Fulton County High School. The school course consists of nine grades which cover all subjects covered by public grammar and junior high schools, also music, and in addition the important subject of religion.

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The present teaching staff of the Immaculate Conception Academy consists of: Sister M. Michael, Superior and Principal, ninth grade; Sister M. Regina Joseph, seventh and eighth grades; Sister M. Columba, fifth and sixth grades; Sister M. Berchman, third and fourth grades; Sister M. Cecelia, first and second grades; Sister M. Carmel, music; Sister M. Elizabeth is in charge of the Convent.

## Saints Peter and Paul School

In 1884 a school was opened by the Sisters of Mercy in the newly established parish of Sts. Peter and Paul. The first school conducted by the Sisters in this parish was taught in a house which served both as rectory and school house. It was located on an elevated lot on the east corner of Marietta and Alexander Streets. It was directly across the street from the present Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing building at Jones Avenue and Marietta Street.

Sister M. Athanasius was the first Superior in charge of this school. She was assisted by Sister M. Leo. The Sisters at first lived at the convent on Loyd Street and went back and forth every day to teach. Some years later a Convent building was fitted up on Luckie Street (Luckie Street is the first street east of Marietta) and the Sisters were more conveniently situated for teaching the children. As the school children increased in numbers it was necessary to have more teachers. The number of Sisters at one time was six under the charge of Sister Mary Veronica, Mother Superior. The Convent and school were named the Sacred Heart by Most Rev. William H. Gross, Bishop of Savannah. This school was really the beginning of the present Sacred Heart School on Courtland Street.

We are fortunate in having a picture of the first class of school children in the old Sts. Peter and Paul parish. The picture also shows the original school building. The building served as a combination rectory and school building. It was a two-story wooden frame building with the chimneys at each end and built on the outside of structure. It had none of the modern conveniences, not even a bathroom. Electricity was not in use. Note a gas lamp used for street lighting. The upstairs was used as rectory and the ground floor as a school house. The school children are shown, some standing, some seated on the terrace and steps. Sisters Athanasius and Leo are shown standing on porch just in front of door. Father P. H. McMahon, the first pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul parish, is shown standing in front of large tree at extreme right of picture. On the same side of rectory that Father McMahon is standing, and only a short distance away, Sts. Peter and Paul church stood. It was a building about forty by sixty feet and seated three hundred people.

As the number of school children increased it was found necessary to fit up a separate school house. This was done. The new school faced Alexander Street and was directly in rear of rectory, or building shown in picture. About one hundred and twenty-five children attended this school.

Sts. Peter and Paul parish and school were discontinued with the establishment of the Sacred Heart parish. This parish included practically all of the old Sts. Peter and Paul parish and a large part of Immaculate Conception parish.

## School in Saint Anthony's Parish

On September 16, 1912, at the invitation of Rev. Father O. N. Jackson, the first pastor of St. Anthony's parish, the Sisters of Mercy established a Parochial School in St. Anthony's parish. The first school was held in the old rectory building that formerly stood on Ashby Street directly behind St. Anthony's Church. Three rooms of this building, which had formerly been used as a chapel before the completion of the basement auditorium of the church, were converted into school rooms. The following year, 1913, the house adjoining the rectory was purchased and converted into a school house.

Sister Mary Irene, the first Mother Superior, was sent here with Sister M. Aloysius as assistant by Mother M. Genevieve in charge of the Sisters of Mercy at Savannah, Georgia. They lived at the Convent on Washington Street and made the trip from there to St. Anthony's School and return every day, in rain, snow, sleet, good weather and bad weather on the street cars. It was necessary for them to transfer to make the trip. Old-timers will remember that street cars in those days were not as comfortable as those of today. It was a trying trip for anyone in bad weather.

The first school opened with an attendance of about fifty pupils. St. Anthony's Schools from their beginning have had some pupils from Catholic families in Fort McPherson to attend their schools. They have also had children of non-Catholic families attending. They have all been welcome.



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The Sisters of Mercy taught St. Anthony's Parochial School for four years. Besides the Sisters above mentioned, Sister M. Cleophus, Sister M. Loretta, Sister M. Catherine, Sister M. Melanie and Sister M. Conception taught in this school. The Sisters received the assistance of Miss Emma Corley and Miss Catherine Stocking who taught the first two grades. Miss Emma Corley is now Mrs. Godfrey Hoch. In June, 1917, the Sisters of Mercy resigned this school as the available teachers were needed elsewhere.

The building which was used as a parochial school by the Sisters of Mercy in St. Anthony's parish was located at No. 651 Ashby Street, S. W. It was not needed after the school was moved to Gordon Street and was disposed of by the parish.

## School for nursing

The work of the Sisters of Mercy in this city has not been limited to academic schools. One of their great achievements is the establishing of a hospital in Atlanta that has steadily increased in size and that has built a reputation for excellence in nursing and medical attention that few hospitals excel. This is St. Joseph's Infirmary, which was founded at its present location, No. 372 Courtland Street, N. E., fifty-eight years ago. The now great institute was begun in an humble manner, the Sisters planning and re-designing an old residence to make it suitable for hospital purposes.

St. Joseph's Infirmary was opened in 1880 by Sisters of Mercy sent here from the Mother house in Savannah, Georgia. Sister Mary Cecilia Carroll, of Dublin, Ireland, was appointed Superior, her companions being Sister M. Borgia Thomas and Sister M. Helena Sheehan. The good works accomplished by these nuns and their successors would fill volumes.

With the continued growth of this institution it became evident that the establishment of a School for Nursing under the Sisters' direction was a real need. A three-year nursing course was established and the first class graduated March 22, 1903. Since its first class of graduates there have been three hundred twenty-four young ladies to receive diplomas at its hands (1937). At present there are about fifty young women in this Nursing School. Some are college graduates, all are high school graduates. This school is non-sectarian.

The medical staff of St. Joseph's Infirmary is composed of physicians and surgeons who are outstanding members of their profession. In addition to the daily class work and nursing practice received by the young ladies in the School for Nursing, lectures by members of the staff and by other eminent surgeons and physicians form part of the thorough training received by them. The influence and personal care given the young women in training by the Sisters gives the valuable addition of upright character to their knowledge and nursing abilities. Those interested in the personal welfare of the ambitious young woman of today, appreciate the benefit to be derived from the atmosphere of a hospital and school conducted by experienced Religious Teachers and Nurses.

## The Order of Sisters of Mercy

A few words regarding the founding and work of the Sisters of Mercy is not out of place in this article. The Sisters of Mercy was founded in Dublin, Ireland, by Catherine Elizabeth McAuley in 1827. The first institution was opened on the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, September 24, 1827. It was at first a secular society of ladies who devoted several hours daily to charitable and educational work.

The ladies spent more and more of their time at these works. In 1828 the Archbishop permitted them to adopt a distinctive dress. The order formed rules and led a life that was more on the order of a religious than a secular organization. Finally, on the request of their intentions, made by the Archbishop, they unanimously voted to become religious. On December 12, 1831, Miss McAuley took her vows as a Sister of Mercy and became Sister Mary Catherine. Two other ladies, Miss Elizabeth Harley, and Miss Anna Maria Doyle, took their vows on the same day. These three ladies, after a novitiate in the order of Presentation Sisters, became the first Sisters of Mercy. Sister Mary Catherine was selected as the first Superior, an office which she held for the remainder of her life.

"It has been the spirit of their foundress, Mother Catherine McAuley, that has guided the labors of her daughters. She showed the tenderness of a mother for the afflicted, seeing Christ in all who came to her for aid. Since the foundation of the Order, more than one hundred years ago, these self-sacrificing women have been engaged in every phase of social service activities, works of mercy and of true Christian charity. Year by year, the work has grown and fructified. Today,

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there are ten thousand Sisters of Mercy in the United States, as well as large numbers working in Ireland, England, Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand, North and South America and the West Indies.”

“Not only in times of peace, but history attests to the fact that the spirit of the Order has risen to real heroism when suffering humanity --when Christ in His members -- has been visited by war, plagues, famines, floods and catastrophes of every kind. Latest reports from the Leper Colony in British Guiana give evidence of splendid work in the compounds there. Facing the difficulty, some years ago, of securing enough lay nurses for a work so repulsive to human nature, the English Government turned to the Trained Nurse in the Order of Mercy. The efficiency and skill in developing a Leprosarium which is a credit to present day science, is only equaled by the Sisters' kindness and tender care of these poor unfortunate victims.”

## The Georgia foundations

In Georgia, the Sisters of Mercy at Savannah were founded from Charleston, S. C., on June 13, 1845. They remained for two years under the Charleston foundation and then became an independent community. St. Vincent's Academy, Savannah, Georgia, then became their Motherhouse.

During the administration of Rt. Rev. Thomas A. Becker, Bishop of Savannah, the Sisters changed to Mother McAuley's rule and habit. This did not effect their independent foundation. St. Vincent's Academy remained their Motherhouse until the amalgamation of the independent foundations on August 26, 1929, into the Sisters of Mercy of the Union.

The Savannah Community belonged to the Province of Scranton from 1929 to 1935 when the present Baltimore Province was erected. The present Provincial House of all the Georgia foundations of the Sisters of Mercy is at Mt. St. Agnes, Mt. Washington, Md. The General Motherhouse of the Order, now known as Sisters of Mercy of the Union, is Villa Mercy, Bethesda, Md.

The short outline of the educational and other works of the Sisters of Mercy in Atlanta that we have given in these articles are enough to show that they have been an important factor in the building of our city and in molding the character of our boys and girls so that as they grow to manhood and womanhood they become honorable citizens of our great city.

## Walpole's private school

Among the early Catholic schools in Atlanta was the Atlanta Catholic Male School conducted by Mr. Patrick Walpole in 1869-70-71.

This school was located at a point on the west side of Broad Street, north of Hunter, the third building from the corner and south of the present Rich's Store. According to present numbering it would be about 63 or 65 Broad Street, S. W.

Mr. Walpole's classical training made him an important factor in the educational field in the days of reconstruction and before the opening of the Public Schools. Mr. Patrick Walpole came to Atlanta in 1867. After establishing his school in 1869, its growth and popularity necessitated additional teachers. He secured as his assistant his brother, James Walpole. Both Patrick and James Walpole received their degrees from the Dominican College of Limerick, Ireland. Mr. Mayer, another professor, taught singing, German and other languages.

His school supplied a complete academic course. Old pupils relate that their studies were not confined, however, to text books, but the social amenities were well instilled. During vacation periods, as well as during the school year, weekly balls and other entertainments were held. An old Atlanta newspaper of that period, the Daily New Era, of August 1, 1871, states that a large and brilliant assemblage attended the exercises given by the Catholic Male School in the City Hall on the night of July 31, 1871, and that the applause attested their appreciation.

Some of the outstanding leaders in the development of Atlanta attended this school. Among its pupils were: Joseph M. Corrigan; John Burckhardt; James J. Haverty; John Gardiner; John Roach; James Sullivan; John T. Connolly; C. J. Sullivan; Peter F. Clarke; John Ryan; Charles B. Crenshaw, and others.

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Mr. Walpole was one of the first teachers of shorthand in the South, and also was one of the first young men in Georgia to employ shorthand in the State Capitol, where, as Court Reporter, he pursued his legal studies.

When Patrick Walpole began the practice of law his brother, James Walpole, took charge of the school.

In connection with the day school Mr. Walpole established a night school. Here with other studies, shorthand was taught. This was the first business night school in Atlanta.

These schools were closed when James Walpole went to New Orleans to accept a position on the editorial staff of the New Orleans Picayune.

## *Patrick Walpole*

The founder of the Atlanta Catholic Male School was born in Limerick, Ireland, and it was in the Dominican College of Limerick that he received his degree. Before he made Atlanta his home in 1867 he and his brother James had been engaged in reportorial and editorial work. A gentleman and a scholar, Mr. Walpole was well suited to establish a Classical School. The school he founded in 1869 was the equal of any in the city at that time.

While conducting the school, Mr. Walpole secured an appointment as Court Reporter at the State Capitol. It was in this capacity that he became associated with Judge Lochrane, first as an understudy and then as a law associate. In those days there were few law schools and the legal profession was approached in this manner. In the pursuit of his studies he was one of the first Court Reporters to use shorthand.

While associated with Judge Lochrane, Mr. Walpole did all of the legal and field survey work of the Etowah Land Company and the Bartow iron Works around Cartersville as evidenced by field and note books now in possession of Mrs. Otis, his daughter.

Mr. Walpole married in 1875 Miss Mary Gardiner, the eldest daughter of a family identified with Atlanta's earliest days, and whose members had for several generations been engineers and builders. Their daughter is now Mrs. Robert R. Otis and their grandchildren are Walpole R. Otis of Atlanta and Mrs. Edward H. Oliver of Jacksonville, Florida.

Mr. Walpole died in Atlanta of typhoid fever in 1879 and old friends and pupils testify as to his outstanding character and integrity, and to the fact that his educational efforts were of much benefit to the community during this period of reconstruction.

## [Sisters of Saint Joseph](#)

The second religious order to open a school in Atlanta was the Sisters of St. Joseph of Georgia.

This order of nuns was first established in Georgia at the request of Rt. Rev. Augustin Verot, Bishop of Savannah and Vicar-Apostolic of Florida. In 1866 he brought eight Sisters of St. Joseph to St. Augustine, Florida, from the Mother House in Le Puy, France. Three of these Sisters were sent from St. Augustine to Savannah, Georgia, and in that city the first Georgia foundation was made in a small house at the corner of Perry and Floyd Streets on April 23, 1867.

It is interesting to note that Bishop Verot was himself a native of Le Puy, France, the city where the Mother House of the Sisters of St. Joseph was first established in 1650.

In 1870 the See of St. Augustine was erected and Bishop Verot was transferred to it. Rt. Rev. Ignatius Persico was appointed to the See of Savannah. When this change was made the Georgia community of the Sisters of St. Joseph was separated from the Florida community and also from the Mother House. It then became, in March, 1871, a Diocesan Community, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Georgia.

## *Loretta Academy*

Loretta Academy, a school for boys, was the first school opened by the Sisters of St. Joseph in Atlanta. This school was opened in October, 1894. It was at the suggestion of the then pastor of the Immaculate Conception Church, Father Keiley, who later became the Rt. Rev. Benjamin J. Keiley, D. D., Bishop of Savannah, that this school was opened.

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Loretta School was first opened in temporary quarters in a building on the west side of Capitol Avenue between Rawson Street and Woodward Avenue. It was conducted here by the Sisters for a year, while they were obtaining a suitable location and erecting a permanent school and convent building. According to present street numbering the temporary school was located at about 351 Capitol Avenue, S. W.

Loretta Academy and Convent was built by the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1895 at a cost of \$11,400.

The building was built on the west side of Pryor Street, between Rawson and Eugenia Streets. According to the present numbering system it was number 407 Pryor Street, S. W.

Sisters M. DeSales was the first Superior of the Convent and School. She had four assistants, Sister M. Clare, Sister M. Regis, Sister M. Ignatius and Sister M. Patricia. Eight grades were taught at Loretta Academy.

St. Anthony's Parish has reason to be interested in Loretta Academy. Besides a number of men in this parish who attended that school, one of our former priests, Rev. Father Herman J. Deimel, was a student at this school. Father Deimel is now the Catholic Chaplain at the United States Prison on McDonough Boulevard.

This school was conducted until August, 1915, when it was discontinued, due to misfortunes suffered by the order in Augusta, Georgia.

The building in which Loretta Academy was conducted was sold in 1916 and building alterations changed it into an apartment house, for which purpose it is used at the present time.

Besides Father Deimel, the following priests were formerly pupils at this school: Rev. Father Joseph Morris, who is a Paulist; Rev. Fathers Joseph Deihl, William Hanlon and Joseph Sullivan, who are Marists.

## Sacred Heart School

The second school to be opened by the Sisters of St. Joseph in Atlanta was the Sacred Heart Parochial School. Rev. Father John E. Gunn, S. M., in later years Bishop of Natchez, who was then pastor of the Sacred Heart Church invited this order of nuns to open a school in that parish.

The Sacred Heart School was opened on September 29, 1909, at 330 Courtland Street (present numbering). This location was the southwest corner of Courtland Street and Forrest Avenue. The first year, 1909-1910, the school and convent were located in the same building. In the fall of 1910 another building had been secured and the school was conducted in a separate building. Both of these structures were old residences which had been altered to meet their new requirements. These buildings were used by the Sacred Heart Parish for fifteen years.

Sister M. Francis was the first Superior. She had four assistants, Sister M. Joannes, Sister Marie de Lourdes, Sister M. Alphonsa who was later Superior of St. Anthony's Parochial School for many years, and Sister M. Immaculata who was also a Superior at St. Anthony's School for two years.

The Sacred Heart Parish grew rapidly and the increased number of children in the school required larger quarters. In 1924, under the administration of Rev. Father James A. Horton, S. M., a building ample for the school needs was erected for the Sacred Heart Parochial School. This building was three floors in height and of fireproof construction. The cost was \$120,000. Most Rev. Michael J. Keyes, Bishop of Savannah, dedicated it November 16, 1924, and it has been in continuous use since that date. Grammar school courses for boys and girls, and three high school courses for girls, literary, commercial and general, are provided. Music and athletics are also included in the school's courses. It is fully equipped to care for five hundred pupils. The location, according to present number is 312-314 Courtland Street, N. E. At present it is the only Catholic senior high school for girls in Atlanta.

The Sacred Heart Parish also built a fireproof convent for the Sisters at No. 64 Baker Street, N. E. (present numbering). This building, including land, cost \$63,000. It was built about 1925. The money for both the convent and school building was raised by prominent Catholic laymen of the Sacred Heart parish.

At the present time Sister M. Carmelita is the Superior and Principal. Her assistants are -- High School: Sister Anna Marie, twelfth grade; Sister Marie Therese, eleventh grade; Sister M. Bernardine, tenth grade; Sister Kathleen Marie, Ninth grade; Sister Marie Celine, eighth grade; Sister Marie Cecile, seventh grade. Grammar School: Sister M. Dorothy, sixth

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grade; Sister Frances Jane, fifth grade; Sister Alice Joseph, fourth grade; Sister Cecilia Joseph, third grade; Sister Agnes Joseph, second grade; Sister Roberta Joseph, first grade.

Sacred Heart School pupils who have been blest with vocations in the services of Holy Mother Church are: In the order of Sisters of St. Joseph: Catherine Wolpert, Sister Bernadette; Nellie Stephens, Sister Agnes Catherine; Agnes Carmen, Sister Gertrude Therese. In the order of Holy Cross Sisters: Helen Minahan, Sister Canisius; Gertrude Minahan, Sister Benjamin. In the order of Holy Name Sisters: Geraldine O'Donnell, Sister Imelda Marie. In the order of Sisters of Mercy: Amelia Eisle, Sister M. Francene. In the order of Sisters of the Most Holy Sacrament: Mary Calkens, Sister Marie de Lourdes.

Rev. Father Marion Perry, O. M., was formerly a Sacred Heart School pupil. Two other boys, James Pratt and Daniel Mannen, are now students preparing to enter the Marists.

## Saint Joseph Sisters at Saint Anthony's

Rev. Father O. N. Jackson, the first pastor of St. Anthony's Church applied for teachers in 1917 and Rt. Rev. Bishop Keiley urged the Sisters of St. Joseph to take charge of this school. The undertaking was accepted and Sister M. Genevieve and Sister M. Ambrose were given the assignment.

At the time the Sisters of St. Joseph took charge of this school in September, 1917, there was no convent building in St. Anthony's Parish. The two teachers lived at the Sacred Heart Convent at 330 Courtland Street and went back and forth on the street cars to the school which was then at 651 Ashby Street, S. W.

Appreciating the difficulties under which the Sisters labored, living in one part of the city and teaching in another part; seeing the crowded conditions in the school, and foreseeing the needs of larger space for future expansion; a loyal and devoted member and benefactor of St. Anthony's Parish, Miss Hannah Kuh, purchased and gave to the parish a spacious residence building on a large and beautiful lot, located on Gordon Street and adjoining Howell Park, to be used as a school and convent.

With a few alterations part of the first floor provided ample space for the school. The second floor was used as the living quarters for the nuns. Sister M. Alphonsa was appointed the first Superior. She had two assistants, Sister M. Ambrose, who taught the third and fourth grades, and Sister M. Dorothy, who taught the first and second grades. Mother Alphonsa taught the fifth and sixth grades. There were six grades taught the first year in the new school, 1918-1919.

Mother Alphonsa remained Superior until 1924 when she was succeeded by Sister M. Immaculata, who was Superior until 1927, when she had to leave on account of bad health. Sister Alphonsa returned and remained Superior until 1931. This parish was saddened by the death of Sister Alphonsa on October 11, 1936, at the Sacred Heart Convent. Sister M. Magdalen was appointed Superior in 1931, and remained here for six years until 1937. During her stay at St. Anthony's Sister Magdalen celebrated her Golden Jubilee as a professed nun on February 2, 1935. She is now at St. Francis Xavier School, Brunswick, Georgia. In 1937, Sister Mary Caroline, the present Superior and Principal, was appointed. Sister Mary Caroline came here from St. Louis, Missouri.

The continued growth in members of St. Anthony's Parish brought the need of a larger school to accommodate the increased number of pupils. During the pastorate of Rev. Father Harry F. Clark, later Monsignor, this need became acute. He began planning for a new school and a new convent. In July, 1933, the old school building was demolished and the erection of the present handsome fireproof school begun. It was finished in January, 1934, and was dedicated by Most Rev. Michael J. Keyes, Bishop of Savannah, on February 11, 1934.

During the construction of the new school, temporary class rooms were constructed and used in the basement of the church. After the school was dedicated the new school was first used on February 12, 1934.

Several years before the construction of the new school, a well-constructed sixteen-room house on a large lot adjoining the school property was purchased by Father Clark. In the summer of 1933 this building was refinished inside to meet the modest and simple requirements of a convent.

It was ready for the use of the nuns when they returned for the opening of school in September. In January, 1934, one of the large rooms was remodeled and furnished to make a beautiful chapel. This convent was dedicated on the same day

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as the school. It is the present home of the Sisters in this parish. The building is located about forty feet from the school. The street number is 953 Gordon, S. W.

St. Anthony's Parochial School is located at number 963 Gordon Street, S. W. It contains eight standard classrooms that are fully equipped in every detail. There is also space for three additional classrooms in which no equipment has been installed. There is an office for the principal, girls' toilet, boys' toilet, wide corridors and stairs and four entrances. A conduit system for the future installation of radio equipment centering in the principal's office and with extensions to each classroom is a feature of the construction.

The school course consists of nine grades, grammar and junior high. From 1919 to 1932, St. Anthony's School had seven grades. In the fall of 1932 an eighth grade was started. In the following year, 1933, a ninth grade was started and the first class graduated from the Junior High course in May, 1934.

The present faculty at St. Anthony's Parochial School is: Sister Mary Caroline, Superior and Principal, ninth grade; Sister M. Felice, seventh and eighth grades; Sister M. Grace Marie, third and fourth grades; Sister M. Josephine, fifth and sixth grades; Sister Mary Edward, first and second grades.

Sisters who have taught at St. Anthony's besides those already mentioned are: Sister M. Dorothy, who taught the first and second grades from 1918 to 1931; Sisters M. Anthony, Mary Louis, Rita, Raphael, Alice Joseph, Bernadine, Philomena, Aurelia, Angela, Josephine, Augustine, Bernadette, Grace Marie, Mary Bernard. St. Anthony's children have been benefited by the teaching of these unselfish women.

Sisters, like other people, sometimes get sick. On several occasions, when due to illness the teachers needed assistance with the school work, some of the ladies who were not Sisters have offered their assistance. Miss Rose Moran has assisted with the teaching at St. Anthony's, and a number of years ago when Sister Dorothy was operated upon, Miss Regina Keith, now Mrs. Ernest Ray taught in her place for six weeks.

Sister Mary Marcella of the Sisters of St. Joseph was formerly a pupil of St. Anthony's School. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Meyer of this parish. Another Sister now a member of the Sisters of St. Francis was a pupil in St. Anthony's School. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Frenke, former members of St. Anthony's parish, who now live in Kentucky. Two daughters of Mrs. J. J. O'Donnell, who are now Sister Lillian Josephine and Sister Imelda Marie, were pupils of St. Anthony's first school.

## Present name of order

The Sisters of St. Joseph in Georgia became affiliated with the oldest foundation of the order in the United States in 1922. This affiliation was approved by Pope Benedict XV, February 13, 1922. The order is now known as the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. The first Foundation was established at Carondelet, Mo., in 1836, and the Centennial of this foundation was celebrated March 25, 1936.

## *Origin of order*

The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph was canonically established at Le Puy, France, on October 15, 1650, by Rt. Rev. Henri de Maupas, Bishop of Le Puy. The Order was founded some time before this by Rev. Jean-Paul Medaille. Father Medaille brought to the attention of Bishop Maupas the Congregation he had founded and its objects.

For about one hundred and fifty years the Order went through periods of progress and periods of persecution, but as the years passed they grew in members and grew in good works accomplished. Then, almost overnight, you might say, the terrible French Revolution, which failed to distinguish between the good or the evil, swept away their all. In 1793 the convents and chapels of the Sisters were confiscated (a nice word for stealing). The Sisters were driven out, some were officially murdered, martyrs for Christ. Many were placed in jails and dungeons. Among the latter was Mother St. John Fontbonne.

In 1807, through the assistance of Rev. Claude Cholleton, Vicar-General of Lyons, Mother St. John, who escaped death in the Revolution, re-established the Order, which has continued to grow to the present day.

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## [Appendix](#)

*This article followed the last installment of the above series in the March 1938 edition of Saint Anthony's Parish News. It indicates the historical importance of this work, and the great debt that the Catholic Community of Atlanta owes to the memory of T. J. O'Keefe.*

### **WANTED HELP**

Are You Interested in the Catholic Church?

1937 was the centennial of the founding of the city in which we live --Atlanta. True, it was not always called Atlanta, but that does not matter. The great majority of those who read this are Catholic citizens of Atlanta. Atlanta is your home and you should be proud of your city. Catholics from the very beginning of this city have done their part to make Atlanta the metropolitan city that it is, therefore you should also be proud of the work of your Church in this city.

Last July we started an article entitled "Our City's Centennial," which has been continued from month to month, and which is still being published. We have received more favorable comments on this article than any article that has been published in St. Anthony's Parish News. This article contains valuable information on the progress of your Church in Atlanta.

In assembling the data for this article we consulted a number of histories of this city and we were very much surprised at finding very little information on the work that Catholics and the Catholic Church have done in building this city. Take, for instance, the subject of early Catholic Schools. We read of only one Catholic School being mentioned before 1870 and that in about one line: "A Convent School for girls is kept by the Sisters of Mercy." In these articles we have mentioned six conducted previous to 1870. Others ignore the existence of a Catholic Church prior to 1851 at which date a resident pastor was stationed here. Yet we know that a Catholic Church had been built and dedicated before April, 1849.

In several histories it is stated there were not over half a dozen families here in 1842. We have the word of Mrs. Willis Carlisle (in contempt, it is true) that there were Catholic (Irish) families living here when she and her husband first located in this city in June, 1842. We know that Catholic missionaries passed through here in the early forties. The writer's grandfather, a Catholic, settled in Cass County, Georgia, in 1840. Father Barry visited the Catholics in that county. He was pastor of Holy Trinity Church in Augusta, Georgia, and was Vicar General of Georgia from 1839 and for the entire Diocese of Charleston from 1844 until the erection of the See of Savannah in July, 1850. In traveling from Augusta to Cass County and other sections of northwest Georgia he must have passed through Terminus at its very beginning.

That the work Catholics have done in the building of this city has not appeared in histories of this city as it should, may be partly the fault of the Catholics themselves. It has been a very difficult job to secure the little information that we have published in these columns. However, we wish to heartily thank those who have assisted us in securing the valuable data so far obtained.

And now to that "Wanted Help" that starts this column. There are plenty of people in this city who possess valuable and interesting information, pictures of historical value, etc., on facts pertaining to the Catholic History of Atlanta, or, who have friends from whom they could secure this data. We are anxious to secure information, dates, pictures, etc., that may inform our friends and our constantly increasing Catholic population of what Catholics and the Catholic Church has done in the developing of our city. You can help by giving or lending us information, pictures or data that you possess, or by lending your assistance in securing this information from relatives, friends, and acquaintances who possess interesting or valuable data.

If you want to help, get in touch with some member of the staff or call T. J. O'Keefe at Raymond-0425.