

The Establishment of St. Patrick's Church in Sherbrooke, Quebec — Its Development and Influence Throughout a Period of Fifty-Seven Years

BY
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The establishment of Catholic institutions in the Sherbrooke of an earlier day, had, as a background, the stragglng village, its cross-roads, and the roar of waters (Sherbrooke's first great "Te Deum") as the broad Magog River thundered in its unbridled power down a gorge three-quarters of a mile in length to join the St. Francis one hundred and fifteen feet below. The steep wooded hills which offered scant welcome to the settlers wandering in the valley at their feet, later gazed in wonder at the awakening of a rock, for the physical vigor absorbed from the rugged countryside, the zeal of early Missionaries, and the living Faith of our pioneer fathers, were productive of results, and upon that 'rock' was built the Church against which, as promised of old, nothing would prevail.

The "History of Pioneer English Catholics in the Eastern Townships" by the Rev. Thomas Walsh, S.J., discloses that there were numerous Englishspeaking Catholics (for the most part Irish) settled in Sherbrooke and vicinity. They worshipped with their French-Canadian brethren at the little Chapel dedicated to St. Columban in 1830, and in 1855, at St. Michael's Church, both built upon the rock mentioned above.

The names of thirty Irish families appear when Father B. McGauran, a missionary-priest, had charge in 1853 of the subscription from English-speaking Catholics toward the building of St. Michael's. The amount subscribed was £155 10S., approximately \$760. The Catholic population of the city, numbering about 3000, experienced the joy of welcoming His Lordship Bishop Autome Racine when Sherbrooke in 1874 was made the head of a diocese, with Bishop Racine the first to occupy the episcopal chair in what had now become St. Michael's Cathedral.

The address of welcome on behalf of the English citizens was read by Judge Marcus Doherty, and that of St. Patrick's Society by Mr. M. Connolly, its first president. Other early Presidents of this Society, formed in 1873, were Messrs. Thomas Quigley, Wm. Murray, M. T. Stenson and D. McManamy. The National

Festival was always celebrated, and it is interesting to note that in 1874 the guest speakers were the Rev. Father Moylan, S.J., at the Mass, and in the evening J. J. Curran, Esq., both of Montreal.

A few years later, a young priest, the Rev. Charles E. C. Fiset. preached the St. Patrick's Day sermon, and the inspiration, religious fervor and eloquence of his discourse edified and thrilled his hearers. Figuratively speaking, he was appropriated by the Irish people on the spot in the event of their becoming a separate congregation. This desire, and the wish to relieve the Cathedral clergy of the necessity of delivering sermons in both French and English, were, no doubt, determining factors in bringing about the decision to take definite action. This resulted in their becoming, within a year, an approved congregation, the only entirely English-speaking one in the Eastern Townships.

On the 23rd of November, 1886, a representative Committee composed of Messrs. Wm. Murray, James Tracy, John Mulvena, Patrick Hackett, J. S. Broderick and H. W. Mulvena called upon His Lordship Bishop Racine to express their desire of constituting themselves a separate congregation and of attending a church set apart for their use, and they begged His Lordship's views upon the matter and the conditions under which he would be pleased to allow the project to be carried into execution.

Upon hearing the request of the delegation His Lordship acquiesced in the plans, adding graciously "not that we wish to lose you, but since this is your expressed desire, we will approve and lend you every assistance."

On the 23rd of November, 1886, in a communication addressed to Mr. Murray, Chairman of the general meetings, His Lordship expressed himself categorically upon questions pertaining to parochial routine. He then specified that the new congregation was to be composed of English-speaking Catholics only, and stated that through its trustees it could buy, build or hold title to property. (Consolidated Statutes, C. 19,A,2). He promised the petitioners an Irish, or English-speaking, pastor, but could not immediately say when the congregation would be registered, and, for financing the project, he recommended a subscription fund, to which he wished to contribute.

The official Board of Trustees elected on the 8th of December, 1886, at a public meeting presided over by the Very Rev. A. E. Dufresne, Vicar General, was composed of Messrs. Wm. Murray, John Mulvena, John Meagher, J. S. Broderick and Martin Brauswell, who were to hold office for five years, according as the Notarial Act provided, which was signed by all those present. On the 9th of December, the Board elected Messrs. Wm. Murray and H. Mulvena as their permanent Chairman and Secretary. Up to, and including, this date, Mr. J. J. Campbell had acted as secretary *pro tem*.

Their activities now centered upon procuring or building a church. A prospect presented itself when the Methodist congregation decided to seek more

spacious quarters, and their properties were made available for purchase: negotiations were started with a view to acquiring them.

The satisfactory response to the subscription list was reported to His Lordship, who immediately subscribed \$1,000. The Rev. Father Dufresne, Vicar-General, and the Rev. Father J. O. Chalifoux each contributed \$500. The purchase of the Methodist Church (built in 1838) and property at the price of \$4,500 was made on the tenth of May, 1887.

On August 10, 1887, in answer to a petition signed by forty-nine freeholders and heads of Irish families, the congregation was canonically erected by Bishop Racine under the invocation of St. Patrick, and on the same day Father Fisetite was appointed its Missionary-Priest and Administrator.

The following Irish citizens were the signers of the above mentioned petition for Canonical Erection: James Meagher, Wm. Murray, John Cotter, M. McCarthy, B. Murray, H. Mulvena, John O'Boyle, J. S. Broderick, David Stenson, T. D. Walsh, J. H. Walsh, Ed. Quinn, John Heaney, James Doherty, Patrick McCarthy, Thos. McGuire, J. McDonnell, E. McKeon, Wm. Dillon, M. Millette, Jos. Dennison, John Mulvena, M. Galvin, John Galvin, H. M. Mulligan, John McGowan, John McGuire, Thos. Flannery, John O'Connor, R. Delaney, Wm. Burns, Martin Brauswell, John McManns, John J. Campbell, H. G. Stanton, J. C. Kelly, John Muldoon, James Moore, John Cleary, E. Duffy, John M. Heaney, P. Houlahan, W. Coogan, Hugh Connor, R. A. Unsworth, Wm. Reilly, Luke Egan, Thomas Galvin and F. A. [Lachance].

Necessary alterations were made to the interior, and a cross erected over the church, which was blessed by Bishop Racine on Sept. 4, 1887. At the conclusion of the ceremony he was conducted to the throne, attended by the Rev. Fr. R. Sentenne, parish priest of Notre Dame, and the Rev. Father Verreau, Principal of the Normal School, both of Montreal, and the Very Rev. Father Dufresne, Vicar-General, who delivered the consecration sermon. The Rev. Father P. Girard, Superior of St. Charles Seminary, celebrated the solemn high mass.

Massive brass candlesticks and a crucifix, the gifts of the Rev. Father M. McCauley, adorned the altar. Over the altar had been erected a statue of St. Patrick, the gift of Bishop Racine, who also donated the vestments worn by the celebrant. Other gifts included a statue of the Blessed Virgin, by Mrs. Catherine Murphy, and of St. Joseph, by Mrs. W. Campbell (through collection), and a side altar to St. Anne, by Mr. L., J. Codère.

Among other publications Father Fisetite announced that, with the Bishop's approval, St. Patrick's would inaugurate the custom of having vespers in the evening.

The choir, which included the Rev. Father Roy and the Rev. Father Seguin, T. McGuire, S. Broderick, Robert Unsworth, A. Codère, with Vincent Brosseau as soloist, sang "Messe Royale," directed by Father Fisetite, with Mde. Chas. Beaudoin at the organ. Miss M. McGuire .of Quebec sang an "Ave Maria" with

violin obligato by Mr. Thos. Doherty.

The sanctuary and altar decoration had been intrusted to the Reverend Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame.

In the afternoon a set of chimes was blessed at the Cathedral, and the authorities presented the old bell to St. Patrick's parish. Cast in Troy, N. Y., in 1853, it had been blessed, in 1855, for the old St. Michael's church and bore the names: Gabriel, Charles, Patrick, and Clara (for Mrs. Felton).

Early in November stations of the Cross, the gift of Mr. Murray, and a statue of the Sacred Heart were blessed and installed in the church.

When Father Fisette left the seminary to reside at the Presbytery in 1889, the parishioners plans for a housewarming took practical form. The parlor, diningroom, and bedrooms were furnished by Messrs. J. Walsh, D. McManamy, and Father Fisette's own family, and the office by anonymous friends. Mesdames J. Walsh, L. Belanger, James Doherty, H. Fortier and Miss Annie Griffith collected from the ladies, many Non-Catholics and neighbors contributing voluntarily, and their gift to the presbytery was the table linen, china and kitchen equipment.

For three years Miss M. A. (Nannie) Fisette resided with her brother, and later his parents and sister Millie (Mrs. J. Bell) came to live with him. After their death a sister Sarah (Mrs. P. Slattery), and later his sister Lena (Mrs. H. Placey), remained at the Presbytery keeping, up the traditions of a home which ever radiated a cheery welcome, and was renowned for its Christian hospitality of heart and hand. The old-time sextons and many others called it rightly, "La Maison du Bon Dieu."

The Irish Catholic population of Sherbrooke in 1888 numbered 511, with 109 families and 403 communicants. About fifteen families from the surrounding country also attended St. Patrick's.

Father Fisette, the first pastor and administrator appointed to St. Patrick's Mission, came to Sherbrooke in early childhood from Richmond, Virginia, U.S.A. He entered St. Charles Seminary, and later studied for the priesthood, and was ordained in 1884.

His fine Christian character, his philosophy of cheer and optimism, his bilingualism and buoyant personality, fitted him preeminently for his labors in this mixed community. He was appointed the English-speaking Catholic Chaplain, held honorary office in all religious and educational institutions, and soon became a leading figure among the clergy and laity.

Circumstances favored the simultaneous start along life's way of this young priest, fired with the ardor of his calling, and that of the new-born Mission in which "Men of one Mind" sought to establish a new source of spiritual guidance and national culture. In this field, Father Fisette's personal example, and courageous spirit, and tireless energy, were instrumental in bringing to a

successful issue, the hopes and plans of the congregation. A fine and never failing sense of humor was invaluable both to himself and his associates in the accomplishment of this lengthy and arduous task.

He took practical interest in all questions pertaining to education, including the arts, and will be remembered for his edifying zeal as a pastor, his Christian charity, and his gift of eloquence. No beginnings could have been more auspicious, and their promise was well fulfilled during the fortysix years of this associations as pastor and congregation. Father A. O. Gagnon, a classmate, became Father Fisette's first assistant-priest, and Edward Cotter his first altar-boy.

The earliest association formed in the parish was the League of the Sacred Heart, founded in 1888. Miss Amelia Murray was the first distributor of leaflets. It was interrupted for a short while, but was reorganized and Miss Owenie McKeon is the present distributor.

From the beginning, the ladies were successful in raising money for altar and other expenses, and organized various entertainments for that purpose. Some were known as "Socials," where different sales-booths and friendly rivalry were conducive to spendid financial results.

On Feb. 4th, 1892, Lieut. Maurice Shea (Order of Isabella), last surviving veteran of Waterloo, born in Cork, Ireland, died here aged 98, and was buried with military honors.

In order to secure building space the trustees purchased an adjoining property in 1895. It was rented and brought in \$120 yearly.

In May, 1897, the church was damaged by fire; statuary, altar ornaments, vestments and two fine oil paintings by the Roman artist, Petriglia, were destroyed. The interior was promptly repaired and the church provided anew with altar linen and requisites. Among these were some beautiful gold-embroidered vestments, one set of which was the gift of Mr. James Tracy.

A banner page in the history of the parish was written in September, 911, when St. Patrick's Academy was formally opened under the jurisdiction of a committee elected by the Irish citizens, viz. Messrs. D. McManamy, D. J. Steele, F. Campbell, M. A. Hawkins, as secretary, and J. H. Walsh, with Father Fisette as Honorary Chaplain. The first Community consisted of Brothers P. Cagney (Cassian), D. Colbert and D. R. Moynihan (Polycarp). The Academy and the Brothers of the Presentation, representing all that is best in our Irish tradition, have proved valuable assets in the community. Established thirty-five years ago, the record of the academy is an enviable one, both as an educational institution, and as a cultural and recreational centre for the youth of the parish.

Citizens have cordial memories of the distinguished members of the Order who have visited Sherbrooke. The Old Boys' Association, founded in 1927, is an outstanding progressive group.

In 1930 the Community mourned the deaths of the Rev. Brother Polycarp,

one of the founders, and their Chaplain, the Rev. Father N. St. Laurent.

The present Community consists of the Rev. Brother O'Shea, Superior, and the Rev. Brothers O'Keeke, Bernard, Berchmans and Joseph.

A second disastrous fire in the church building occurred in 1910, practically destroying it, and it was then decided to build the present fine structure.

The last mass was celebrated and the last meeting of Pastor and Wardens held in the old church basement late in July, 1912. During the construction of the new building, services were held in the Knights of Columbus Hall, and later in the new basement chapel. The upper part was inaugurated by a sad and unforeseen event, the funeral of the venerable Mrs. Fisette, mother of the pastor.

The new church was blessed by His Excellency Bishop Pellagrino Stagni, Papal Delegate to Canada and Newfoundland, on the sixth of October, 1913.

Immediately afterward, Pontifical High Mass was celebrated in the church by His Excellency Archbishop Gauthier, of Ottawa, attended by Bishop Chalifoux, Auxiliary Bishop of Sherbrooke, as assistant-priest, with deacon and sub-deacon. There were present in the sanctuary Their Excellencies Mgr. Stagni, Archbishop Bruchesi of Montreal, Bishop Bruneault of Nicolet, and Bishop Larocque of Sherbrooke, many members of the clergy of the Diocese, and the Rev. Brothers Peter and Stanislaus, representing the Presentation Order of Cork, Ireland.

After the ceremony, the distinguished company were guests of the ladies of the parish at a banquet in the Knights of Columbus building, Gordon Street.

The church is constructed of red brick, with granite trim, design "Early Christian." Compact in appearance, it is relieved by a slight gable effect of the roof. The tall belfry tower, with electrically illuminated cross, and a shorter tower at the opposite corner, flank the façade, which is surmounted by a granite cross of Neo-Greek inspiration. The church has a seating capacity of about eight hundred. Mr. Edward Kelly, a past warden, superintended all final details of the construction.

Stained glass memorial windows showing the influence of French art have been inserted in the names of the early trustees by the Murray, Mulvena, McManus, Walsh, Tracy, McGuire, Fisette, Branswell, D. A. McManamy and Coogan families. Particularly fine are those representing St. Patrick and St. Bridget, the Evangelists Mathew, Mark, Luke and John, and those bearing the inscriptions and symbols I.N.R.I., I.H.S., Paschal Lamb, and the Xristos.

A very large window of stained and leaded glass, proportioned to suit the area, and designed and styled after the "Last Supper," was inserted over the main altar. It was the gift of Mr. and Mrs. D. McManamy.

Brass standards, bearing clusters of electric lights, and the Christmas 'Crib' were donated by Mr. and Mrs. Walsh, the latter for their son Leo; a statue of St. Joseph and two side altars, by Mrs. McManamy, Mr. William and Emma Webster-McManamy. A statue of St. Teresa was given by Miss Irene Collins

through a collection, and the marble pulpit was donated by the 'Emerald Club'. The original (1887) statue of 'Our Lady' survived the two fires uninjured, and is installed in the present sanctuary.

In 1915 a two manual pipe-organ costing \$4,000 was purchased and its installation celebrated by a sacred concert.

A survey of early assets shows the acquisition of an adjoining property, presbytery and church repaired, and the church later enlarged, with the addition of a new sanctuary.

In 1910 a presbytery, and in 1913 a \$60,000 church were built, and 1911 saw the establishment of St. Patrick's Academy. The Academy had no connection with parish revenue at any time. It is mentioned here as a member of St. Patrick's family, and the crowning event in the way of material development throughout a quarter of a century. In 1913 the church properties were valued at \$45,000 and St. Patrick's Academy \$2,000.

The church revenue was generally sufficient to meet the ordinary expenses and pay interest on borrowed monies; however, when such revenue did not quite balance the year, the parishioners saw to it that the money was forthcoming. The funds with which to finance the progressive improvements and developments were obtained in the form of mortgages. The upkeep of the church, interest, and the gradual payment of the debt, which at one time reached a total of \$60,000, was carried out through the voluntary financial cooperation of all the parishioners. The ladies, through the Guild, raised about \$1,500 as their yearly contribution.

An excerpt from a letter written earlier to the Faithful of St. Patrick's by Bishop Larocque, may be quoted here.

"Your small but thriving congregation, with its record of united effort, generous sacrifice, untiring zeal of Pastor and Flock, has contributed thousands of dollars for church use. In view of this fact, I may say that St. Patrick's parish stands forth today a shining example of generosity for all parishes."

In 1914 the ladies formed a Guild and inaugurated the opening of the new Church Hall by resuming their series of afternoon teas, sales and varied entertainments. The different organizations experienced a period of great activity. War had been declared and the needs of the 'Red Cross' created a call for aid which could not be denied. The influenza epidemic which followed the war renewed the need for help. A great many of St. Patrick's parishioners, Miss E. Bradley among them, helped in the hospitals, and in the emergency hospital of 200 beds which was entirely staffed by volunteer nurses.

The third Knights of Columbus Council in Canada, Council 530, was established through St. Patrick's, in Sherbrooke, in 1900. The first committee was composed of Thos. McGuire, Grand Knight, W. McManus, Secretary, and D. J. McManamy, Treasurer, with the Rev. Father Fiset as Chaplain. Nine parishioners subsequently held the office of Grand Knight.

To meet the need expressed by Bishop Larocque, when Mr. D. J. Steele was Grand Knight, the council sponsored a campaign for funds to be applied on building necessary additions to the Old Folk's and Orphans' Home. The sum of \$107,000 was realized and the buildings enlarged in time for the Golden Jubilee of the Grey Nuns in 1925. Knights of Columbus huts were inaugurated during the first World War, and are in operation during the present war. From St. Patrick's, Weldon Kenalty served in England for two years, Thomas Redmond in Iceland, and Charles Gordon' in Sherbrooke.

St. Patrick's Mission Circle, the society of longest uninterrupted standing in the parish, was founded in 1919 by Miss Geraldine Hébert: its first President was Mrs. Fred Shelley, Vice-President, Miss Doris Hewitt, Treasurer, Miss Minnie Mooney, and Secretary, Miss Hébert.

The Mission Circle celebrated its Silver Jubilee in June of the year 1944. To commemorate the event, at which the Rev. Father Hector Daly, S.J., was guest-speaker, the members of the society donated \$500 of the proceeds of their jubilee collection towards the foundation of a small chapel to be erected in a poor Western settlement. Led by Miss McConnell the Mission Circle holds the Championship for artistic and original Hall decoration.

In 1920, Mrs. Henry Mulvena, with the approval of His Excellency, Msgr. Larocque, organized the first Sub-division of the Catholic Women's League in St. Patrick's. The sponsoring of closed retreats, monthly communions and Holy-Hours, Reading Clubs for the study of Catholic literature, prizes and scholarships to schools, practical assistance to underprivileged children, and visits to the sick, are but a few of the many activities carried on here. Mrs. F. Hoye has held the post of National Convener of Lay-Retreats, and Miss G. Mullins, that of National Convener of Publicity.

Distinguished women who have been guests at St. Patrick's in connection with the League are Mrs. M. E. MacIntyre, Mrs. J. Coffey, and Mrs. A. J. McCabe, Past National Presidents, and Sister Rosemary Hudon of the Sisters of Service.

Mrs. D. J. McManamy and Miss Mullins founded the Sherbrooke Junior Catholic Women's League, with Miss Maura McManamy as first President. The Juniors, among their other activities, have successfully organized St. Patrick's Day social evenings for the parish. Last year, 1944, Father Thos. Kearney, the speaker, commended the young ladies' poise, and the dignity maintained in managing these large gatherings, always held at the Chateau Frontenac, hospitable home of the Conways. Miss Lucille Crochetierre is the local President. Miss Eileen Hand is National Convener of Juniors. Father Fisette was created a canon by Bishop Larocque on the 16th of July, 1926. Installed September 28th, by Bishop Gagnon, he was named a Prosynodal Consultant.

The parishioners had occasion .to follow the career of Father Gagnon, first assistant-priest at St. Patrick's, with pardonable pride. In 1923 he was appointed

Auxiliary Bishop of Sherbrooke and Titular Bishop of Spiga, and was consecrated by the Most Rev. Bishop Gauthier of Montreal. The gift of the Irish congregation was his bishop's crozier. Upon the sudden death of Bishop Larocque in August, 1926, he was appointed Vicar-Capitular, acting as Administrator of the diocese, and on the 23rd of June, 1927, His Holiness Pope Pius XI, presiding at a public consistory in Rome, named him Titular Bishop of Sherbrooke. He was the first Eastern-Townships-born subject to attain such an exalted status.

The Rev. Father Stanislaus Gosselin succeeded Father Gagnon as Curate at St. Patrick's and remained until 1926. He was succeeded by Father N. Codère as dominical curate. He acted as Administrator. from May until July 26, 1933, and is still an assistant priest. He was created an honorary canon by Bishop Gagnon in May, 1937. Father A. Linahen became dominical, then resident-curate in 1934, remaining until 1940. He was succeeded by Father P. E. Morin in this capacity for one year. In 1940 the resident curate was Father C. Pepin, in 1942, Father Alphonse Comeau. He was followed by Father Rosario Moisan in June, 1944. The Rev. Father Edmond Tanguay, later Monsignor Tanguay, was assistant-priest during Father Gagnon's absence in Europe in 1895.

In November, 1932, the parishioners were saddened and concerned about the health of their revered pastor, Canon Fissette. He suffered a slight stroke of paralysis in November, 1932. Some improvement in his condition took place but the insidious malady took a sudden turn for the worse in March, and on St. Patrick's Day he re-entered St. Vincent de Paul Hospital, where his death, at the age of seventy-one, occurred on the 19th of May, 1933.

In its hour of grief, the congregation, while keenly conscious of its great loss, determined, as he would have wished, to make its first great sacrifice generously, and commend his soul to God in prayer.

His funeral, attended by Bishop Gagnon, who in a short funeral oration took touching leave of his life-long friend, was one of the largest ever seen in Sherbrooke. It took place in St. Patrick's Church on the 22nd of May. Interment was made in St. Michael's cemetery. Father D. Biron recited the final prayers at the grave-side. In the church a bronze memorial plaque has been erected to his memory by the parishioners, and a memorial window representing the 'Good Shepherd' inserted in his name.

The Rev. Father J. C. McGee, who was appointed Parish Priest of St. Patrick's in July, 1933, was ordained in Windsor Mills by Bishop Larocque in 1900. While at the Canadian College in Rome, Italy, he received a Doctorate in Philosophy. Upon his return he became assistant, then resident priest in Capelton, then in Sutton, where he remained twenty years. Upon arriving in Sherbrooke, he was welcomed at St. Patrick's Church Hall, and addressed by representatives of three generations in the parish Mr. Walsh, a veteran of the Old

Guard, Mr. O'Boyle, who styled himself the 'Middle Ages' and Mr. K. Flaherty on behalf of the young men.

In a brief reply, Father McGee expressed his appreciation of this cordial greeting, his sympathy in the recent loss of the late Pastor, his satisfaction in coming to Sherbrooke, and asked for the generous support and cooperation of the congregation.

A short musical program was followed by refreshments served by the Ladies' Guild.

Father McGee was created a canon by Bishop Gagnon in 1934.

The Society known as "St. Patrick's Laymen Retreatants" was formed in February, 1934. To extend privileges and remove restrictions affecting membership, the name was later changed to "St. Patrick's Men's Society" and in 1941, in order that the members might profit further by the spiritual advantages offered, the above named organizations were merged into the "Holy Name Society," which carries on the devotional exercises and monthly communions; and breakfasts. The names of the Honorable Senator E. W. Tobin, Messrs. George Murphy, Sr., J. B. Simms, J. Walsh and D. McManamy, appear on the advisory committee.

It has donated, through collections taken up in the parish, useful and beautiful gifts to the church — among others, an ostensorium and the electric clock. In 1942 it sponsored, through collection, the erection of a monument styled 'Rock of Ages' on the grave of Canon Fiset. It was unveiled by Mrs. Lena Fiset Placey, on June 21, and blessed by the Very Rev. Canon McGee; then followed a memorial address by the Very Canon Codère, and prayers for the departed, recited by the pastor and congregation.

Outstanding social events of the Holy Name Society were the inaugural day ceremonies and banquet in 1941, and those of 1944 with, respectively, the Rev. Father Lagree, C.S.S.R., with Mr. B. Holtham, and the Rev. Father McGinnis, C.S.C., with Mr. Leo Gagnon as the speakers. Earlier presidents were Dr. J. Heney and Messrs. J. L. Foley, J. S. Mooney, J. G. Russel, J. T. Hawkins, A. J. O'Boyle and J. Woodgate. First honorary presidents were the Rev. Fr. E. Roy, C.S.S.R., and the Very Rev. Canon McGee.

Messrs. J. Britten, W. King and J. Beaulieu have been recent efficient sacristans, while the altars are in the excellent care of the Rev. Sisters of Jesus and Mary.

St. Patrick's library was founded in 1922 by the Very Rev. Canon, Fiset, as he realized the need of good literature for his parishioners. This is probably the first parochial library in the diocese. It was Father Fiset's wish that the use of the Library, containing several thousand volumes, be free to all parishioners. He named Miss Gladys Mullins and Miss Loretta Steele as Librarians and they have continued in that capacity. The Catholic Women's League has contributed several hundred dollars towards the purchase of suitable books.

Following the death of Canon Fisette in 1933, the library was dedicated to his memory and has since been known as "The Canon Fisette Memorial Library."

Sponsored by the St. Patrick's Academy 'Old Boys' Association, the Boy Scout troop and Wolf Cub Pack were organized in 1936. The first committee consisted of Thos. Bonner, E. Mitton and F. Kenalty. The Rev. Brother Kevin was appointed first Scout Master, and was succeeded by Gerald Giroux. The present Leader of Scouts is Brother Berchmans. Mr. J. A. Largy is local representative to the Sherbrooke Boy Scout Association. St. Patrick's troop has twice won the Lister Trophy, emblematic of best all-round troop in the Sherbrooke District.

Gerald Giroux was founder and first Cubmaster and was succeeded by his sister Mary. Gerald has given his life for the 'Cause' overseas. The present lady-cubmaster is Miss Josephine Crochetière.

St. Patrick's Academy Cadets Corps, No. 402, was formed in 1914. They have enhanced the glory of the Academy's Honor-Roll. Over 225 former members have joined the Armed Forces. To date (October 1944) fifteen have made the supreme sacrifice.

The present Corps is directed by Capt. P. Slattery and the Rev. Brother Joseph. Its ranking, attained in 1943-44 shooting contests was: Provincial 2nd, Dominion 10th, and British Empire 40th. In Junior and Senior First Aid Tests, they were second to none.

The first Girl Guide Company, formed in 1937, was sponsored by the Catholic Women's League. The first Captain was Margaret Doherty. The District Commissioner who helped the Captain form the unit had a splendid opinion of the company. Miss Mary Corcoran, who obtained her warrant of Captain in 1941, succeeded Miss Doherty. Miss Mildred Corcoran is her Lieutenant.

Mrs. A. Vallée was appointed St. Patrick's representative to the 'Red Cross', upon its organization in October 1939. Cooperating with the Sailors' Club of Montreal, she is convener for ditty bags for torpedoed survivors. Officials of the local Red Cross Organization consider the contribution of war work and the cooperation of St. Patrick's workers outstanding. A few instances are cited as worthy of mention.

Mrs. Michael Haughton, who died in 1943, aged 90, had completed 100 knitted articles. Mrs. Harriet St. Louis, 1,192 sewn articles. Mrs. John Simms, expert cutter of Red Cross Civilian garments for years, was forced to give up through illness; and Winnie Dellotenville has not missed a weekly meeting in 5 years.

Mrs. R. O'Reilly-Provencher is the efficient Citizens' War-Services Convener. Officers and men stationed at local military centers have been made welcome at St. Patrick's Church Hall for Christmas dinners and social evenings.

Geraldine Dwane of St. Patrick's was 'Nurse in Charge' of the V.O.N. for 10 years.

Mrs. Josephine Crochetière and Mr. Cecil Dunn are Vice-Presidents of the Sherbrooke Advisory Committee of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. Mr. B. N. Holtham is Chairman and Treasurer.

Many of these non-parochial activities have offered wide opportunity for Christian service.

St. Patrick's Parish has contributed six sons to the priesthood: Father Patrick Tracy, Father Wendell Reilly, P.S.S., Father William Byrd, Father Thomas Walsh, S.J., Father M. Hawkins, S.J., and Father W. Miller. Francis Giroux is Brother Philip of the Presentation Order.

The grace of religious vocation has been granted to the following young women: May McManamy, Mother of the Redeemer, C.N.D., Superioress of Marianapolis College, Montreal; Pauline Darche, Doris Wolfe, Annie Wolfe, Margaret Giroux, of the Congregation of Notre Dame; Kathleen Wolfe, Sisters of Charity, St. Augustine; Elizabeth Marcotte, Presentation Order; Teresa Fisher, Sisters of Service.

Parochial retreats have been regularly conducted by outstanding missionaries, among them the Rev. Fathers Knox, Connolly, Nash, Primean, Hingston, Lally, Bradley, of the Society of Jesus; Fathers Holland, O'Sullivan and F. Coghlan, C.S.S.R.; Fathers Lewis and Scannel, O.M.I.; Father Ethelbert, Franciscan; and Father Thomas Kearney, C.S.C.

Many talented musicians were among the parishioners, their art dedicated to the service of the church.

Father Fiset directed the first choir, with Mrs. C. Beaudoin, Miss A. Griffith, and S. Broderick as organists.

In the early 90's the choir, cooperating with its capable Director, Edward Codère, a former member of the famed Jesuit choir of Montreal, and Josephine Doherty as organist, was the first to introduce Classical Sacred Music, often accompanied at Midnight Mass and Solemn Feasts by an orchestra. It set a standard that has not been surpassed.

Outstanding members have been Messrs. McGuire, Tracy, Honlahan, Lefebvre, Boucher and Morissette; Olivier, Genest, Crochetière and Corcoran families, the Misses M. Archambault, Bessie Nott (Mrs. E. W. Tobin), the Misses Mullins, Vera Workman, Kathleen and Mimi Shea, Alberta Vincent, Sylvia Mullins Gervais, Alice Maguire and Mrs. Claire Hawkins.

The high standard was maintained with Teresa Doherty (who also produced several operatic performances and concerts with the choir and academy singers), and also with Messrs. V. Olivier, H. Roy, H. Unsworth, M. Corcoran, as Directors; Mrs. Mildred Lergie-Sampson as Guest-organist; and Mrs. J. Doherty-Codère and Jack Leneghan as Composers.

Reforms approved in the 'Motu Proprio' (1903) of Pope Pius X, and

detailed in the "Divini Cultus" (1928) of Pope Pius XI have altered the character but not the high standard of Church Music. The present excellent choir has adapted its efforts to these requirements. It is under the direction of John Codère, with Mrs. M. Shea as organist.

Dramatic art has not been neglected. Mr. Thos. McGuire was the pioneer in this field.

Sponsored by the Ladies' Guild, for St. Patrick's Day Celebrations, a dramatic society known as the 'Irish Players' achieved distinction under the direction of Mrs. F. Doherty.

Splendid plays and comedies have been produced by M. Corcoran, who has also directed the ever popular Minstrel shows for the 'boys'.

The Wardens* have always, been the pillars of the church; through their cooperation with the pastors, and wise administration, the parish is now free of financial encumbrance. The parishioners are about to undertake extensive improvements recently found necessary to the church hall, at an approximate cost of \$15,000.

The present officials are: Mr. Clovis Buzzell, Head-Warden, and Messrs. Frank Conway and Leonard Dunn.

Parochial history may or may not call forth the valiant women-workers of the past again, but offers them homage now, in the person of a grand old lady, Mrs. J. H. Walsh, 84 years of age.

Mrs. J. Quinlan over ninety, and Mrs. Thos. Redmond 84 years of age, are also hale and hearty, and ever ready to talk over 'old times', and pray for the parish. God bless them!

The present (1944) city valuation of St. Patrick's Church property is \$135,000 and that of St. Patrick's Academy, \$90,000.

The parish Census-Report compiled in October, 1943, gives the following figures: 270 families, 954 Communicants, in all, 1154 parishioners.

St. Patrick's was honored by the first visit of His Excellency Mgr. Desranlean as Coadjutor on the 14th of May, 1939. Upon the death of Bishop Gagnon he became the fourth Bishop of Sherbrooke Diocese on the 13th of February, 1941.

An early page in the history of St. Patrick's second half-century was shadowed by the retirement of its beloved Pastor, Canon McGee. His decision, made known to the congregation from the pulpit on Sunday, October 8, 1944, occasioned general regret.

* Three have occupied the mayoral chair, Messrs. Wm. Murray, D. Mc-Manamy and John Leonard. H. Mulvena became District Magistrate in 1895. J. K. Flaherty is Vice-President and Managing Editor, and D. Mc-Mahon is News Editor of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*, the only English newspaper of the Eastern Townships.

Citizens and parishioners join in the earnest wish “Ad Multos Annos,” that he may enjoy the peace and serenity of the approaching sunset, the after-glow of his long and well ordered life.

The nomination by His Excellency Bishop Desranleau of the Rev. Father Rosario Moisan as Parish Priest of St. Patrick’s, was read by the Very Rev. Canon Codère from the pulpit on Sunday, October 15, 1937. Father Moisan was then inducted into his new charge by the Very Rev. Canon Bourassa, representing His Excellency the Bishop. The cordial sentiment of the parishioners for their new pastor, is embodied in the word, “Welcome!” which multiplies effectively in the Irish greeting, “CEAD MILE FAILTE!”

The history of Catholic institutions in Sherbrooke may be visualized in its numerous and thriving churches and parishes. Of its background of old, the mighty power of the Magag has been harnessed to gleam in the myriad lights of a modern city, but its muted “Te Demn” has arisen a triumphant Paean in the mightier voice of the Catholic Church.

To this great choir, the voice of St. Patrick’s brings its characteristic Chord of Irish faith, tolerance and understanding. These, with the high moral, educational and cultural standards maintained in the parish, have created and exercised a benevolent influence felt and acknowledged time and again.

Its members, foremost in all religious, patriotic, social and sporting activities are its standard bearers, and it is the consensus of opinion that those entrusted with the ‘Colors’ have ever brought them additional lustre.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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2. *Le Diocèse de Sherbrooke*, compiled by the Rev. D. Biron.
3. *Annuaire* of the Seminaire St. Charles Borromée.
4. *Annals of St. Patrick’s Academy*.
5. Files of various newspapers, including *Le Pionnier* (1887), *Sherbrooke Record*, *La Tribune*.

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