

- 1962 Vatican II convened.
- 1968 Bishop George Speltz, sixth bishop of St. Cloud.
- 1970 Parish Council reorganized.
- 1971 Abbot John Eidenschink, OSB, St. John's seventh abbot, blessed on October 15.
- 1974 CARA Committee established.
- 1975 Parish Centennial celebration on July 20.

## PROJECTIONS

Mother Church has guided her children with wisdom through the centuries. The local chapter of this Church, the Collegeville parish, has followed her leadership since 1875. The Benedictine pastors, the sisters and lay teachers who staffed the school, and the families of the congregation have responded to this leadership.

Traditions have died and blossomed in the last century. The Latin Mass and German sermons have given way to a liturgy based on directives of Vatican II. Youth liturgies with guitar, brass, and woodwind music today illustrate that the organ is not the only instrument to help a congregation worship. Only a few families in 1975 separate as they enter

*Traditions  
continue,  
develop*

the Assumption Chapel – men to the Gospel side and women to the Epistle side. Men and women lectors assist the celebrant in proclaiming the Liturgy of the Word. A lady or two still wears a hat to church. A council advises the pastor on parish business. The women no longer make their “Easter Communion” in a group on Holy Thursday and the girls theirs on Easter Sunday. Penance services draw parishioners together for reconciliation and prayer. Food is still blessed on Easter Sunday. Little girls still wear coronets on Solemn Communion Sunday. Skat, bingo, and 500 remain as must activities at a parish social. “Lunch” – coffee, cake, and cookies – is served at every parish meeting.

#### CARA

In 1974 the pastor asked the parish to think seriously about its community commitments and respond to guidelines established by the national Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA). A committee staffed by Mrs. Thomas Gretsche, Mrs. Walter Goerger, Mrs. Stewart Hansen, Mrs. Nick Wolf, and Mr. William Cofell and Mr. A. W. Braun has worked with the pastor, Fr. Kieran Nolan, OSB, now also the dean of the St. John’s Seminary, in implementing the guidelines of CARA, namely, a concern for ecumenism, civic responsibility, the nurturing of Catholic principles through education and liturgy, relating to the unchurched in society, and helping the foreign missions. This committee has studied what the parish might do in the years ahead to determine specific needs of parishioners and to tap the resources of education, health, commerce, entertainment, and demography which serve these needs.

In the winter 1975 the parish council, working with the CARA committee, discussed what the five standing committees of the council might do to nurture the prayer-life of the parish, to uphold the doctrines of the Church, to expand the parish’s education program – especially for adults, and to correct communication gaps among the groups in the parish that age, profession, and education may inadvertently have caused.

The St. John the Baptist Parish perhaps has just begun to realize what opportunities for growth in Christian living are possible in a community that is part of a monastic and university setting. Committees of farmers, teachers, students, civil servants, housewives, doctors, nurses and businessmen are examining the goals of the parish as it enters its second century. The barrier of the town versus the gown has almost disappeared. The Colledgeville parish has a spirit of community in 1975 that its first one hundred years had fostered.

Perhaps the parish council, now firmly organized, clearly illustrates this spirit of community. As early as 1954 the parish formed a council, with Joseph Eisenschenk, Hal Roske, and Edward Douvier as presidents in the first three years. During the pastorship of Fr. Lancelot Atsch, OSB (1956-65), this council of the whole became an arm of the Diocesan Council of Catholic Men. Parish picnics and parish dinners were major events during that decade. Parishioners well remember the dinner in the fall 1960 when almost everyone, including some stumping politicians, went home with ptomaine poisoning from a delicious but dangerous turkey dressing. This last supper ended the parish-dinner routine, but a council continued organizing parish activities.

Mr. Al Vogel and Mr. Stewart Hansen headed other councils of the whole, and during the pastorship of Fr. Wendelin Luetmer, OSB (1967-72), the parish, now divided into five geographic areas, elected representatives from each area to a council.

A simple constitution established guidelines for this council, and a second and more detailed constitution was ratified on July 24, 1972—at the beginning of Fr. Kieran Nolan's pastorship. Council members then elected Mr. Francis Dylla, Mr. Richard Haeg, and Mr. Hal Roske in the next three years as this body's presidents. During this period parish income has more than doubled, as the long-time parish book-keeper, Mrs. Stewart Hansen, can attest, and the number of families has grown perhaps to an all-time high, 120. Such

*Parish  
councils*

*Centennial  
celebration*

growth in spirit, numbers, and cooperation suggested that in April 1975 it was time for a parish "town meeting" to offer input for continued growth of the Collegeville parish community. Input suggested that perhaps it is time for this financially-sound parish to expand its apostolate of Christian living — perhaps even to adopt a foreign mission.

As eighteen committees — from quilting to bingo — planned the parish centennial celebration of July 20, 1975, parishioners reflected on the future of this community. Although the parish school and even its building is now but a memory, the parish possesses other strengths, perhaps not so evident in 1875 or 1925. The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine education program — in cooperation with nearby parishes — offers formal education of the parish youth in Christian doctrine. Further, the parish subsidizes parochial school education in the area's Catholic schools. Prayer groups for the Collegeville adult community are active — especially in Lent. CARA and the council are exploring the parish's needs and service potential. Monthly socials bring parishioners together in fellowship. A liturgy committee supervises chores that perhaps were once solely the pastor's — organizing ushers, servers, lectors, planning for feast days, etc. Parish children continue to sacrifice allowance money for the missions. The location of the parish office in the old church reminds long-time parishioners of the past. The occasional coming together of monks and parishioners for worship indicates the unique status of the Collegeville parish.

It's been a century of worship and work for the St. John the Baptist Parish.