

FROM PIG'S EYE TO SAINT PAUL: IN THANKSGIVING FOR 175 YEARS

I attended a wonderful “behind the scenes” tour of the Minnesota History Center this past Tuesday, thanks to the invitation of a parishioner and Cathedral neighbor. I saw just how vast is the collection of the Center, so much of it beneath ground in our massive and award-winning History Center. Of course, my visit gave me occasion to put in a plug for what I think should be a future exhibit, namely one on the life and ministry of our first Archbishop, John Ireland, whose centenary of death is less than two years from now. He died on September 25, 1918. So in terms of floating an exhibit idea, it is not at all too soon to make my pitch. I also inquired about seeing some of the earliest photos of Saint Paul, one of which is included on today’s bulletin cover. (The images were known as *Daguerreotypes*, named after its inventor, a Frenchman by the name of Louis Daguerre, in 1839. It was an early photographic process employing an iodine-sensitized silvered plate and mercury vapor, and the small image rested on a highly polished, mirror-like silver surface.) The original is just 3x3 inches and the approximate date is listed as 1855. It shows Dr. Day’s Drugstore in the background and I wonder if that is coal stashed outside the front door, perhaps for use in the stove, or bricks?

It was in these humble surroundings, in a settlement known as Pig’s Eye (French: *L’œil du Cochon*), that Fr. Lucien Galtier will forever be remembered and lauded for suggesting a simple name change. Following the slightly earlier settlement at Mendota (naming the chapel after St. Peter), he suggested calling the settlement St. Paul. Since 13 out of the 20 families in the settlement were Catholic, Galtier’s desire carried considerable weight. The name change stuck- Deo Gratias! The little chapel built by Fr. Galtier and his band of assistants took only about a week to construct. While that is impressive, recall that originally, it stood just 24 feet long by 18 feet wide by 10 feet high. It contained just two 3-foot square windows and a single door. Six years later, the chapel was expanded, doubling its size, but by then Fr. Galtier had left the area, having been replaced by Fr. Augustin Ravoux, another Frenchman. The names of the builders deserve mention: Isaac and Joseph Labisonniere, Pierre Gervais, Benjamin Gervais and Vital Guerin (who together donated the land), Pierre and Charles Bottineau, and Francois Morin. *Merci à vous tous, du plus profond de mon cœur!*

A world away in Washington D.C., William Henry Harrison had recently died, just a month after being inaugurated our 9th U.S. President. It was a cold wet day during which he gave a 105-minute speech, and contracted pneumonia. **President John Tyler** occupied the White House on **November 1, 1841**, and **Pope Gregory XVI** was the Bishop of Rome. That chapel would eventually become a Cathedral with the establishment by Pope Pius IX of the Diocese of St. Paul on July 19, 1850. Newly minted Bishop Joseph Cretin would not first set foot in his new Cathedral until nearly a full year later on July 2, 1851. He immediately set out to build a more permanent structure befitting of the name Cathedral. Yet, for a brief time this indeed was our Cathedral, and of it we ought to be proud as we honor the anniversary of that first Mass this Tuesday at 5:15 p.m., All Saints Day.

We must try to appreciate just how brutal this mission territory was in the mid-19th century. Galtier was the only priest, and he suffered from tremendous loneliness, absent all priestly companionship. Galtier, somewhat irascible, had a bit of a falling out with Bishop Loras, then the Bishop of Dubuque, under whose jurisdiction these parts effectively fell in those days. Technically speaking— yes, I like to be technical— the eastern bank of the Mississippi fell under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Milwaukee. So yes, I sleep well knowing that no true St. Paulite ever took ecclesiastical orders from anyone based in Iowa! But canonical boundaries carried little weight in those days. Troubled by loneliness, sickness and yes, a modicum of boredom, Galtier returned to France. But the lure of the missionary adventure soon brought him back, eventually settling in Prairie du Chien, WI, where his tomb may be found today.

To locate the site of our first Cathedral, look from Kellogg Blvd. to the grassy park between the street and the river, the block between Cedar St. and Minnesota St. Called **Kellogg Mall Park**, there you may find a simple plaque attached to a large stone, much closer to Robert St. It honors both the first log chapel, as well as the **Sisters of St. Joseph**, the first group of women religious recruited by Bishop Cretin to come up river from Missouri to teach in our first Catholic schools. We honor the pioneer spirit of those clergy, religious and faithful

laity who risked so much to forge a new life in this unchartered territory. It gives me great comfort to know that the birth of our capital city is inextricably interwoven with the arrival of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the saving sacraments of His Church.

- I heartily encourage you to join us here this Tuesday evening November 1 at 5:15 p.m. as Archbishop Hebda celebrates the 175th anniversary Mass on All Saints Day. A reception follows downstairs. I'd love to see a **large crowd** to commemorate this auspicious milestone. The Archbishop will also offer the **"Blue Mass,"** on All Souls Day, November 2 at 5:15 p.m., honoring the service of Law Enforcement and First Responders. It recalls those who have died in duty, and prays for God's protection and guidance as they carry out their vital service to our community. Let's show our support for these brave men and women.
- The Vatican has agreed to facilitate the negotiations aimed at healing the long-standing political crisis in Venezuela. Our Archdiocese has operated a mission there since 1970, and our priests are ministering to thousands of faithful in two parishes amidst a very dangerous situation. Talks will be held on an island 40 kilometers off the coast of the country.
- Our Mass schedule for **All Saint's Day** is as follows: **Monday October 31** at 5:15 p.m. (anticipatory Mass); **Tuesday November 1** at 7:00 a.m. (note earlier time for workers); 12:00 Noon and 5:15 p.m. All Saints day is a holy day of obligation. On **All Soul's Day**, (Nov. 2) we will offer Masses at 7:30 a.m. and 5:15 p.m.
- Ouch! New figures released last week seem to confirm what critics have been saying since 2009– the **Affordable Care Act** is fast becoming an oxymoron. Minnesota has the fourth highest premium rate hike, a whopping 59 percent. The burden of health care costs has clearly shifted to the middle class, as health-care spending across the economy reached 18.2% of gross domestic product as of this past June, up from 13.3% in 2000.
- The new instruction from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith about **cremation** is not really new, but rather reaffirms our teaching on the proper approach to the handling of cremated remains. I'll write more in detail in a future column, as this has become a growing issue.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. John L. Ubel,
Rector