

## Jordan Valley, Oregon



Holy Family Church, Arock, Oregon, was made possible by a generous gift of His Eminence, Richard Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston. Dedicated on May 3, 1959, by Bishop Francis P. Leipzig, D.D., it has filled a long-wanted need of the residents of Arock.

Many years before a church was erected in Jordan Valley the Catholics of the vicinity received spiritual ministrations from priests from Idaho and the Archdiocese of Oregon City, Oregon. Since the boundaries of the Archdiocese of Oregon City and the Diocese of Boise were not clearly defined geographically, at least, in the Jordan Valley area the Catholic folk living there were the object of concern of priests as far away as Cheyenne, Wyoming, and Pocatello, Idaho. Father Francis Hartleib and Father Henry Kremers visited this territory from Oregon City from time to time. Other names remembered by the old timers from this period are Father John Burri, Father Emanuel Nattini, S.J., Father Servais, Father Dryer, Father Dempsey, Father Joseph Van der Heyden and others. During the early years from the time of the Vicar Apostolic of Idaho, Right Reverend Alphonse J. Glorieux, D.D., (1885-1893) priests came into the area traveling on horseback and since there was no way of telling whether they were in Idaho or Oregon they took care of the needs of any Catholic family they met. The History of the Diocese of Boise is replete with the travels of these early missionaries into Jordan Valley, Silver City and the surrounding country.

It is recorded in the History of the Diocese of Baker that Father Edward O'D Hynes while pastor of Ontario, Oregon (1906-07) visited Jordan Valley and ministered to the Spiritual wants of the faithful there.

Bishop Glorieux much concerned with a number of Basque people from Spain in his struggling diocese obtained from the Bishop of Victoria in Spain the loan of a Basque priest, Father Bernardo Arregui who arrived in Boise on July 11, 1911, and immediately began his work among the Basque people in southern Idaho. At the re-

quest of Bishop O'Reilly the Basque folks in Jordan Valley were visited by Father Arregui. The Baptismal Register of Jordan Valley has several entries of persons who were baptized by Father Arregui in 1911 and 1912.

Father Marshall's entries in the Baptismal Register begin in 1913 and are continuous until December, 1915.

Sometime after Bishop O'Reilly's visit in 1914 for confirmations the present church was started. The Bishop appointed Father Hugh J. Marshall as pastor of Jordan Valley on July 30, 1915 to be effective August 8, 1915.

Father Marshall was transferred to Klamath Falls, April 19, 1916, as Pastor of Sacred Heart Church. Jordan Valley reverted to mission status and it was attended once a month by Father Patrick J. Stack, who had been appointed to the Missions of Baker County on the same date as Father Marshall's transfer to Klamath Falls.

Bishop O'Reilly came to Jordan Valley on Wednesday, May 16, 1917, and began a three day Mission on the 17th which ended on Sunday, May 20, 1917, the day that he dedicated the new Church under the patronage of St. Bernard. During the Mission which was conducted by himself twenty-two souls received their First Holy Communion—twenty-seven were recipients of the Sacrament of Confirmation and five converts were baptized. Among them the newly baptized were Caroline E. Swisher, the wife of Jack Swisher and Martha L. Knight. The last mentioned were baptized by Bishop O'Reilly and the rest by Father August F. Loeser, who was Pastor of St. Francis Cathedral and had accompanied the Bishop to Jordan Valley.

Bishop O'Reilly was evidently impressed with the need of a resident priest at Jordan Valley. On September 16, 1917, he appointed Father Michael C. Murphy as pastor of Jordan Valley where he remained about a year.

Toward the end of October, 1918, Father Patrick J. Stack was appointed to Vale with the Missions of Brogan, Malheur City, Juntura and Jordan Valley. In December, 1919, he was transferred to Ontario as Pastor, but with the care of all these Missions attached. Jordan Valley was visited by Father Stack from time to time during his pastorate at Ontario.

Father Marshall came back to Jordan Valley again as resident pastor in 1924 and remained until 1926, when he was transferred to become pastor of St. Mary's Church in Hood River. Jordan Valley became again a Mission of Ontario and was attended by Father Stack.

On August 1, 1928, Father John A. O'Connor was placed in charge of Jordan Valley and McDermitt with residence in Jordan Valley.

Referring to the early days of the apostolate in Jordan Valley Father Marshall writes "Notwithstanding the irregular visits of the priests, caused by the isolation of Jordan Valley, the Catholics

kept the Faith splendidly. And this can be explained by the practical zeal of the mothers. It was they who taught the prayers and catechism to the children and prepared them for the Sacraments and presented them to the priest on his annual visits. Among those devout women preservers of the Faith here, the names of O'Keefe, Joyce, Scott, Glover, Molloy, Fenwick, Connors, Swisher, Deary, Driscoll, Shea, Daly, McMahon, Baltzor and Maher stand out prominently."

Father John A. O'Connor remained about two years as pastor and once again Jordan Valley became a mission attended to by priests from Baker. Mass was celebrated once a month. The priest traveled by train to Caldwell, Idaho, and from there took a bus, a distance of 65 miles, to Jordan Valley. In September, 1938, Jordan Valley was placed under the care of the John Day Parish. Father George A. Murphy said Mass twice a month. He remained in the area for a week at a time, instructing the children and visiting the people.

One year later, September 10, 1939, Jordan Valley became a mission of Ontario and was attended twice a month. The priest remained over the week end and had instruction classes for the grade and high school pupils. In 1935 the local school board had granted released time for the children attending the Public Schools. When the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine was established in the Diocese in 1935, regular Summer Vacation School was started.

In November, 1949, the Church underwent extensive repairs and the interior was decorated.

Jordan Valley remained a mission of Ontario until October 1, 1951, when it was taken over by the Franciscan Fathers of the Santa Barbara Province who were on loan to the Diocese of Baker. These Fathers were stationed at Nyssa, Oregon. Father Rembert Ahles, O.F.M., was in charge of the Nyssa Parish. The assistant at Ontario took care of the mission of Jordan Valley on two Sundays a month until Father Matthias Curtin, O.F.M., was appointed assistant at Nyssa Parish on February 20, 1952. From that time on Mass has been celebrated every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation. While Father Matthias was in charge he had the rooms at the back of the Church fixed up as living quarters with a gift from the Catholic Church Extension Society of \$1,500.00. Father Matthias served the Jordan Valley mission until October 13, 1955, when he was replaced by Father Lucien Pargett, O.F.M., who remained until September 20, 1956, when Father Sebastian Zielski, O.F.M., was appointed in his place. During these years of Father Matthias stay at Jordan Valley he began to offer Mass at the Eiguren home in Arock. The first Mass was offered on March 8, 1953, in the living room using a long solid walnut buffet brought from Spain. This home occupied by Pascual Eiguren, and his son Fred and Fred's wife, Isabel, and their children, was used until January 1, 1959, to offer Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.

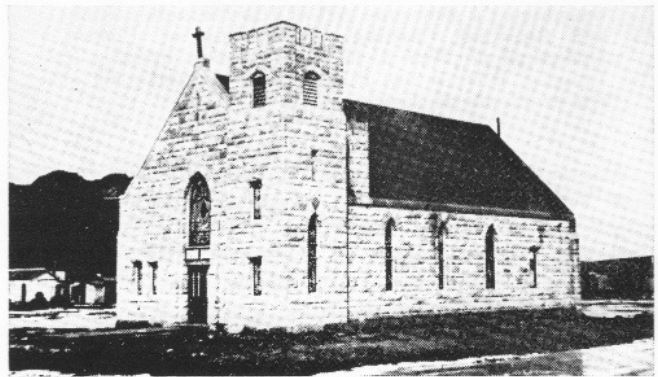
When Jordan Valley was officially erected as a Parish on March 11, 1958, the first undertaking

of the new pastor was to seek means to erect a mission church at Arock.

A generous donation of \$15,000.00 was given by His Eminence, Richard Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston towards a new church and assembly room attached to the church for Confraternity of Christian Doctrine classes.

The building of the church began on October 5, 1958, and was completed in April, 1959.

The pews in Holy Family Church had been used for many years in St. Mary's Church, Caldwell, Idaho. When Rev. Fr. Gerald M. Scanlon, pastor of St. Mary's Church had new pews installed in St. Mary's he kindly donated the old pews to Holy Family Church, Arock. No donation was ever given to Holy Family Church for new pews by anybody. The Stations of the Cross were donated by several families from the Archdiocese of Boston. The altar, baldachino and altar rail are the gifts of Mr. Fred Eiguren given in mem-



St. Bernard Church, Jordan Valley as it was dedicated on May 20, 1917, by Bishop Charles J. O'Reilly, D.D., Bishop of Baker.

ory of his mother, Catharina Eiguren. The statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary was given in memory of Robert Wernig, of Everett, Massachusetts, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Wernig, who died at the age of six. Mr. and Mrs. Wernig raised a considerable sum of money to help pay for the church. The statue of St. Joseph was donated by the Urquiaga children in memory of their mother, Josepha. The credence table, pulpit, statue pedestals were donated by Mrs. Gilbert Sullivan of Dorchester, Mass., in memory of her husband. The land upon which the church is built is the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Larrusea of Arock.

Dedication of the church in honor of the Holy Family and in memory of the families of the Archdiocese of Boston by Bishop Francis P. Leipzig took place on May 3, 1959. Mass is celebrated every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation and also on First Fridays.

Father Matthias Curtin, O.F.M., who had been assigned as assistant to Father Rembert Ahles, O.F.M., pastor of St. Hubert Church, Nyssa, Oregon, on February 20, 1952, took over the care of the Jordan Valley Mission. From the date of his assignment until October, 1954, Father Matthias lived in various parishioners homes on the week-

(Continued on page 31)



## Jordan Valley, Oregon

(Continued from page 28)

ends that he stayed at Jordan Valley. This did not contribute to the privacy needed in his work as a priest so he sought help to make quarters available at the church. An appeal to the Catholic Church Extension Society brought that help to the extent of \$1,500.00. With the assistance of a Franciscan lay brother versed in plumbing, heating and carpentry who traveled up from California Father Matthias fixed up the area in the rear of the church over the sacristy of St. Bernard's Church as living quarters. Proximity to the roof of the church made the quarters like a furnace in the summer and its northern exposure in the winter turned it into an Eskimo's igloo in the winter. Nevertheless, he used these quarters from October, 1954, until his departure in October, 1955. During his days at Jordan Valley he managed to buy a Ford pick-up with help from the parishioners who raffled off a calf. As soon as he had the church quarters over the sacristy he began to seek help for a chapel at Arock. In January, 1955, he sought help to build this chapel at



Standing in front of the doors of St. Bernard's Church are Father Hugh J. Marshall, Father Patrick J. Stack and Joseph Grant, taken May, 1916, shortly before Father Marshall was transferred to Klamath Falls as Pastor of Sacred Heart Church. Father Stack succeeded Father Marshall and took care of Jordan Valley when it reverted to a mission on Father Marshall's departure for Klamath Falls. Mr. Joseph Grant helped Father Marshall do much of the finishing work in the Church which had been started the year before. Rev. Timothy Grant, assistant at Blessed Sacrament Church in Ontario, Oregon, is the son of Mr. Joseph Grant.

Arock but there were no funds available. Father used the fixed up quarters over the sacristy until he left for San Francisco on October 13, 1955, where he became assistant at St. Paul of the Shipwreck Church in that city.

Father Lucien Pargett, O.F.M., succeeded Father Matthias in the care of the Jordan Valley Mission and had care of it until his departure in September, 1956. He was succeeded by Father Sebastian Zielski, O.F.M., who left for an Indian Mission in Arizona in August of 1957.

Father John Baumgartner became pastor of St. Hubert Church in Nyssa, Oregon, on August 29, 1957, with Father Donald Sullivan as his assistant. Since the Jordan Valley Mission was included in the Parish of St. Hubert Church, Nyssa, Oregon, Father Sullivan was assigned to take care of the church at Jordan Valley. The distance from Nyssa to Jordan Valley is 83 miles. The little community of Arock is 30 miles from Jordan Valley and four miles off Highway 95 going to California.

Father Sullivan was appointed pastor of Jordan Valley on February 10, 1958, and was installed by Father Vincent Egan of Burns on March 11, 1958.

As mentioned in a previous paragraph the first concern of the new pastor was for a church at Arock to serve the Catholic families living in the area. With the gift of Cardinal Cushing and the generous offerings of the folks in the Arock area which the Church would serve together with the help of Bishop Leipzig the church was paid for on December 24, 1960.

Since the Catholics in the Arock area were involved in trying to build a church they were not approached to help build the Parish House when Father Sullivan sought help from the parishioners to obtain funds to inaugurate that project.

At a meeting called by the pastor on May 12, 1958, which involved only those parishioners who did not ordinarily attend services at Arock it was decided to go ahead with a campaign to obtain funds to build the Parish House. Present at the meeting were Floyd Acarregui, Elias Eiguren, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Fenwick, Phil Jaca, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Maher, Bill Maher, Don McKay, Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Scott. Mr. Ed Maher of Lone Tree Ranch became the Chairman of the Building Committee to build the Parish House with Floyd Acarregui, Elias Eiguren, Joe Fenwick, Phil Jaca, Don McKay, and Hugh Scott as associate members.

Simultaneously funds began to be collected to build the Church at Arock and the Parish House in Jordan Valley. Because of the outstanding gift of Cardinal Cushing towards the building of the Arock church work was able to begin on October 5, 1958, on that project. Meanwhile, funds were being collected among the Jordan Valley parishioners towards the building of the Parish House. Sufficient funds were obtained so that an architect was hired on September 11, 1959, to draw plans for the new Parish House. Bids were opened on October 22, 1959, and the lowest bid was \$22,280.00. The committee felt that the figure was too high and the architect went to work to make some revisions. On April 13, 1960, new bids for the revised plan were opened. The lowest bidder came up with a bid of \$19,937.49. Construction for the new Parish House was begun on August 10, 1960. The building was completed and ready for occupancy and an Open House was held on December 18, 1960. It was officially dedicated by Bishop Francis P. Leipzig on January 10, 1961. The Catholic Church Extension Society donated

\$2,500.00 towards the building of the new Parish House. A sizeable donation was made by the Parishioners of Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Sharon, Massachusetts, to pay for most of the furnishings of the new Rectory.

We are indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Sabino Mada-riaga for the land on which the Rectory stands. An exchange of land was negotiated so that the Rectory could be built next to the Church. The grading of the land around the Rectory and part of the Church was done by members of the Holy Name Society which included Elias Eiguren, Allen Baltzor, Don McKay, Bill Maher, Joe Castro. They also erected the chain link fence after the contractor had built the concrete wall and inserted the posts.

Father Matthias' friend the Franciscan lay brother who had come up from California to as-

amount left by Dick Molloy. The remaining \$3,000.00 provided an initial gift to start off the campaign for Father Marshall Hall when it was inaugurated in the Fall of 1964. Father Marshall and Dick Molloy had been good friends when Father Marshall had served his time in Jordan Valley.

On March 31, 1959, the first Holy Name Society was established in St. Bernard Parish at the home of Mrs. Violet Skinner. The first Officers were elected that Tuesday evening with Elias Eiguren, as President, Ed Maher, as Vice-President, Don McKay, as Secretary, Peter Fenton, as Treasurer and Bill Maher, Sergeant-at-Arms.

The ensuing years saw Hugh Scott, Jose Castro, James Baltzor, Allen Baltzor, Jerry Haines, Fred Eiguren, Walter Baltzor, Dick Penson, Lloyd Long, Jerry Gordon, Darrell Slippy, Wendell Col-



The crowd that gathered to celebrate the dedication of the new Holy Family Church erected in memory of the families of the Archdiocese of Boston at Arock, Oregon, on May 3, 1959.

sist him in fixing up the quarters above the sacristy did not take into consideration the difference in winter temperatures between California and Eastern Oregon. In January, 1960, the temperature went down to 35 degrees below zero. The good lay brother had put all the drainage plumbing outside the building and every pipe froze and broke so that there were not any facilities for drainage in the living quarters. A new Parish House was a blessing after a year without these facilities.

A well-known and beloved parishioner, Mr. Richard Molloy, died in September, 1959, and left one-fifth of his estate in his will for the benefit of the Jordan Valley Parish. In September, 1960, extensive repairs and renovations were made in the church with the income of this legacy. A new central heating plant, insulation of the roof, pointing of the stone work and a new vestibule were the result of this gift. Also a new confessional and cry-room were built. The low land around the building was filled in and the new fence surrounded the church and rectory at a cost of \$9,000.00. The sum of \$12,000.00 was the actual

lins, Phil Jaca, James Zatica, Stan Henry initiated into the Holy Name Society besides the first Officers named above.

The Holy Name Society has been instrumental in doing many things to further the best interests of St. Bernard Parish over the years. The maintenance of the grounds surrounding the Church as a fitting setting for the House of God has been a major responsibility of the Society. Assistance in purchasing a movie projector for the C. C. D., the final payment on the electric organ, the purchase of a power lawn mower and other undertakings have done much to prove the need of a strong Holy Name Society.

In March, 1963, the Altar Society and Holy Name Society made plans to interest the parishioners in purchasing a Hammond Electric Organ as a gift to St. Bernard Church and a living memorial of Mrs. Violet Skinner who has played the organ and led the singing at the church services for so many years that they cannot be counted. The gift was made possible by the donations of many persons within the Jordan Valley area and

(Continued on page 34)



## Jordan Valley, Oregon

(Continued from page 32)

outside of it, former parishioners and friends not of the Catholic faith. It was a fitting tribute to the constant faithfulness of our esteemed organist when the presentation was made on March 22, 1963, as a surprise to her.

The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine established many years in the Parish has been its most important organization. In 1935 this Confraternity was erected in the Diocese of Baker and St.



Mrs. Violet Glover Skinner receives the Papal award "Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice" from Bishop Leipzig in St. Francis Cathedral in Baker, Oregon, on June 14, 1964, while Father Sullivan, Thomas L. Skinner, Sister Elizabeth Maureen, S.N.J.M., and Gardner Skinner look on.

Bernard Parish shortly afterwards received its charter. The unit at Arock also has its own charter.

Through the years many stalwart souls have lent their talents and zeal to the cause of the C. C. D. Among the names of the teachers we find Doris Pollentier, Maxine Telleria, Eugenia Acordagoitia, Wilma Carter, Margaret Rothengass, Rosie Bilbao, Mercedes Calzacorta, Victoria Eiguren, Ann Eiguren, Bette Collins, Elbeda Corta, Ann Corta, Sharon Gordon, Paula Slippy, Lorraine Henry, Beatrice Jaca, Audrey Long, Violet Skinner, Delphina Staples, Peggy Zatica, Pauline Baltzor, Connie Stitzel, Ellen Tuckness, Isabel Eiguren, Barbara Caywood, Lucille Montgomery, Ruth Cray, Hazel White, Shirley Warn, Marcia Skinner, Peggy Skinner, Estelle Elordi and undoubtedly many others whose names do not appear on the records.

The first record we have of the Religious Vacation School goes back to 1936. Over the years there have been many and zealous helping hands to further the work of the Lord's admonition "allow the little children to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." First the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary came to Jordan Valley and then the Sisters of St. Benedict from Mount Angel, Oregon. Since the sum-

mer of 1954 these latter Sisters have been teaching the children in the Religious Vacation School.

In recent years some of the year-round teachers have also volunteered to assist the Sisters during the Religious Vacation School. Among these folks we find Violet Skinner, Janet Burrell, Sharon Gordon, Audrey Long, Adean Mackenzie.

St. Bernard's Altar Society has been in existence a long time but exactly how long cannot be definitely established. For many years the Society cleaned the Church regularly and raised such money as was needed for minor repairs of the Church building. Each March they have sponsored an annual dance on March 17 and in more recent years have established a bazaar which is put on during the month of December. The same women who teach the C. C. D. classes are usually the same ones who are in the forefront in sponsoring other parish activities. They have purchased with the assistance of the Holy Name Society a fine 16mm movie projector, furnished all the dishes and banquet equipment for Father Marshall Hall, sponsored the annual picnic for the C. C. D. and the Christmas Party for the children. If anything needed to be done other than cut the lawn or bring in fill for the lawn area the St. Bernard Altar Society was willing and ready with cheerful spontaniety.

One of the very happy events of the Parish was the receiving by Mrs. Violet Skinner of the "Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice" award. This very coveted medal was presented to Mrs. Skinner on June 14, 1964, in recognition for her outstanding work for St. Bernard's Parish for over fifty years. The presentation took place in St. Francis Cathedral and Bishop Francis P. Leipzig, D.D., did the presenting. Mrs. Skinner is the mother of Sister Elizabeth Maureen, S.N.J.M., principal of St. Joseph's School in Salem, Oregon.

With debt on the Parish House paid on May 17, 1963, the minds of the parishioners turned towards the erection of a building for Confraternity of Christian Doctrine classes and a general meeting place. In the Fall of 1964 a group of men met to form a Building Committee. The idea was suggested that the new building be called Father Marshall Hall and C. C. D. Center. The chairman of the Building Committee was Elias Eiguren and associated with him were Allen Baltzor, Wendell Collins, Jose F. Castro, Fred Eiguren, Jerry Gordon, Felix Jaca, Lloyd Long and Don McKay. The committee spent many hours collecting the funds and then going over the plans proposed. The work on the building began on October 7, 1965, and was completed by March, 1966. In conjunction with the triennial visit of Bishop Francis P. Leipzig, D.D., to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation the new Father Marshall Hall and C. C. D. Center was formally blessed and dedicated on April 26, 1966.

Many priests of the Diocese of Baker have come to Jordan Valley to minister to the spiritual needs of St. Bernard's Parish from time to time whose names have not been mentioned before and among them are Father Michael C. Murphy, Father Hu-

(Continued on page 48)