

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN EASTERN NEW HAVEN COUNTY.



An Illustrated Historical Sketch of the Faith in New Haven, Meriden, Wallingford, and Neighboring Places.

St. John's Parish, New Haven.

On the very site of old Christ Church, hallowed in the memories of the older Catholics of New Haven, stands the church of St. John, surrounded by the grave-stones that tell of those who sowed the prolific seed of faith in this county.

In 1857, after St. Patrick's parish was well organized, Rev. John Smith came from Danbury to institute another parish, and was welcomed to the hospitality of Father Edward O'Brien's house until he was able to secure a residence for himself. St. John's Church was built by him, and was dedicated during the following year. About the same time he erected the school building, calling in the Sisters of Charity as teachers; owing, however, to financial difficulties, the schoolhouse was shortly afterwards rented out to the board of education.

Father Smith died in 1864, and was buried in front of the church. His immediate successor was Rev. Doctor Carmody, a priest of deep erudition and great eloquence, who remained here fourteen years. Doctor Carmody laid the foundations of the present St. Francis' Orphan Asylum in 1874; and during the same year he built the convent of St. Elizabeth, opening the school immediately thereafter under the care of the Sisters of Charity.

Father Cooney, his successor, came in 1878, and remained in charge more than eight years; he was succeeded Feb. 19, 1887, by Rev. B. Bray.

Father Coyle was born in Bridgeport, Dec. 18, 1850, went to school there, took a course in the Business College of Bridgeport, and went to St. Charles' College in 1871, where he remained all through his classical course, with the exception of the last year, which he passed at St. Michael's, Toronto. He studied philosophy and theology at the Grand Seminary of Montreal, and was ordained Dec. 17, 1881. After a four years' curacy at Stafford Springs, he became pastor there Jan. 1, 1886, remaining there until his appointment to St. John's.

Rev. M. A. Sullivan, Father Coyle's assistant, was born in Middlefield, Conn., Sept. 16, 1860, studied at Bacon Academy in Colchester, and at St. Bonaventure's College and Semin-



St. John's Church and School, New Haven, Conn.,
Rev. J. D. Coyle, Pastor



St. John's Rectory, New Haven, Conn.,
Rev. J. D. Coyle, Pastor.



St. Elizabeth's Convent of St. John's Parish, New Haven, Conn.,
Rev. J. D. Coyle, Pastor.

ary, where he was ordained June 16, 1884. Immediately after his ordination he was made assistant at Windsor Locks, and was transferred thence to St. John's, Feb. 19, 1887.

St. John's Church is a modified Gothic brick edifice, with brownstone underpinning; its facade is variegated with brownstone facings and darkened brick pediments.

Its octagonal spire is of good proportions. Its interior finish is out of the ordinary, the ceiling following the pitch of the roof, thus giving a peculiar character to the rib-work which divides it into panels; and these panels are bordered in diaper work, every one of them containing an emblematic design. The main arches of the nave are depressed, and the true Gothic lines are carried out in fresco on the walls above, the treatment of the side-aisle ceilings being in harmony.

The chancel wall is a combination of Gothic and Roman arches, which are supported by finely clustered and splendidly capped columns arising from the altar-piece. The principal embellishment of the chancel wall is in diaper, which is relieved by paintings of the Good Shepherd and the Immaculate Conception, while above these is a large rose window of thirteen lights, the central opening representing St. John.

The chancel ceiling is peculiarly paneled and is richly decorated with angelic studies.

The school of St. John's parish, situated at some distance below the church, is built of brick, and accommodates at present about five hundred children, the teaching community consisting of thirteen Sisters of Charity. The efficiency of this school is seen in the success of its graduates who take the high school examinations.

In the short time that has elapsed since Father Coyle took charge of St. John's parish, he has undertaken a great many improvements in the parochial buildings, though, as secretary of the diocesan board of school examiners, his duties take a great deal of time from parish work. He has remodeled the school building, making a complete change in the entrances; and he has introduced new heating apparatus into schoolhouse, convent, and rectory.



Rev. M. A. Sullivan,
St. John's Church, New Haven, Conn.



Rev. John D. Coyle,
Pastor St. John's Church,
New Haven, Conn.



St. Francis' Convent, New Haven, Conn.,
Rev. P. Mulholland, Pastor.



St. Francis' Parochial School, New Haven, Conn.,
Rev. P. Mulholland, Pastor.

St. Francis' Parish, New Haven.

St. Francis' parish is an offshoot of St. Patrick's, land having been bought on Ferry street in 1866 by Rev. Matthew Hart. This land was secured from Ambrose Clark for \$5,100. The first pastor was Rev. P. A. Gaynor, who began the construction of St. Francis' Church in 1867. The first Mass in the new church was celebrated Oct. 1, 1868, a carpenter's bench serving for an altar. Father Gaynor died May 29, 1869, and was succeeded on the sixth day of the following month by the present pastor, Rev. Patrick Mulholland.

Father Mulholland was born in Armagh, Ireland, in 1841, and received his early education partly at a private school and partly at the national school of Newtown-Hamilton. He studied the classics at the classical school of Bellemoyer, and afterwards at Violet Hill College. In 1860, he went to Louvain, Belgium, and after a seven years' course of

philosophy and theology was ordained there Aug. 17, 1867, by the Cardinal Archbishop of Mechlin. Arriving home, he was assigned to assist Father Hart at St. Patrick's, New Haven, where he remained until his appointment to succeed Father Gaynor.

Father Mulholland is assisted by Revs. Thomas H. Shanley and Daniel J. O'Connor. Father Shanley was born in Marysville, California, in 1861, his parents coming to Waterbury during his early childhood. He was educated at St. Charles' and St. Bonaventure's, and was ordained in June, 1886. After short terms of curacy at Moosup and Danielsonville, he came here in June, 1889.

Father O'Connor was born in Middletown, Conn., made his classical course at the Middletown high school and Wesleyan College, studied philosophy at Montreal, and pursued his theological studies at Aix-en-Provence, France, where he was ordained May 26, 1888.

When Father Mulholland took charge of the parish, the debt was \$85,000; and this debt was gotten under control in 1873. During the latter year he furnished the church with an organ and a new altar. He

began the erection of St. Francis' School in 1879, opening it in 1881 with a teaching corps of the Sisters of Mercy. This building is a substantial brick structure, is solidly built and well-ventilated, and stands out very prominently on Ferry street. For convent purposes he bought the fine property, 216 feet by 385, on the corner of Chatham and Ferry streets, at an expense, including the renovation of the dwelling, of \$18,000. During 1885 and 1886 Father Mulholland enlarged and improved the parochial residence and made considerable alterations in the school building, the total outlay for both purposes being \$15,000.

In May, 1894, he began the rebuilding of St. Francis' Church; and he has since added to the edifice a spacious transept, a very lofty chancel, and commodious vestries, raising the middle roof, enlarging the windows, and effecting a thorough change in the interior. Indeed, when the rebuilding will have been finished, St. Francis' Church will be entirely new, its exterior appearance being wonderfully improved already, and its interior, pure Gothic without a clerestory, promising, with its harmony of lines and the rich frescoes

that are in contemplation, to be unsurpassed in New Haven.

The church is of brick, trimmed with Easthaven and Longmeadow brownstone. It is 185 feet in length, 100 feet across the transept, and 62 feet in nave width.

Its facade is very strong, its broad expanse being splendidly counteracted by a towering spire and graceful pinnacles.

St. Francis' School, registering 800 children, and under the guidance of fourteen Sisters, has long since established its efficiency,—its graduates doing honor, in their various callings, to the instruction imparted to them by the Sisters of Mercy. In the first four grades the Pollard system of reading and pronouncing is followed, with satisfactory results.

Father Mulholland's many years in New Haven contain the record of a busy life; and today, with all the work of these years standing out unmistakably, and carrying a debt of less than \$25,000, notwithstanding the great expense of the rebuilding of the church, his labor has its reward even here, in the best affection of his people.

(To be Continued next week.)



St. Francis' Rectory, New Haven, Conn.,
Rev. P. Mulholland, Pastor.



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