

## Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Community Traces History to 1856



Holy Name of Jesus today

"A.D. 1857, on August 21, I baptized in this place of Medina an infant born on February 1, 1857 of Leo Stumpf and Regina Stumpf, a wedded couple of this place. The name given the infant was Francis. The Godfather and the Godmother are George and Mary Ann Reiser."

The signature on this original baptismal certificate is illegible. The first known priest to serve in the area of Holy Name of Jesus was the Rev. George Keller, who journeyed on foot from St. Paul to say mass at the home of George Reiser in 1856. For several years thereafter the Rev. Eberhart Jahr, O.S.B., a missionary in St. Anthony, came to Medina to say Mass at the homes of Mathias Hansmann and Andrew Jordon.

The City of Medina was originally called Hamburg, named by about 50 German families. Hamburg became a township on May 11, 1858. At that time the settlers, numbering 37 voters, attended a meeting called by Andrew Scherer and unanimously voted to change the name to Medina.

In the year 1864, Holy Name Parish was incorporated by the Most Rev. Thomas L. Grace, Bishop of Minnesota. One of the requirements for incorporation was 40 acres of land, free and clear. The stipulated land was donated by the families of Lenzen, 12 ½ acres; Hansmann, 12 ½ acres; Luby, Mooney, and O'Brien, 5 acres each. That same year a log church was erected on the shores of Holy Name Lake, at that time called Hansmann Lake.



Tony Ditter at old log church

Between 1864 and 1875, Holy Name Parish was administered by the Benedictine Order from St. Boniface Parish, Minneapolis (a parish staffed with priests by the St. John's Abbey near St. Cloud).

The Rev. Ignatius Schaller began a frame church in 1874, undergoing great difficulty, because many who until now belonged to the Holy Name of Jesus community, dodged the costs and withdrew. The parish then fell into debt and disunity developed. The new church was completed, however, and dedicated on September 5, 1875. When Fr. Schaller was transferred, the parish was without a priest and was visited only occasionally by priests of neighboring parishes.



First frame church, built in 1874

The old log church was now used as a school, teaching German Catholics for three months of the year. The first teacher, Mr. Carl Meyer, was hired in 1876.

It was in 1877 that Holy Name Parish received a permanent priest in the person of the Rev. Janarius Czarnowski, a Franciscan from Poland, who

also attended to the parishes at Medicine Lake as well as Crystal Lake. But this young, pious and zealous priest stayed only one and one half years, after which, at Easter, 1879, he went to the Diocese of Green Bay, WI, where his parents lived.

On May 23, 1879, The Rev. Magnus M. Mayr, O.S.B. was appointed to Holy Name of Jesus. He did not arrive until August, moving with all his belongings into the old church building, which had now been remodeled to serve as a residence. He had instructions from Bishop Grace to build a new parish house, but he still had to wrestle with the old church debts (\$700). In addition he had to take care of the unfinished church at Medicine Lake, which hampered his work at Holy Name of Jesus.

From a journal kept by Father Magnus: "In July 1881, a parish meeting was held in Holy Name of Jesus Church to discuss the possibility of building a new parish house. But because of dissension this plan fell through. Accordingly, a report was made to Bishop Grace, and the Bishop ordered that a parish house should be built in Felters Settlement (now Loretto) at the church of Sts. Peter and Paul, and Holy Name of Jesus should be taken care of from there. This parish house was built during the winter of 1881-1882. Father Magnus was sick at the time and could not move into the new parish house. "Here there are only ten men who are of one mind to build, and that is in vain. Nobody wants to pay anymore." -P. Magnus Mayr, Jan. 10, 1882.

Father Magnus' name appears for the last time in the Holy Name of Jesus register on March 29, 1882.

For the next twenty years, Holy Name of Jesus was quiet due to the frequent change of pastors. A series of priests follow Fr. Magnus: The Rev. F. O. Kober came in October 1883; The Rev. J. Schwartz arrived in January, 1884; then several Franciscan priests; The Rev. Fulgentius Eich, OSF; The Rev. Dominicus Florian, OSF; and The Rev. Marianus Hahn, OSF. The Rev. John Justin Jacobs arrived in September, 1887 and remained until the arrival of The Rev. Pius S. Schmid, O.S.B., in March of 1889.

Father Schmid remained at Holy Name of Jesus for over seven years. It was during his administration that the parish was once again incorporated. The records show: "On the 25th day of September, 1891, the church of The Holy Name of Jesus of Medina became incorporated." This incorporation was duly signed by the register of deeds of Hennepin County. The directors of this incorporation are: John Ireland, Thomas L. Grace, Pius Schmid, John Theis, and Nicolas Roehl.

In 1891, a parish house was built on the premises but no mention of the expense was made in the financial report. Perhaps it was all donated.

The old log church was torn down in 1893, and in its place a new frame school was built. It had a full basement under it, known as the 'Society Hall', where all the meetings, card parties, receptions and entertainment took place.

Father Pius left Holy Name of Jesus in April, 1896, when The Rev. Theodore Venn took over, remaining three years. In October of 1899, The Rev. B. G. Jansen, came, but only for one year.

The Rev. C. M. Hampsch, O.S.B., was appointed in September, 1901. Evidently he did not quite agree in thought with the members of the parish. The minutes of one of the meetings records, in beautiful

German script: "Resolution adopted at Holy Name of Jesus , Minnesota, February 19, 1904. A meeting was held on the purpose of fixing the pastor's salary and other business brought up by the trustees.

Resolved: That the pastor is to receive as his salary the sum of five hundred dollars per year.

Resolved: That the sexton is to receive \$50.00 per year for sexton work except building fires in the church stoves.

Resolved: That the congregation allows fifty cents (.50) per month for oil used in the church and pastor's house for starting fires. Furthermore that if that is not sufficient, the pastor has to pay the rest out of his own salary.

Resolved: That the pastor shall, beginning in English, preach in English at the first High Mass and at the following High Mass he will preach in German and so on throughout the year and when the pastor preaches in German when it should be in English, we will deem it necessary to withhold five dollars (\$5.00) for each and every sermon so violated.

Resolved: That when no sermon is preached, we will withhold five dollars (\$5.00) for each time no sermon is preached.

Resolved: That the organist shall receive as his salary the sum of forty dollars (\$40.00) per year, but he must pay his pew rent which is fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per year.

It is not surprising to note that Father Hampesch stayed only a short time after that meeting. The Rev. Andrew Baczyk became pastor in May, 1904. He obviously did not like some of the above resolutions and scratched them out in the meeting record book by writing boldly "absurdity" across the pages several times and then signing it. He did not stay long either.

The Rev. John Henry Keil, O.S.B., took his residence at Holy Name of Jesus in June of 1905, and remained until April 21, 1908, when he drowned in Hansmann's Lake while out rowing with friends. He is buried in the parish cemetery. The Rev. Fedore Doring, O.S.B., was appointed pastor January 7, 1909 and remained until September 1911.

On March 4, 1911, the rectory burned to the ground, started by a fire in the kitchen stove. Immediately, a new rectory was built. It was barely completed when the church was struck by lightning at the base of the cross on the steeple. Leonthine and Stella Striebel, young girls who lived nearby, rang the bell to call for help until it would no longer ring. Parishioners rushed to the church to try to save it.

Some of the pews were saved, some of the stained glass windows. The sanctuary bell and lamp were saved by Grandpa Pohlker. A bucket brigade was formed from the lake and the new rectory was saved. The church, however, burned to the ground. The date was June 3, 1911, the Eve of Pentecost.

Once again, the parishioners of Holy Name of Jesus were to build. Henry Scherer, Sr. and George Reiser became the 'general contractors' and arranged for the plans, stained glass windows and lumber. The new church was built on the old corner stone. That summer Mass was said outdoors under the willow trees. It has been told that it did not rain once on Sunday morning throughout the construction.



**New church and rectory in 1913**

The parish made an appeal to St. John's Abbey in Collegeville for a resident priest, as there was a shortage of secular priests at the time. The Rev. George Scheffold, O.S.B., a priest of whom people still speak with love, was sent. He took charge of Holy Name of Jesus parish and ministered to the members for 13 years.

When Father George arrived, the new church was framed but the interior was not yet finished. Father



**New church decorated for the dedication in 1913. Garlands are made from oak branches tied with twine and strung with heavy rope.**

George arranged for the decoration of walls, and the sanctuary paintings. The new church was dedicated on October 13, 1913 by the Most Rev. John G. Ireland, Bishop of Minnesota.

Father George, a tireless worker, also began the mission parishes of St. George's in Long Lake and St. Bartholomew's in Wayzata. He administered the construction of both churches. During his stay he also conducted missions in many parishes.

Father George was a striking tall man who did everything with great enthusiasm and conviction.

In the summer of 1914, Father George celebrated the 25th jubilee of his ordination. Any social events were held in the basement of the old school house, which indeed was too small for much of a crowd. Father George saw the necessity of a hall where dinners could be held and larger crowds could be handled.

A meeting was called, plans were soon underway and a building committee was organized. The 'Amusement Hall' as it was known, was in progress. Labor was donated and the carpenters in charge were Anthony Adams, Mike Adams, Henry Scherer, John Reiser, George Reimer, August Striebel, Simon Scherer and many more. Lumber was inexpensive and the building materials cost approximately \$700.

The building was completed in December, 1914, and plans were made for a grand opening to be held on New Year's Eve. This indeed was a gala event. And what a lot of preparation. The lamps alone were a big job. Who can remember all the kerosene lights that had to be lit and the wood and water that had to be hauled? The party was a huge success, including a chicken dinner, fortune wheel, raffles. The Merz Orchestra furnished the music. There was dancing in the evening and when it was over everyone felt the Amusement Hall was well worth the time and effort.

World War I intervened, and the boys were called to service. Farewell parties in the hall were sad and good-byes were said with tear-filled eyes. Of the 32 young men who went to the war, only one did not return. Armistice Day on Nov. 11, 1918 brought an end to that conflict. And the boys came home. Again there were welcome home parties in the hall and soon came the news that the casket bearing the body of John Pohlker was being returned to be buried at Holy Name of Jesus. The casket lay in state in the hall. His comrades stood guard all night and never was there so great a crowd at a funeral here.

The need for a larger school became apparent and another building program was begun. An addition to the old school was built, doubling the size. At the same time a new convent was begun. Father George applied to the St. Scholastica Priory at Duluth for sisters to teach.

Holy Name of Jesus School opened its door in September of 1919 for the full school year with four nuns and 52 students in all eight elementary grades and one year of high school. Father George vacated the rectory so the sisters could live there until the convent could be finished. At Thanksgiving they moved into their new home. The school enrollment increased rapidly, reaching 90 students by 1930. After the first few years of operation, the first year of high school was dropped.

Father George was transferred to St. Bartholomew's in Wayzata, a parish he had begun, in September of 1925. The Rev. Benedict Schmitt, O.S.B., replaced him and remained until March, 1929 when the Rev. Leo Hoppe, O.S.B., came for only a short time. In September of 1929, The Rev. Eugene Woerdehoff, O.S.B., arrived.

Things continued in much the same pattern. There was the Harvest Festival in August each year. There were card parties drawing large crowds and an occasional bingo party. School picnics, graduation exercises, wood cutting bees, and everything that would be a help to the community both socially and financially, were all held in the Amusement Hall.

Holy Name of Jesus had the privilege of serving the dinners in the Hall for the Most Rev. John Gregory Murry, Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis and the Most Rev. Leo Byrne, Bishop of St. Paul, as well as the First Mass dinners for the Rev. Bernard Mengelkoch, O.S.B., The Rev. Bernard Reiser, and the Rev. Mathias Faue O.S.B., parishioners who gave their life to God's service in the priesthood. How proud Holy Name of Jesus was to serve them!

During the depression events slowed in the parish. The Rev. Adalbert Unruhe, O.S.B., came in August of 1931 but activities were more difficult to sponsor. There were years, lean indeed, when even the harvest festival was not held.

In September, 1936, The Rev. Hyacinth Cismowski, O.S.B., was appointed to the parish. He remained ten years and is fondly remembered by many.

World War II in 1941 again called the young men of Holy Name of Jesus. Fr. Hyacinth counseled and consoled many of the wives and mothers left behind. At Holy



**Holy Name School and Amusement Hall in 1946**

Name School, each student was responsible for praying for the safety of one soldier.

This war again claimed one of our boys. Lt. Anthony Ditter died as a hero helping his co-pilot to safety, thereby losing his own life. He was buried at sea.

On July 4, 1946, The Rev. Edward Botzet, O.S.B., was appointed to Holy Name of Jesus. He was to stay the longest of any priest assigned to the parish to date. In 1946 changes were taking place in the community. The men were returning from the war and the parish was growing. New families moved here and school enrollment reached ever higher numbers. Every year the subject of the crowded school conditions was discussed but the task seemed so enormous. Finally a ballot was issued to all wage earners and a vote was cast: 98% of the people voted for a new school, the basement of which would serve as the 'Amusement Hall' for dinners and social events. A building committee was organized, plans prepared. The estimate was in: \$120,000.

On Easter Monday, April 12, 1955, ground was broken for the new school. That August would be the last Harvest Festival in the old hall. In September three sisters from St. Scholastica's came to teach and a classroom was set up in the old hall.

In January 1956, the dream came true. Class rooms were completed and the children and teachers moved into the new school. Also the bingo parties, card parties, and suppers took place there.

In the early 1960s, Fr. Edward became ill. In April 1964 he was hospitalized and it was apparent that he would not recover. The Rev. Frances Studer, O.S.B., was assigned to administer the parish in Fr. Edward's absence. On May 27, 1964, Fr. Edward died. After 20 years with the parishioners of Holy Name of Jesus, the loss was felt deeply. His funeral at St. John's Abbey was attended by many from the parish.

On June 21, 1964, The Rev. Emmanuel Kelsch, O.S.B., was appointed. He arrived at a time when the parish boundaries were being changed by the Archbishop. St. Anne's in Hamel, until that time had been a national parish with no boundaries. Now they became a territorial parish and part of Holy Name of Jesus was relinquished.

At the same time a surge in suburban population was published. It was projected that the registration for Holy Name School would double or even triple by the mid 1970's. In preparation for this, it was determined that an addition to the school would be necessary to accommodate the growing enrollment.

Once again construction was underway at Holy Name of Jesus, beginning in September 1966. A contract was let for the building of four class rooms to the back of the existing school. This building project did not have the wholehearted support of the parishioners as other construction projects had in the past. There was a great deal of dissension. The school addition was completed in December 1966 and occupied as classrooms during the first week of January 1967.



**The old school and hall burn to the ground**

On July 18, 1967, early in the morning, two young boys were seen leaving the old school premises. Shortly thereafter, the building was blazing. It quickly spread to the roof of the old hall. Three fire departments tried to fight the inferno, but both buildings burned to the ground.

That fire not only ended an era in buildings, but the contents, which were also lost, were the equipment used to set up for the annual harvest festival... all the tents and booth material. It

was never replaced, and harvest festivals were discontinued at that time.

Fr. Emmanuel suffered a heart attack in 1968 and recuperated for some time. When it became evident that the strain of parish administration would be too much for him, The Rev. Alto Butkowski, O.S.B., was appointed in September 1969. A dear man and a capable 'handy man' Fr. Alto repaired and restored many things at Holy Name of Jesus, including the parish spirit.

The Rev. Arnold Weber, O.S.B., came to Holy Name of Jesus, July 1, 1972. A retreat master, marriage counselor, a gifted public speaker, his sermons were a pleasure to hear. He left June 1973 to administer Benilde St. Margaret High School.

After Vatican II parishes were asked to renovate church sanctuaries according to the norms of the church. Fr. Arnold began this renovation, which was completed by The Rev. Mathias Spier, O.S.B. who was appointed pastor in June 1973. He continued to introduce liturgical changes as recommended by the Archdiocese. Fr. Mathias greatly improved the grounds, buildings and the general beauty of the parish site.

The Rev. Henry Anderl, O.S.B., was appointed pastor July 17, 1979. His blood brother, Brother John Anderl, O.S.B., was assigned to be of assistance to Fr. Henry. Eighteen months later, in December 1980 both were assigned to the LaCrosse diocese. Fr. Henry demonstrated a great concern for the spiritual welfare of the parish, and a special way visited the sick and aging of the parish.

The Rev. Arnold Weber, O.S.B., President of Benilde-St. Margaret's High School returned to Holy Name of Jesus in December 1980, while simultaneously retaining his position at Benilde-St. Margaret's until June, 1981, when he was replaced at Benilde-St. Margaret's and became full time pastor at Holy Name of Jesus. The community of Holy Name of Jesus was blessed to have Father Arnold with us for 23 years.

"I'm not very fast, but I always start right away," stated Father Arnold, in an interview for an article in *The Holy Name Herald*, when he returned to Holy Name of Jesus in December 1981. That is exactly what he did. Father Arnold began immediately to build community at Holy Name of Jesus, to liven up the liturgies, to encourage stewardship, and to promote unity in all that was done in the parish. When he arrived there were approximately 300 families registered in the parish. (There were over 2900 families when he left in 2003). One of his first decisions was to have a pictorial directory put together so parishioners could more easily recognize one another. The community was crowded for space; the issue of building was also addressed immediately.

In March of 1981, a long range planning committee of 12 members was formed. The Committee advised and assisted the Parish Council in the successful implementation of the long range plans. A needs assessment was made and studied from May 1981 to October 1981. This committee was replaced by the Building Committee chaired ably by Paul Wirtz. Other members were Dan Dorwart, Greg Scherer, Tom Smith, Harvey May, Carol O'Brien, Mary Alice Hargarten, Leon Leuer and Father Arnold Weber, O.S.B.

A master building plan was developed, to be built in two phases. On April 25, 1982, 87% of the parishioners approved Phase I. The Pledge Drive began in May 1982 and construction began in September, 1982. This was completed in August 1983 and involved a new gymnasium, new temporary Worship Center (now the Good Samaritan Center), library and additional classroom wing. The total cost of the construction, furnishings, etc. was \$1,300,000.

Throughout this time the parish continued to grow, adding 20 to 25 new families every month. So it was no surprise when Phase II of the planning began in record time, in April 1984. From April to September 1984, another complete needs assessment was made through a parish questionnaire and open meetings. The parish again exhibited a great spirit of community and concern to take care of the needs of all. Hospitality and community is the hallmark of Holy Name of Jesus Parish, stemming from its Benedictine roots.

Plans for construction were prepared and the parish again approved the construction by nearly 90 percent. Involved in Phase II was a new church with seating for 1100, a large narthex for gathering, converting the temporary Worship Center into a parish center, the Good Samaritan Center, remodeling of offices from the former dining hall, remodeling of school and some other minor changes along with a new rectory.

In Phase I, great emphasis had been placed on the stewardship concept which parishioners generously responded to so that the \$1.3 million was paid for as plans were begun for Phase II. In Phase II even greater emphasis was placed on stewardship as the

**Fr. Arnold Weber, O.S.B.**

Expansion of God's Kingdom in western Hennepin

County. Parishioners responded so that over \$2.2 million was pledged. Total cost of Phase II with furnishings, etc. amounted to \$2.7 million. This \$4 million plan was now completed by May 1987. The Church of the Holy Name of Jesus was dedicated on November 22, 1987 by Archbishop John Roach, concelebrating with Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B. and Father Arnold Weber, O.S.B. with Rev. Mr. Joe Wierschem assisting as deacon.



In a questionnaire following Phase I, 94 percent of the parishioners had indicated high satisfaction with Phase I of the program. The questionnaire also revealed a great emphasis was placed on community of faith and good liturgy. The predominant desire was to build a new church. The emphasis on expansion of God's Kingdom

became a spiritual motivation for looking forward to the completed facility. Parishioners continued their



generosity as before. Because of the unusual generosity, the loan was for \$1.2 million. Parishioners have continued their generosity so that the debt was repaid early. The parish continued to grow in size and dedication.

Holy Name of Jesus truly owes a debt of gratitude to Father Arnold Weber, O.S.B. His tremendous Christian leadership, sense of community, hospitality, and love of people just naturally flows over into the lives of the people with whom he worked. The community was deeply saddened when he retired in 2003 because of health problems.

Fr. Jonathan Licari, O.S.B. came to Holy Name of Jesus in June 2001 to assist Fr. Arnold. He worked as assistant pastor for three months and then assumed the role of pastor, with Father Arnold as assistant. In 2003, Father Arnold's health deteriorated so that he was not able to continue as Assistant Pastor. He retired to St. John's Abbey to recuperate.

Father Joseph Feders, O.S.B. arrived in July of 2003, to serve as associate pastor with Father Jonathan. Under their leadership pastoral restructuring was initiated. An in-depth survey of the parish was generated. All parishioners were invited to share in the ministerial life of the community by participating in the newly formed Ministry Area Commissions. All the various ministries of Holy Name of Jesus were grouped under seven commission heads: Liturgy, Stewardship, Social Justice, Finance & Administration, Faith Formation, Pastoral Care, and School. The commission leaders meet monthly to help foster all areas of ministry. Unbeknown to themselves, Father Jonathan and Father Joseph became the transition team between the Benedictine and Archdiocesan administration. In June 2006, St. John's Abbey, due to their shortage of priests, announced they could no longer supply priests for Holy Name of Jesus. After over 150 years of Benedictine tradition, Holy Name of Jesus will become an Archdiocesan Parish as of June 30, 2007. Father Joseph left Holy Name of Jesus in June of 2006, and Father Jonathan served as pastor until June 2007.

At this time, Archbishop Harry Flynn presided at a Transfer Mass at Holy Name of Jesus, where Abbot John Klassen of St. John's Abbey officially transferred our parish to the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. In July of 2007, Father Tim Morin and Father Paul Kammen actively took over the roles of Pastor and Associate Pastor at Holy Name of Jesus. On September 16, 2007 Archbishop Flynn returned to Holy Name of Jesus to perform the Installation Mass for Fr. Tim. Unlike the Transfer Mass, which celebrated the transfer of leadership, the Installation Mass serves as a reception of our new Pastor and his ministry. Both Fr. Tim and Fr. Paul helped usher in a new Parish Mission that remains to this day: "Sharing in the Body of Christ, we seek to:

Know the heart of Christ.

See the face of Christ.



**Fr. Paul Kammen and Fr. Tim Morin at September 16, 2007 Installation Mass**

Be the hands of Christ.”

Father Joseph-Quoc Vuong joined as associate pastor at Holy Name of Jesus in 2009 and joined Fr. Tim and our entire faith community in living this mission. After serving our community for four years, Fr. Tim left HNOJ to go on sabbatical. Our community welcomed Fr. Steve Ulrick as pastor in July 2011 and celebrated his Installation Mass on Sunday, September 11, following our annual parish festival. Fr. Steve came to HNOJ familiar to our area, having grown up in Mound, Minn. Our parish family now looks back at more than 150 years of history with pride and looks into the future with confidence. Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Community is a generous, active, profoundly spiritual congregation with strong Social Justice affinities. And despite many changes over the years, our parish has maintained St. Benedict’s philosophy: “Welcome all as you would welcome Christ.”

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