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The Catholic Church in Southern Indiana

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Butler University

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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SOUTHERN INDIANA
1846-1866

by

Sister Mary Carol Schroeder, O.S.F.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE FOOTNOTES

A. O. F. M. - Archives of the Franciscan Fathers, Oldenburg, Indiana

A. O. S. F. - Archives of the Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg, Indiana

U. N. D. A. - University of Notre Dame Archives Notre Dame, Indiana
INTRODUCTION

When the diocese of Vincennes, Indiana, was founded in 1834, it comprised the entire state of Indiana and the western third of the state of Illinois. Under the leadership of its first Bishop, the scholarly Simon Bruté de Remur, the new western diocese made notable progress in the establishment of the Catholic Church within its boundaries. Particularly outstanding was the system of free school education inaugurated by him at Vincennes which served as a model for future development of education in the diocese. In 1839, following the death of Bishop Bruté, Father Celestine de la Hailandière was appointed to fill the vacancy. He was a brilliant and ambitious bishop, who initiated valuable projects and stimulated the development of those already in existence. During his administration such great progress was achieved that in 1843 the Illinois portion was separated from the diocese. However, trouble began to brew. The Bishop who could devise such wonderful plans for the advancement of the Church lacked the executive ability necessary to insure the successful carrying out of his projects. His failure as an administrator plunged the diocese into a period of confusion and disorder from which it was finally extricated by
his resignation and the appointment of a new bishop. The brief episcopate of Bishop John Stephen Bazin stayed the tide of discontent and in 1848 with the nomination of Bishop Maurice de St. Palais, the fourth Bishop of Vincennes, the diocese entered upon a new era of prosperity.

The purpose of the following study is to detail the essential events in the history of the Catholic Church in Indiana during the years 1846-1866, a period of reconstruction and reorganization. This important period of the Church history coincides to a large extent with a period of similar characteristics in the history of the state. During the fifties, Indiana was recovering from financial mistakes and depression of a previous era and at the same time it was inaugurating many movements which helped to create some of the modern conditions within it. According to time, the period considered begins with the year 1846, the date of the resignation of Bishop de la Hailanière and of the appointment of Bishop Bazin, and terminates in 1866, at which date the essential work of Bishop de St. Palais was finished. The entire episcopate of Bishop Bazin and seventeen years of that of Bishop de St. Palais are included. Attention is directed not to the entire state of Indiana, which was included in the diocese of Vincennes in 1846, but to that portion of the state which later became the diocese of Indianapolis. It is possible within these limits to trace in detail the development of the fundamental
organization accomplished by Bishop de St. Palais upon which the ensuing eleven years of his episcopacy was based.

There has been no special treatise written on this period of the history of the Catholic Church in Indiana. Bishop Herman Alerding gives a cursory account of it in his History of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Vincennes, as does Charles Blanchard in his two-volume work, The History of the Catholic Church in Indiana. In volume four of John Gilmary Shea's History of the Catholic Church in the United States the author devotes as much time and space to the Diocese of Vincennes as a work of so general a nature permits. In addition to several brief biographical sketches of the Bishops of Vincennes, there is L'Abbé Azais: Monseigneur Maurice d' Aussac de St. Palais, a short, eulogistic account of the life of the Bishop, which is not a fruitful source for material on the history of the Church. This writer, therefore, had recourse to the principal newspapers published during the years 1846-1866 in the following cities: Vincennes, Evansville, New Albany, Madison, Rushville, Indianapolis, and Terre Haute. With the exception of the Vincennes' Western Sun and General Advertiser, very little data on ecclesiastical history was found. The Catholic Telegraph published in Cincinnati, but widely read by Catholics in Indiana, proved to be a valuable source for information on the various parishes in the diocese of
Vincennes. Another printed source that was especially useful was the Journals and Letters of Mother Theodore Guérin, edited by Sister Mary Theodosia Mug, a Sister of Providence.

The manuscript source material used for the first time in the writing of this history of the period consists chiefly in the correspondence of Bishops and priests of the diocese contained in the archives of the University of Notre Dame. Of these the Cincinnati collection, letters, for the most part, of Bishop de St. Palais to Archbishop Purcell of Cincinnati, the Du Pontavice letters, and those in the Audran collection (1860-1866) were the most valuable. None of the material from the University of Notre Dame Archives used in this study may be published without permission of the archivist of that University. The Diocesan Archives of Indianapolis were also consulted, as well as those of the Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg, and of the Franciscan Fathers at the Holy Family Monastery, Oldenburg.

The writer wishes to express sincere gratitude to all who assisted in this work, especially to Reverend Robert Gorman, Ph.D., Archivist of the Diocese of Indianapolis, for the loan of materials and for his valuable advice in the preparation of the manuscript. The writer is likewise indebted to A. D. Beeler, Ph.D., under whose competent direction this study was made, and also to Mr. Albert Worst, Librarian of Xavier University, and Reverend Thomas McAvoy, Ph.D. Archivist of the University of Notre Dame, for their generous assistance during the research.
CHAPTER I

BISHOP BAZIN APPOINTED THIRD BISHOP OF VINCENNES

At the Sixth Provincial Council of Baltimore, 1846, the Bishops accepted the resignation of their colleague, Celestine de la Hailandière, Bishop of Vincennes. From their observation of the state of affairs in Indiana they were convinced that a change in leadership would be beneficial to the welfare of the diocese for the Bishop was scarcely fitted by temperament to be a successful manager of men.¹ Hence they recommended to the Holy Father that the resignation be accepted and a new bishop be appointed for Indiana. The members of the council were acquainted with the fact that, when in Rome the preceding year, Bishop de la Hailandière had made a personal plea to be relieved of the bishopric, a request which the Pontiff had refused. Undoubtedly Pope Gregory XVI had believed the difficulties which confronted the Bishop were of a character that one might ordinarily expect to encounter in the initial stages of a new endeavor. He had advised Bishop de la Hailandière to go back to his diocese and to continue his work courageously. The Bishop returned to Vincennes,

but discovered that during his absence discontent had taken on greater proportions.\(^2\)

It was most unfortunate that this talented and zealous prelate who was so sincerely devoted to the interests of his diocese should fail as its administrator. The fact is more striking when one considers the material and spiritual progress made during one of the most distressing periods of Indiana history. Indeed, his administration has impressed its mark upon the history of the diocese too deeply not to be noticed. His untiring efforts resulted in a remarkable growth of the Church; there were almost 30,000 persons who professed the faith in 1847; the number of churches had practically doubled since the beginning of his administration, while the number of missionaries reached forty-seven; the diocese had been partitioned in 1843 which made it coterminous with the state; religious and educational institutions had been established and material improvements had been completed. In addition to the St. Charles Seminary at Vincennes, there was also the College of St. Gabriel under the direction of the Budists, a society of priests whom the Bishop had induced to come to Indiana from France in 1839. Two other congregations devoted to educational pursuits, the Brothers of the Holy Cross under Father Edward Sorin and the Sisters of Providence

with Mother Theodore as superior, also made foundations in
the diocese upon the invitation of the Bishop. There were
further evidences of his boundless energy and fruitful activ-
ity in the various building projects and municipal improve-
ments initiated by him at Vincennes and carried to completion
under his supervision.

All of this indicated progress, and yet in 1846 the
diocese was in a perilous condition because of lack of admin-
istrative ability on the part of the Bishop. No one was more
aware of this than the Bishop himself. He had seen the
danger approaching; nevertheless, he had been powerless to
avert it. His restless energy, his impetuous nature had
prompted him to take a personal hand in directing all the af-
fairs of the diocese. Due to his lack of prudence and tact
in dealing with people, he frequently aroused opposition.
Humbly the Bishop offered to resign so that a more capable
person than he could be placed at the head of the diocese.
The death of the Holy Father delayed the acceptance of that
resignation a year.

During that time the situation at Vincennes had become
more tense and threatening. Father August Martin had left for
Rome; Father Sorin had transferred his Brothers to the Diocese
of Louisville; Father Julian Delaune, pastor of Madison, had
accepted the presidency of Father Sorin's college in Kentucky;
Father John Corbe, the ecclesiastical superior at St. Mary-of-
the-Woods, was contemplating a return to France; and finally
the foundress of the Sisters of Providence, Mother Theodore, had been excommunicated because of friction with the Bishop in a matter of jurisdiction. It was at this critical period that Bishop de la Hailandière received official notice of the acceptance of his resignation. Father Corbe was on his way to Vincennes when he "learned at Terre Haute by a telegram from Father Bellier, in Mobile, that Bishop Bazin had been appointed to the See of Vincennes." The Bishop himself informed the Sisters who taught at Vincennes of the appointment of the new Bishop. Bishop de la Hailandière took it upon himself to inform his flock of the final acceptance by the Holy See of his resignation as Bishop of Vincennes and of the appointment of a new bishop for the See. In his Pastoral Letter of July 16, 1847, he bade the clergy to be submissive to their new bishop, and to place complete confidence in him, while he admonished the laity to love and obey their priests who labored so untiringly for them. This farewell letter, preparing the way for his successor, had the effect of turning all eyes southward to Mobile to scrutinize the bishop-elect. There were few who knew of Father Stephen Bazin and his missionary labors in the south, and therefore, rejoiced to know that he was to be their bishop. Others were

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4 Pastoral Letter of Bishop de la Hailandière in Western Sun and General Advertiser, Oct. 23, 1847.
undoubtedly of the same opinion as Sister St. Francis Xavier, one of the early members of the community at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, who wrote: "I know nothing particular in regard to him, but, since God has chosen him we must hope he will do much good for our poor Indiana."\(^5\)

To assume the responsibility of leadership at any time requires a certain amount of courage combined with prudence and discretion. How much more so when the group to be directed is confused, bewildered, and discontented! At such times it demands a leader who can quietly, but surely, win the confidence and faith of the people. Bishop Bazin was just such a person, having gentleness, kindness, prudence, and firmness in the right proportions. He humbly assumed the responsibility, won the cooperation of clergy and laity alike, planned and worked with them and for them for a brief period of six months. The time, however, was not too short for him to effect a salutary change throughout the diocese.

At the time when he was nominated to the See of Vincennes, Father Bazin was vicar general of the Diocese of Mobile in Alabama. He had been working in this diocese since his arrival in America in 1830 when he had come in answer to the request of Bishop Michael Portier of Mobile. For seventeen years he labored among the southern people where he earned

the reputation of being a most zealous priest. His particular interest in religious education and care of orphans led him to organize and to conduct personally classes in religion and to establish an Orphan Society whose members engaged in charitable activities on behalf of the orphans of Mobile. It was through Father Bazin's personal appeal that the diocese obtained the services of the Christian Brothers to take charge of the orphans. At the same time he secured a group of Jesuits who were to conduct a college at Springfield.6 This genuine concern for his people coupled with a realization of their needs inevitably brought him recognition from his fellow priests and his superiors. His own Bishop Portier appointed him vicar general and others looked upon him as a probable candidate for the episcopacy. As early as 1844 Archbishop Blanc of New Orleans had listed him with two others as a possible co-adjutor for his Archdiocese of New Orleans on the ground that Father John Bazin seemed to know the spirit of the country and the needs of the people.7 Three years later the episcopal honors were bestowed upon him.

Official notice of his appointment to the See of Vincennes, vacated by the resignation of Bishop de la Hailandière, was received on the second of September, 1847. He immediately

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6Alerding, op. cit., p. 187.

7Blanc à Bishop Purcell, Jan. 10, 1844, U. N. D. A.
notified Bishop John Purcell of Cincinnati and took occasion to ask the Bishop's advice on certain matters. Father Bazin knew that as Bishop of a diocese with which he was unfamiliar, it would be imperative to have a wise and competent priest of the diocese to serve as his advisor. Therefore, he asked Bishop Purcell who knew the priests of Indiana to suggest the one he thought should be appointed Vicar General. He also laid before the Bishop his plans for the consecration. Conditions in the south were so bad that no Bishop could come to Mobile without danger to his health; and it was impossible for Archbishop Blanc to leave New Orleans, for the yellow fever was ravaging the city. Consequently Father Bazin had decided to be consecrated at the Cathedral of Vincennes no earlier than October 24, since it would be impossible for Bishop Portier and him to leave Mobile before the first of October. He invited Bishop Purcell to preach the sermon and asked him about the advisability of inviting the Bishops of St. Louis and Chicago for the occasion. On October 4, he set out for Vincennes and arrived at his episcopal seat on the fourteenth in the company of Father Anthony Deydier of Evansville. The Bishop-elect appreciated the slightest kindness and consideration shown him on the part of his new flock. When the Sisters of Providence at Vincennes, his first visitors, called upon him, he received them kindly and appeared truly

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8 Bazin à Bishop Purcell, Sept. 3, 1847. U. N. D. A.
grateful to them for their thoughtfulness, and, as if to give evidence of his appreciation, Bishop Bazin returned the visit the very next day. The Sisters were happy to welcome him in the home and to show him their school. The Bishop spoke to the children, and after giving them his blessing declared a holiday. It is not unlikely that from this day forward the Bishop had a host of staunch young friends. The Sisters, too, thought him an excellent person, "frank, simple, and lively, with manners much like those of the beloved Bishop Bruté."

After having spent the preceding week in retreat, the Bishop-elect was consecrated on Sunday, October 24, in St. Francis Xavier Cathedral at Vincennes. There was a splendid representation of clergy and laity present for the solemn services, the first of the kind ever held in the cathedral and in Indiana. That they made quite an impression upon those who attended is vouchèd for by the editor of one of the local papers:

Last Sunday, was consecrated according to the Catholic rite, in the Cathedral of Vincennes, Right Reverend John Stephen Bazin. Bishop Portier of Mobile, the intimate friend of Doctor Bazin, was the consecrator, and Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati, and De la Hailandière of this city, Assistants. The ceremony was numerously attended by the clergy of this diocese, and by laity, many of whom were from distant towns and from the adjoining State. In the sanctuary there were four Bishops, and twenty other clergy-men besides the seminarians who have not yet received orders. The ceremony was new to most of us and its effect upon those who thronged the cathedral was such as to prove that there can be no better aid to the veneration

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9 Corbinière, op. cit., p. 276.
of a Bishop by his people than his consecration in their midst. Its solemnity was irresistibly impressive.

At Vespers the new Bishop addressed his flock, promising to bestow all his care and affection upon them even to the point of sacrificing his life if the salvation of their souls demanded it. "If you are sick or afflicted," he said, "come to me night or day and have no fear that you will annoy me. Consider me now as belonging entirely to you, since I was consecrated this morning for your happiness. My hair is white, but I am still vigorous and strong, and I shall love you as I loved my children of Mobile." His amiable simplicity and sincere charity won the love and affection of his priests and people. They believed that through his kindness he would accomplish much good for the diocese.

The Bishop felt the need of a competent advisor and assistant in the administrative affairs of the diocese. Thereupon he consulted two of the older priests, Father Deydier and Father Joseph Kundek of Jasper, asking them for suggestions as to who would be able to render this service in addition to serving as superior to the seminary. Both agreed that Father August Bessonies then stationed in Perry County, who had been in the diocese from the earliest years, had given ample evidence of ability in the work accomplished in the

10 Western Sun and General Advertiser, Oct. 30, 1847.
11 Corbinière, op. cit., p. 276.
missions assigned to him. Father Bessonies was summoned to Vincennes, but when the Bishop offered this promotion to him, he declined on the ground that he was not capable of fulfilling adequately the duties of the office. He, however, suggested the priest he thought that best fitted to act as superior of the seminary and vicar general, Father Maurice de St. Palais, who had recently been given charge of the important and flourishing parish at Madison. The latter, though not anxious to assume the honor proffered him, yielded to the Bishop’s request realizing that the Bishop himself had been asked to leave the missionary field where he had worked for seventeen years and to accept a western diocese burdened with more than ordinary difficulties. The situation confronting the new Bishop required delicate, tactful handling; there were anxious minds to reassure, strained relations to adjust. The most pressing task, demanding immediate attention, was that concerning the sorely tried community at St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

There had been a misunderstanding between the former Bishop and the Sisters of Providence concerning the government of the community. Bishop Bazin now wrote to Mother Theodore, who was ill and had not been able to come to Vincennes for the consecration, to assure her and her Sisters that they might look upon him as their spiritual father and friend:

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Vincennes, October 28, 1847

Good and respected Mother,

I write two words in haste, for I am still overburdened with occupations. I am much pained to learn that you are seriously indisposed. I hope that when this letter will have reached you that you will be already nearly restored; this is at least the desire of my heart.

I was deeply moved in reading your letter. My tears flowed. Burn the past in oblivion, or think of it only to bless the Providence of God who sent you crosses because He loved you; for God never fails to try His true children.

Father Corbe and your méchant Sister Xavier have informed me of your difficulties. The future is yours. I shall judge you only by the future and according to your Constitutions. Please tell your Daughters of the Woods that I will also be a father to them. I have the sweet hope that the enemy of all good will never succeed in troubling the happy harmony that should exist between religious communities and their chief pastor. It seems to me that if on both sides we seek the greater glory of God, we must necessarily agree.

As soon as I can get off for a day I shall go to see you, and I hope that this will be soon.

Whilst awaiting this pleasure, I beg of you to present to your dear community my sentiments of devotedness and affection, and you in particular to accept the expression of my respect and consideration.

+John Stephen
Bishop of Vincennes

The letter dispelled at once what fear and anxiety remained at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. And yet, as if to make doubly certain that all doubt had given way to confidence, the Bishop again wrote a letter to Mother Theodore in which he clearly describes the relationship which should exist between a Bishop and the superior of a community:

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13 Bazin to Mother Theodore, Oct. 28, 1847 in Sister Mary Theodosia Mug, ed. Journal and Letters of Mother Theodore Guérin (St. Mary-of-the-Woods; Providence Press, 1937), pp. 219-220. (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Journals and Letters.)
I hope you will ever find in me a father, a friend in Jesus Christ, in whom you will be able to confide without fear all your anxieties only as a support to assist you to observe your Rule in all its perfection. A Bishop ought to be, for a superior who has the spirit of her state, a lever to raise up the heaviest burdens, a light to enlighten her in her doubts, and a confidant to whom she may confide her pains and from whom she may draw the consolations she needs.¹⁴

Even before the fulfillment of these ideals, the Bishop dispelled all anxiety and supplanted it by the peace and happiness and security long sought for by the Sisters.

When he visited at St. Mary-of-the-Woods the first week of January, 1848, he manifested a kindly interest in everybody and everything. Great as was his solicitude for the material needs of the Sisters and school children, it did not overshadow his interest in their spiritual welfare. He gave the Sisters several conferences. He discussed the necessary revision of certain rules of the congregation with Mother Theodore, and promised to return in August to give the Sisters' annual retreat. On his return to Vincennes he wrote to all the Sisters who were on mission of the joy and satisfaction his visit to St. Mary's afforded him.¹⁵

This joy was counterbalanced by the continual uncertainty of the future of the seminary and college due to financial difficulties. Father Peter Bellier, who was the president of St. Gabriel College at Vincennes, was unable to pay the


¹⁵Corbinière, op. cit., p. 278.
debts contracted by his predecessor in purchasing the property, and those for which he was responsible through improvements made on the building. The college was on the verge of bankruptcy and was to have been sold by the sheriff on the eighth of January when the Bishop took over the college in his own name, thus assuming all the debts of the Eudists. Since the funds available were insufficient to maintain both a college and a seminary, he conceived the idea of merging the two into a college which would serve as a diocesan major seminary as well as an institution of learning for Catholic boys. Father de St. Palais, having been placed in charge, drew up a prospectus and had it printed in the local papers:

Saint Gabriel College
Vincennes, Indiana

This Institution, incorporated by the Legislature of Indiana, with University privileges, and formerly under the direction of the Society of the Eudists, has passed to the hands of the Right Reverend Doctor Bazin, Bishop of Vincennes, and is now organized on a new plan.

It being the intention of the Bishop to make it, at the same time, the Diocesan Seminary and a secular college for the benefit of the Catholic youth of Indiana and other states, more particular attention will be paid to the religious instruction of the pupils and, in consequence, Catholic children only will be received.

The discipline will be mild but strict.

Following a description of the courses offered and the recreational facilities available to the students, the notice read:

16 Bazin à Archbishop Blanc, Jan. 16, 1848, U. N. D. A.
17 Western Sun and General Advertiser, March 11, 1848.
Day scholars of all denominations will be received, and will follow the regular classes of the college; but they will have a study room and playground especially appropriated for their use.

FACULTY

Very Reverend Maurice de St. Palais, President and Professor of Divinity and Moral Philosophy.
Reverend J. B. Chassé, Professor of Ancient Language.
Reverend William Doyle, Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature, assisted by several tutors.
Reverend L. Ducondray, Procurator.
Reverend John Contin, Professor of Mathematics and Bookkeeping.
John Isidore Baty, M. D., Professor of Natural Philosophy and Chemistry.
Mr. D. B. Reicherer, Professor of German.
Mr. F. X. Leray, Professor of French and Music.18

In his Lenten Pastoral, the only pastoral he issued, Bishop Bazin impressed upon his priests and laity the tremendous importance of a diocesan seminary in which a native clergy would be trained. Such a seminary would maintain and advance the cause of Catholicism. He commended the clergy for their admirable zeal in the arduous work of the missions and the laity for their generosity and cooperation in the promotion of religious undertakings, but pointed out that in spite of these efforts many people were deprived of the consolation of the Catholic religion. There was a definite need for more priests. It was imperative that not only the clergy, but the people of the diocese manifest an interest in the preparation of young men for the functions of the holy priesthood. Unless those who received the benefits of the holy ministry assumed the responsibility of assisting in the maintenance of the institution where the seminarian was educated, it was unlikely

18 Ibid.
that the Bishop would be able to supply his people with priests. The people of a diocese should be proud to have priests chosen from their own ranks, priests who know their language, manners, and needs. The means of establishing a native clergy must be agreed upon and carried out. The Bishop proposed the following plan:

1st. We exhort our beloved brethren of the clergy to examine carefully the early dispositions of the children they instruct, in order to point out to us those who appear better qualified for that sublime calling; because our intention is to select for our Seminary, as far as practicable, some candidate from each congregation.

2nd. We enjoin all the clergymen of our diocese to make a collection in every station committed to their care in behalf of our diocesan Seminary on Easter Day, or any other Sunday to Ascension Day.

3rd. To forward, as soon as possible this amount to us, or to our Vicar General, the Very Reverend Maurice de St. Palais, Superior of the Seminary.19

It was during the Lenten season that the Bishop most truly displayed his burning charity and holiness of life. He had previously uttered the most eloquent exhortations to his priests to be ever mindful of the sacred character of their vocation, to endeavor "to be models to the faithful in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in chastity."20 He likewise exhorted them to fidelity to the regulations of Holy Mother Church. The good Bishop was the first to put into practice all he had advised. Although not at all well, he...
zealously practiced all the penances prescribed, and in addi-
tion to his other pastoral duties, preached the Lenten sermons
at Vincennes assisted by Father de St. Palais and Father Chassé.
When Father Ernest Audran, rector of the Cathedral, was unable
to preach, he substituted for him. Long hours were spent in
the confessional where men who had been away from the Sacraments
for years, touched by the goodness of their Bishop, came to him
and prepared themselves to make their peace with God.

In the midst of these assiduous labors, his health
failed. He was probably not yet accustomed to the severe
western winters, so unlike the gentle climate of Mobile. The
cold which he had contracted developed into pneumonia, thus
forcing him to discontinue further work. On Palm Sunday the
seriousness of his illness caused great anxiety to all. He re-
gretted that he had to leave the work of conversion incomplete
and voiced a desire to live long enough to finish the work be-
gun. No sooner had the words left him, than he reproached
himself for having yielded to the temptation to live, and in
order to expiate what he considered a want of submission to
the will of God, he denied himself all offers to quench his burn-
ing thirst. "No, since my tongue has murmured against the orders
of Providence, it is just that it should be punished." 21

Concern for the welfare of others was still his main
concern, even in his last hours. He thought of the community

21 Corbinière, op. cit., p. 279.
at St. Mary-of-the-Woods and assured Mother Theodore that he would make any sacrifice for its spiritual and temporal prosperity were he to live longer. With Father St. Palais and Father Chasse he made final arrangements concerning the affairs of the diocese. He died April 23, 1848, on Easter morning.

Clergy and laity alike were very much grieved to learn of the unexpected death of Bishop Bazin whose sanctity of life had led them to believe that his administration would be productive of much good. His amiable simplicity and tenderness of heart had endeared him to young and old. They recognized him as a man deeply conscious of his duty and responsibility, a man of prayer and confidence in God. He had made himself a friend and confidant of the priests; in fact, he considered himself as one of their fellow-laborers. To them he had written in his Pastoral: "Having been inured for many years to the labors of a missionary life, we feel ready in spite of our advanced age to share with you all the hardships of the ministry."22 The Bishop, they also knew, measured the spiritual advancement of the people of his diocese by the sanctity of his priests, hence his careful plans for the proper training of the clergy. To his faithful he was a kind, patient father, prompt in the expression of gratitude for favors done him. Indeed, Bishop Bazin's brief administration

22 Pastoral Letter of Bishop Bazin in Western Sun and General Advertiser, March 11, 1848.
had been most promising. He had brought peace and harmony to the Sisters, had attempted to put the college and seminary on a firmer financial basis, had laid plans for the education of the clergy, and also for the housing of orphans. In six months, however, his work was ended. His was the task of diverting the danger of discord and dissatisfaction and ruin from the diocese. It was for another, his vicar general, Father de St. Palais, to proceed with the actual reconstruction.
CHAPTER II

AN INDIANA MISSIONARY RAISED TO THE EPISCOPACY

On his death bed Bishop Bazin had appointed Father de St. Palais administrator of the diocese until a successor should be named. Because of his experience in the mission field and his knowledge of existing conditions of the clergy and laity, the young priest's advice had proved an invaluable aid to the Bishop. So intimately was he associated with the administrative affairs that it was said Bishop Bazin did nothing without first consulting his vicar general. 1 His term of administration coincided with the closing years of that period when the entire State of Indiana lay in complete financial exhaustion due to the extravagant expenditures on internal improvements of the preceding decade. The diocese like the state was in a desolate financial condition. Lack of funds and patronage necessitated the closing of St. Gabriel College and Seminary. The institution simply was not self-supporting. Father de St. Palais' efforts to raise a little money through the sale of property met with no success. In addition to financial difficulties, disciplinary affairs were not in the

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1 Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, Dec. 9, 1848, in Mug, Journals and Letters, p. 267.
best order due to the state of uncertainty in which the diocese found itself. At all gatherings of the clergy the main topics of conversations were the vacant bishopric and the college.2

At this time the See of Chicago was also vacant, Bishop William Quarter having died suddenly April 10, 1848. There was a rumor abroad that Father de St. Palais was to be appointed to the See because he had labored in that area prior to its separation from Vincennes and its formation into a new diocese. Bishop John Baptist Purcell of Cincinnati had intimated in one of the addresses to his laity that such an arrangement was probable. The priests of the Diocese of Vincennes, however, had already made a petition to have Father de St. Palais as their bishop. Those priests who had been present at the funeral of Bishop Bazin assembled after the service and it seemed that by an almost unanimous vote the newly appointed administrator was the desired successor to Bishop Bazin. Father August Bessonies had voted for Father Napoleon Perche of Louisiana, but objections were made to bringing to the west another southerner who would die in a few months. A committee was appointed to confer with Archbishop Kendrick of St. Louis on the subject. The prelate was pleased with the choice and promised to promote its cause.3

2Audran à Bishop Hail landière, June 6, 1848, U. N. D. A.
3Alerding, op. cit., p. 503.
Seven months later Father de St. Palais received his brief from Rome officially announcing his appointment to the See of Vincennes. Even though he was assured of the cooperation of his fellow priests, and was confident of the support of the laity, the good priest hesitated to accept the responsibility. When he had given the matter due consideration, he wrote to Bishop Purcell:

If I did not write to you sooner to inform you of my appointment to the See of Vincennes, it is because I needed a few days of reflection, before assuming a burden much too heavy for me. Having come, however, to the conclusion that I might be resisting God's will, if I did not consent to the nomination which I dreaded and never desired; I now write to you to apprise you of the fact of my acceptance and to request of you the favor to act as assistant Bishop and preach on the day of my consecration. The kindness you have always manifested toward me and the interest you have taken in the welfare of our Diocese during the vacancy of the See, gives me hope that you will condescend to my wishes.

The Archbishop of St. Louis is to perform the ceremony which, if nothing happens to occasion a delay, will take place at Vincennes on the fourteenth of January, second Sunday after Epiphany and the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus.

Bishop Spalding will, I trust, attend also and I shall have the consolation of being surrounded on that solemn and memorable occasion by my three nearest neighbors and of seeing consecrated, by that means, the perfect union that will, I hope, always exist between us.

I applied to you before, R. Rev. Sir, for advice. You gave it cheerfully. I will now more than ever be in need of your counsel and you will, I know, continue to act towards me like a father. At the present time I can feel no want but that of prayers to prepare myself for the participation of those divine graces which are necessary to carry the heavy burden imposed upon me and I earnestly beg the assistance of yours.  

—St. Palais to Bishop Purcell, Dec. 21, 1848, U. N. D. A.
The news of his nomination spread rapidly through the diocese causing all to rejoice in their good fortune to have been given their Father de St. Palais as Bishop. "God has given us the one whom the whole diocese has earnestly asked for since the death of Bishop Bazin."  

Unfortunately the consecration had to take place during the winter thus making it impossible for many to attend the ceremony. Despite the severe winter weather, however, a large crowd was present at the consecration ceremony held at Vincennes on January 14, the Feast of the Holy Name. Bishop Richard P. Miles of Nashville, the consecrating prelate, was assisted by Bishop Martin Spalding of Louisville, and Father Hippolyte Du Pontavice. Sixteen of the diocesan clergy were also there. The Bishops of St. Louis and Cincinnati had planned to attend, but wired that high water and bad roads made such a trip impossible. 

The Archbishop of St. Louis could not come on account of the bad roads, and because the cholera, which was making great havoc in New Orleans, threatened each day to invade St. Louis through the steamboats which run between these two cities, and which are every day loaded with people fleeing the plague. The same reasons detained the Bishop of Cincinnati. The other two prelates came to Vincennes in poor wagons, over frightful roads and with the greatest difficulty; but they had even greater hardships on their return.

5 Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, Dec. 9, 1848, in Mug, Journals and Letters, p. 266.

6 Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, Feb. 18, 1848, in Mug, Journals and Letters, p. 275.
The elevation of Father de St. Palais to the episcopacy marked a new era for the Diocese of Vincennes. This young prelate, only thirty-seven years of age, confident of the cooperation of his flock, trained in the government of the diocese, and equipped with knowledge gained by twelve years of missionary work, was ready and able to direct the Church in a remarkable period of reconstruction and growth, paralleling the advance made in civil affairs.

On May 5, 1849, the Bishops of the United States were scheduled to meet at Baltimore to participate in the Seventh Provincial Council where they would discuss and agree upon a common plan of action for meeting and solving the difficulties encountered in the various sees of the country. This was the first official function outside the diocese in which Bishop de St. Palais took part. The promulgation of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and the discussion on the necessity of supporting the Holy Father took up a great portion of the time allotted to the meetings. The proceedings that immediately affected the administration of the Diocese of Vincennes were those in connection with the proposed erection of three new metropolitan sees, New Orleans, New York, and Cincinnati. Heretofore Vincennes was a suffragan see of Baltimore. If the Holy See approved the decrees of the Council, then Vin-

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cannes would be a suffragan see of Cincinnati with Archbishop Purcell the metropolitan of the Province. Such an arrangement would not alter the practical relationship between the two dioceses or their Bishops. On the contrary, Bishop de St. Palais, as well as other neighboring Bishops, had looked to Bishop Purcell for help and sought his advice from the beginning. Although Cincinnati was not the oldest see in the west, since Bardstown was the first, it was centrally located and gave signs of becoming the most progressive. The decision of the Seventh Provincial Council then only gave official sanction to a relationship already existing.

In view of the fact that Vincennes gave no evidence of ever becoming a flourishing and progressive city, the Bishop now determined to carry out the plan he had long ago conceived of moving his episcopal see and the Sisters of Providence Motherhouse to one of the more prosperous Ohio River cities, preferably Madison. Father Du Pontavice, his vicar general, who was pastor at St. Michael's Church in Madison, was doing all in his power to dissuade the Bishop from accomplishing this plan.

I made my objections. (In fact) I have put forth all the reasons that have come to my mind; but you know a Vicar General has only the power of advising. The protestants of Evansville are making offers to "sa grandeur" that he will not find at Madison. How-

8 Ibid., p. 156.
ever, I think that if he changes residence, Madison will be the place that he will choose.9

Father Corbe and Mother Theodore did their utmost to induce the Bishop to remain at Vincennes, and for the time being he did discard the notion of a change, for there were more urgent matters that needed immediate attention.

The Bishop was anxious to ascertain the actual condition of the diocese and, consequently, to determine more accurately what steps were necessary for the sound organization of his administration. Accordingly, he planned to make a complete visitation of his diocese by a route which would lead him to the south, the east, the north, and the west in turn. He hoped to reach all parts of the diocese before Christmas, and to have matters organized well enough to permit him to go abroad in the spring to solicit material aid and missionaries. It was a happy day for his priests when they learned of their Bishop's decision to visit their parishes and missions. At Jasper, Dubois County, the first parish visited, Father Kundek and the parishioners prepared an elaborate welcome for he had formerly been pastor. In 1837 when Father de St. Palais, then stationed at St. Mary's, Daviess County, had come to Jasper the first time, few Catholics were found. He had said the first Mass there in the home of a Presbyterian, Dr. Aaron B. McCrillus, who also served as his interpreter, for Father

9Du Pontavice à Hailandière, March 29, 1849, U. N. D. A.
St. Palais was not familiar with the German language.  

Within a few years, the parish had increased rapidly. Now Father Kundek had quite a large parish at Jasper and two missions, Celestine and Ferdinand.

On July 10, Father Kundek sent a carriage to Washington for the Bishop and the last five miles of his journey he was attended by twenty horsemen.

He found a large congregation expecting him about half a mile from the church, who formed a procession in the following order. The cross bearer with two acolytes, ninety-one boys and girls to be confirmed, the Sisters of Providence, the Pastor, a volunteer company, a long line of people and the Bishop, whose arrival was announced by the ringing of a fine bell of six hundred pounds and a salute from the volunteers. A solemn Benediction was given by the Bishop, ... the procession was resumed, the pastor having intoned the "Te Deum" and to the solemn chanting of the hymn in alternate verses by the choir, the worshippers proceeded slowly to the church where after the Asperges, the Bishop advanced to the altar, and recited the prayers prescribed for such occasions by the ritual.

The following day Father Kundek accompanied the Bishop to Celestine where, before administering confirmation to seventeen persons, the Bishop addressed the congregation in his usual eloquent manner. He spent the entire day at the little mission. As on all such occasions, his mild and engaging manners won for him the love and esteem of the people.

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11 Letter of Father Kundek in Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, Aug. 9, 1849.
On Tuesday the Bishop went to Ferdinand which he was also eager to visit since he had been there eleven years before when there were scarcely thirty families in the parish. When he preached at Vespers he told the parishioners how happy he had been to confirm one hundred and ten persons. At Father Kundek's two smaller missions, Fulda and Troy, he confirmed only thirteen and eight persons respectively. By this time Father Kundek, overcome by fatigue, felt that he was unable to continue the journey. Father Bessonies, therefore, came to Troy from Leopold on the eighteenth to assist the Bishop. That same evening they set out for Cannelton about seven miles above Troy. Upon the invitation of Honorable E. M. Huntington, one of the Judges of the United States Court, whose wife was Catholic,\textsuperscript{12} they spent the night at Mistletoe Lodge about two miles from Cannelton. It was gratifying to see how solicitous Catholic and non-Catholics were for the comfort of the Bishop and his companion. Several non-Catholics invited Father Bessonies to accept lodging in their homes should there not be enough room where the Bishop had been received. The next morning they proceeded to Cannelton where, since there was no Catholic church, services were held in a private home. There was only one convert to receive confirmation, but there were so many evidences of a rapid increase in the Catholic popula-

\textsuperscript{12}Thomas James de la Hunt, "Judge Elisha Mills Huntington," \textit{Indiana Magazine of History}, XXIII (June, 1927), 115-129.
tion that the Bishop gave his approval for the people to make arrangements to build a stone church. The Bishop preached to the Irish who worked in the cotton factory. In the evening the two clergymen set out on horseback for Leopold, and after an arduous ride of twenty-two miles over bad roads, they were glad to arrive at the missionary's modest little dwelling. The bells were rung to announce to the people the arrival of their Bishop. At Mass the next day, although much fatigued, the good Bishop preached in English and at Vespers in French to please the Belgians of the congregation.

The Bishop was still very much of a missionary, even though he no longer slept at night in a box under the altar of a log church as he had been known to do in former years. He now traveled over great areas of territory in order to visit the widely scattered parishes and officiated more frequently in long solemn services. It was not unusual for him to carry out a crowded program such as he did on his last Sunday at Leopold when he sang the High Mass, administered the Sacrament of Baptism to one person and that of Confirmation to thirty-three, officiated at Vespers, and delivered no fewer than six discourses at various times during the day. Early the next day he was on the road again, his goal being St. Mary's Church, on the bank of the Ohio River, about two miles below

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Flint Island. The small log church he found there had been built by Father Elisha Durbin of Kentucky, probably in the year 1826, for St. Mary's was one of the first Catholic churches built in Indiana. The Bishop rested a little that day while Father Bessonies prepared the congregation for the services to be held the following day. Before Mass on Sunday the Bishop, assisted by Reverend J. P. Dion and Reverend W. Zemuly of Kentucky, baptized a seventeen year old convert. Of the forty persons who were confirmed five were converts. Here, too, the Bishop approved of the erection of a new stone church, for the building then used was entirely too small. The last of Father Bessonies' missions was a rather small congregation, St. John Baptist. Yet, that there were four converts in a class of fourteen to be confirmed indicated the likelihood of future growth. 14

The missions about Jasper and Leopold were in a fine state in so far as members and prospects of rapid increase in the size of parishes were concerned, but there were no evidences of a like increase in the number of missionaries or of aid to assist in the necessary building of churches and schools. Many of the churches that had been erected were merely temporary affairs and ill equipped to serve as the House of God. Unless he could secure the aid of the missionary societies of Europe, the Bishop did not see how he could lend assist-

14 Ibid.
ance to these parishes or maintain a diocesan seminary in which to train new missionaries. The people themselves willingly gave of their time and money, but the funds never sufficed for the building of large stone edifices, for money was not plentiful in the forties.

In September the Bishop set out again, this time to visit the parishes and missions under the care of Fathers Du Pontavice, Munschina, Maloney, and Gueguen. The parish at Madison was in a very flourishing condition. The Bishop commented to the pastor, Father Du Pontavice, on the increase in the number of members since his own pastorate in 1847. It was evident that in a very short time the German portion of the congregation would be large enough to form a new parish. The Bishop arrived at St. Ann's in Jennings County about October 7. Father Alphonse Munschina's congregation numbered about seventy German and Irish families of whom three-fourths were prepared to receive confirmation. This parish erected a neat little log church and a pastor's residence, but had established no school. Father Munschina had built a brick church at Milhousen and a frame one at Napoleon. These missions were showing signs of progress, the latter parish having increased from three families in 1836 to twenty-five in 1849. The people of St. Magdalene's, Ripley County, made the occasion of Bishop de St. Palais's first visit to their parish a solemn

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15 Du Pontavice à Hailandière, Sept. 19, 1849, U. N. D. A.
event. They all walked in procession through the woods to their humble log church where the Bishop confirmed fifty persons. On October 14, the prelate arrived on the morning train at Vernon where Father Daniel Maloney awaited him. They were invited to the home of Mr. Denis McNamee, a recent immigrant from Cincinnati. These good Irish people were very much honored to have the privilege of entertaining their Bishop. About noon a large cavalcade of Irish and Germans, marshalled by Mr. Kekum, a former soldier in Napoleon's army, accompanied the Bishop to the residence of Mr. Leonard Vilgris and thence to the church where the Bishop and priests began immediately to hear confessions. Early Sunday morning the Bishop dedicated the church, then celebrated Mass, preached an instructive sermon, administered confirmation to about twenty-five persons, nearly all of whom were boys and girls who had made their First Communion that morning, gave an excellent instruction to them on the Sacraments. "Thus after preaching twice, baptizing, etc., he seemed not exhausted—he having gone through the duties with that ease and gracefulness that would suit a senior in the prelacy." From St. Magdalene's the Bishop, accompanied by his two priests rode to Scipio where he administered confirmation and preached

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16 Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, Nov. 22, 1849.

17 Ibid.
twice in the parish church, St. Patrick's. He and Father Maloney went to Columbus the next day and since the parishioners were assembled in the church, Bishop de St. Palais gave a discourse on one of his favorite topics, the Real Presence, then proceeded to confirm twelve persons. This was the first time confirmation was administered at St. Bartholomew's. After a brief visit at Edinburgh, Johnson County, the Bishop departed for Vincennes promising Father Maloney to visit the church of St. Columba near Martinsville in the spring before he left for France. This parish had been organized and the church built only a year before. A Mr. Neil Mallon had donated an acre of ground to Bishop Purcell for the Catholics of Morgan County. Due to the zeal of Father Maloney and the Catholics and the liberality of charitable protestants the building of a church had been undertaken and completed. Seven or eight Catholic families had subscribed $171.00 and non-Catholics in the district had given $98.00. 18

During the winter of 1849-1850 the Bishop visited the parishes in the northern portion of the diocese, 19 and in the spring he went to the parishes in those counties bordering on the State of Ohio. In April he had dedicated a new large stone church recently completed at Oldenburg. 20 Father Francis

18 Ibid., Nov. 9, 1848.
20 Journal of Father Francis Joseph Rudolf, 1850, O. F. M. A.
Joseph Hudolf in his zeal had enjoined upon the parishioners to observe the Saturday preceding the consecration as a day of fast and abstinence. The priests and people of the neighboring missions had been invited and six of the clergy had been able to come. As many as could remained there the next day to attend the solemn services and confirmation. On Tuesday the Bishop visited at St. John's at Enochsburg, but returned to Oldenburg in the evening, for on Wednesday morning he had planned to visit the new community of Sisters which Father Rudolf had established. Before Mass the Bishop received the solemn profession of a Sister of the Order of St. Francis and admitted another to the novitiate. On Wednesday evening he departed in the company of Father Rudolf to visit other parishes and missions: New Alsace where Father Martin Stahl was pastor, Blue Creek and St. Peter's, Franklin County in the charge of Father William Engel, and Connersville where Father William Doyle was stationed.

At the end of May the Bishop had almost finished the visitation, only Daviess and Martin Counties remained. Thus far he had found affairs in a most promising state; there was, indeed, a rich harvest, but so few laborers. Without a doubt the most pressing need of the diocese was German priests in those areas where there had been and continued to be such a steady increase in German population. In the southern portion

21 Du Pontavice à Hailandière, May 20, 1850, U. N. D. A.
of the diocese there were only twenty-five missionaries, who, with but few exceptions were tending several widely scattered stations in addition to their main parishes. He could not look to the seminary for sufficient recruits, for the Bishop had only recently been able to reopen the St. Charles Seminary at Vincennes.

He had lost some of the most experienced priests of the diocese within the last year. Father Michael Shawe had joined the Diocese of Detroit after the death of Bishop Bazin; Father Charles Oppermann had gone and Father Michael O'Flanagan had asked for permission to leave. Father Louis Ducondray, who had received permission to return to France, had suffered an attack of cholera at New Orleans and died there. Of course, several newly ordained priests had been put into service during the last two years. Father William Doyle and Father Bartholomew Piers had received Holy Orders from Bishop Bazin on December 18, 1847, and were immediately placed in charge of St. Andrew's, Richmond, and St. Peter's, Montgomery, respectively. Father John Contin and Father Philip O'Connell had been ordained April 7, 1849; the former was sent to Ferdinand, a recently organized parish consisting almost entirely of newly arrived German immigrants, while

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22 Audran à Hailandière, Aug. 1848, U. N. D. A.

23 Joseph A. Thie, "Biographical Sketches of the Deceased Priests of the Diocese" (Unpublished collection of lives of priests who served in the Diocese of Indianapolis, until 1898 known as the Diocese of Vincennes, compiled by Father Thie, a priest of the same diocese), p. 66.
the latter served in northern Indiana. In 1849, Father Francis X. Kutassy, a Croatian priest ordained in Austria in 1824, applied for admission into the diocese. It was probably through Father Kundek that the immigrant priest chose to work in the Diocese of Vincennes. The Bishop had contemplated sending him to Ferdinand, but Father Kutassy did not feel capable of undertaking the type of missionary labor required there. He was then appointed the first pastor of Holy Trinity, Evansville, the first German parish organized in that city. He proved to be an excellent pastor, contributing invaluable service to his adopted diocese.

Shortly after his consecration, Bishop de St. Palais had appointed Father Du Pontavice vicar general, a position which the good priest frequently avowed he would gladly relinquish. When the Bishop asked him to come to Vincennes to be administrator of the diocese while he was abroad, Father Du Pontavice begged the Bishop to appoint another, an able priest such as Father Corbe. The vicar general disliked to assume honors and the responsibilities attached to them. He preferred, as he said, to remain pastor at Madison and to attend to the needs of his people, rather than to attend to the needs of all parishioners and to be the pastor of none.24

At this time, moreover, his parish needed all the attention

24 Du Pontavice à Hail Landière, May 20, 1850, U. N. D. A.
he could bestow upon it. Madison, as well as the Other Ohio River towns, was literally inundated by a deluge of immigrants newly arrived from starved Ireland and restless Germany. The masses of poor, ignorant Irish were attracted to cities, to promising business centers such as Madison with its flourishing factories, mills, and railroad work. Many of the German tradesmen sought to establish a little business of their own while the farmers attempted to settle on the outskirts of the city where there was still plenty of land available for cultivation. These initial attempts to find their place in the New World and to acquire a means of maintaining an existence were trying and difficult partly because of the disastrous plague that swept the country in the spring and summer of 1849.

For months the Americans had watched the spread of cholera in the various countries of Europe, fearful lest it should attempt an entrance into the United States. Inevitably the dreaded plague found passage on the numerous immigrant ships and thence made its appearance in the American ports where it rapidly spread ruin and death. From these cities travellers carried the disease to the inland towns. It was to these persons Mother Theodore was referring when she wrote:

This, (the presence of the cholera), however, does not prevent Americans from visiting the pestilential city, thus making the numerous steamboats the messengers or rather the carriers of destruction; for they go back and forth spreading death wherever they stop. It is to these steamboats that is due the presence of the cholera in our Indiana forests. But the Americans must have the dollar! Their cupidity renders them daring and indifferent to everything else. It is
nothing to them to expose their lives and those of others in order to gain money. How materialistic these people are! Not a single week passes that their indifference does not make our rivers tombs of a great number of persons.25

By the spring of 1849 the cholera epidemic had broken out in nearly all the large cities along the Ohio River. In those cities where her Sisters were stationed Mother Theodore urged them to devote themselves generously to the care of the stricken people. She wrote to Sister Basilda at Madison to do all in her power to prevent the spread of the disease.26 It became necessary to close the school in order that the Sisters could devote themselves entirely to tending the sick. There was even talk of converting the Sisters’ residence into a temporary hospital. In the summer the cholera was making terrible ravages among the people, especially the poor Irish immigrants. In two weeks the parish of St. Michael’s lost thirteen members of its congregation. The pastor, Father Du Pontavice was kept busy day and night assisting at the death beds of his afflicted parishioners. But he felt that in all cases the plague was not as evil a scourge as it was customary to describe it; to some it was actually a blessing in disguise.

Thanks be to God. I am not alarmed at present. I have had the consolation of being able to give the Last Sacraments to all those who died. That is a great deal; but

if this is consoling it is sad, too, to encounter people more than twenty or thirty years old who have never made their first communion and whom it is necessary to prepare in a few minutes to meet their God. Of the hundred new arrivals from Ireland, there are about ninety-nine such cases. . . . In short, it is my sad duty to have to prepare such people for death as well as direct them in life. This year our city has been flooded with people of this kind. . . . They scarcely know that there is a God; they are ashamed to attend Catechism and do not understand the instruction (when they do come). I am expecting help from the cholera, it is a better teacher than I. Sunday morning I heard confessions of about fifty persons most of whom had not made their Easter duty.27

The cholera had also made its appearance in other southern Indiana cities and in Vincennes, Washington, Terre Haute, Indianapolis, and the towns and villages bordering the State of Ohio. Everywhere the fatal visitor took its toll of lives (fortunately missionaries were spared) leaving numberless children abandoned to an uncertain fate. The pitiable condition of these orphans incited Bishop de St. Palais to make a most eloquent plea in their behalf. From the beginning of his administration he had manifested a special interest in the orphans, "the dearest portion of his flock" as he called them. His plans to establish an orphanage materialized when St. Ann's Orphanage for Girls was opened at Vincennes on August 29, 1849. The old school near the Cathedral had been renovated and now served as an orphanage.28 The Bishop had

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27 Du Pontavice à Hailanière, June 21, 1849, U. N. D. A.
28 Western Sun and General Advertiser, Oct. 6, 1849.
asked Mother Theodore to assist in this undertaking and she responded by sending Sisters to care for the children of the institution. The boys had been placed under the charge of seculars. But the dreadful scourge of the summer had so increased the number, that the Bishop found it necessary to call upon his people to aid him in caring for the destitute children. His first pastoral letter, issued on November 22, 1849, is devoted entirely to this most pressing need.

Feeling that all such are our children, and have an especial claim to our paternal care and affection, because unfortunate and poor, we concluded to combat against and endeavor to overcome all difficulties thrown in our path... We confidently trust that our hopes will not be frustrated when we call upon you to help us in supporting our children, and saving them from the misery and corruption that are oftentimes the consequence of poverty and destitution. Were we situated as they are in some other dioceses, where the number and wealth of the Catholics of one city can afford sufficient means for the support of such institutions, we should not appeal to the liberality of all the faithful of Indiana, but we are not; and besides, as the benefits about to be derived from these asylums of charity, will extend to the orphans of the different parts of the State, we wish to depend upon the free and charitable contributions of all for their support.29

Every pastor was asked to place an "orphan box" inside the door of his parish church and stations. On Christmas the pastor himself was to take up a collection for the orphans in his parish church and in his mission churches on the following Sundays. The Christmas season was deliberately selected because at that time "we commemorate the mysteries of the holy

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infancy of our Redeemer, poor and abandoned by the world." Bishop de St. Palais urged the clergy to promote zealously this work of charity and he pleaded with the people to be generous in their contributions for the orphans. "Teach your children to be charitable, and afford them also the means of giving their mite, for you do not know how soon they themselves may be orphans."  

This plea for the orphans coming as it did at the outset of the episcopacy of Bishop de St. Palais was an indication of the fatherly interest he cherished for all his people, especially the poor and destitute. He had noted during the course of his pastoral visitation that willing Catholics were hindered in their efforts to advance the cause of religion by the lack of necessary funds and the invaluable assistance that only missionaries can give. This was generally true in the case of the German immigrants who were most desirous to keep up their religious practices. These two problems, the supply of the clergy and the care of the orphans, were to be the chief problems of his episcopate. It was imperative, therefore, that the Bishop delay no longer in attempting to procure aid from friends abroad and to obtain priests for his rapidly growing diocese.

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30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
Due to the tremendous increase in immigration and the fanatical antagonism of the Know Nothings, the administration of church affairs and the guidance of the faithful had become exceedingly perplexing in the fifties. The full force and weight of the Irish and German immigration were felt in all their serious portent for the future of Catholicism in Indiana. How to control these newcomers, how to provide adequately for their ministrations, how to mold them into Americans—these were the tasks that confronted Bishop de St. Palais in these first years of his episcopacy. With the aid of the diocesan clergy whose numbers increased each year and with the assistance of the religious orders in the diocese, the Bishop succeeded in organizing the immigrants into congregations and in establishing numerous schools where the Irish and German children could be instructed in their religion and also learn to adapt themselves more easily to the American way of life. The sharp and bitter persecution waged by the members of the Know Nothing party against the foreign element of the Church created difficulties, but did not arrest the progress the Church was making during this period. In fact, so great an advance was made that in 1857 a new diocese had to be erected in the northern part of the state.
The southern river towns daily witnessed the arrival of immigrants recently come from their foreign homes or from temporary residences in such cities as Cincinnati and New Orleans. The missionaries literally spent themselves in an effort to minister to those persons belonging to the faith, but were forced to leave much good undone. The field was too extensive for the number of priests available, and many of those in service were hindered in their work because they were unfamiliar with the German language. The Bishop, keenly aware of the pressing need for German-speaking priests, made final arrangements for his long delayed trip abroad where he intended to solicit aid and recruits for his diocese. In July, 1851, he placed the administration of the diocese in the hands of Father Corbe, thus releasing Father Du Pontavice, the former Vicar General, from that responsibility and giving him more time to devote to the rapidly growing parish at Madison. Father Kundek of Jasper, the newly appointed Vicar General, was to have accompanied the Bishop but his impetuous zeal prompted him to remain at Madison, where the two had stopped en route to New York, and to assist the pastor of the German congregation in the erection of a new church. A year and a half elapsed before Father Kundek joined the Bishop in Europe. The latter had made his official visit to Rome and had already

1Du Pontavice à Hailandiè re, Aug. 24, 1851, U. N. D. A.
begun his tour of visiting bishops and superiors of seminaries, placing before them his great need for priests. The response he received was encouraging though not nearly so promising as the results of Father Kundek's appeals. The latter had petitioned the Benedictines at Einsiedeln, Switzerland, to send priests as missionaries to Vincennes. Through his repeated requests, substantiated by the influence of Bishop de St. Palais, however, a promise was obtained from the Abbot to send priests to the Indiana missions, which he did in 1853.

Upon his return to the episcopal city, Bishop de St. Palais transferred the theological seminary from Vincennes to the Highlands about three miles distant. Father John Guéguen, a pious and exemplary priest, was placed in charge of the sixteen students, and for the time being, the St. Charles seminary seemed to be opening upon a more promising future. Under the careful management of the superior the funds derived from the annual Easter collection taken up in all the churches and stations, were made to suffice for the maintenance of the faculty and the students. Yet the institution was not receiving the whole-hearted cooperation of the laity; and without their help it was futile to attempt to maintain a diocesan seminary, for

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3 *Du Pontavice à Hailandière, Aug. 2, 1853, U. N. D. A.*
the Bishop could no longer rely upon large contributions from the Propagation of Faith. This society, established to aid missionary endeavors, had to lessen the amounts formerly given in order to render assistance to other new missionary fields being opened. In March, 1853, Bishop de St. Palais explained the situation to his people and once more appealed to them to help him maintain a seminary where native clergy could be trained. He needed priests to relieve many of the pastors who were overburdened by their too multiplied labors; and to satisfy the frequent demands of the increasing population.4

The clergy also had a responsibility in regard to the seminary. They were not only to encourage their parishioners to support it, but to foster vocations to the holy priesthood among the boys of their parish. There was already a beginning, ever so slight, in the formation of a clergy taken from the ranks of the people of the diocese. Of the ten clerics ordained between the years 1851 and 1857, three were from southern Indiana homes. Father Henry Peters, ordained May 11, 1851, by Bishop de St. Palais, was one of these students. At the age of seven he had left Hanover, Germany, with his family and came to Cincinnati where they stayed but a very short time. In 1834 they settled in

4Circular Letter of Bishop de St. Palais, Feb. 28, 1853, U. N. D. A.
Vincennes where Henry Peters entered St. Gabriel College. A year later he began his studies for the priesthood at St. Charles Seminary under Father Du Pontavice, and in 1851 was one of the two deacons ordained by Bishop de St. Palais. The Bishop immediately appointed him to take care of those German people residing in the neighborhood of Troy. Several years later two other young men, Michael Marendt and Philip Doyle, from Indiana, entered the seminary at Vincennes. Like Father Peters, Father Michael Marendt emigrated from Europe, Lembac, Alsace, to America. The family settled at Spaethsville, later known as Mariah Hill, Indiana. It is probable that Michael Marendt studied under Father Meinkman in Ferdinand for a year or two before applying for admission into the seminary at Vincennes. He was ordained by Bishop de St. Palais on March 24, 1855, the same day as Father Philip Doyle. The Doyle family had lived in a German neighborhood in Pittsburg and had moved to Indiana about 1834, where two of the sons studied for the priesthood and were ordained for the diocese of Vincennes.

The other seven priests ordained by Bishop de St. Palais had come to America after they had begun their studies for the priesthood. Father John B. Merl, who was ordained

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6 Thie, op. cit., p. 276.
7 Ibid., p. 103.
on the same day as Father Henry Peters, had emigrated to the United States when he was already advanced in his studies. Immediately after ordination he served in the German missions at St. Joseph Church, Jasper, while Father Kundek was abroad, and, in 1853, he was appointed resident pastor at St. Andrew parish in Richmond, Wayne County. Fathers Peter Leonard Brandt, Henry Koering, Frederick Pepersack, Joseph Wentz, and Januarius Weissenberger were also German immigrants while Father Cletus Urcan probably came from France or Canada. Father Leonard Brandt had studied theology in Munster, Westphalia, and had been made deacon before he volunteered to go to America with Bishop de St. Palais in 1852. A few months after his arrival in Vincennes he received Holy Orders in the new St. John Church in that city. That place was selected in preference to the Cathedral because the Bishop wished to honor the German congregation by ordaining in their church the priest whom he intended to appoint as pastor.8 After saying his first Mass there Father Brandt took charge of the parish. In April of the same year another distinction was given him, he was asked to preach the sermon at the corner stone laying of St. Wendel Church, and in 1853, he was sent as pastor at St. Mary's, Madison, where the former pastor was experiencing difficulty in successfully organizing the parish.9

8Ibid., p. 33.
9Alerding, op. cit., p. 286.
Immediately after ordination Father Koering from Newhaus in the diocese of Paderborn, Westphalia, Germany, had been appointed pastor at St. Joseph parish, St. Leon, Dearborn County, while Father Peppersack of Oldenburg, Germany, was made first resident pastor at St. James, Gibson County. Father Wentz also from Oldenburg, Germany, was one of the seminarians procured for the diocese of Vincennes by Father Kundek in 1853. Father Januarius Weissenberger who in 1857 was made the first resident pastor of the German parish St. Mary-of-the-Rock had left Baden, Germany, in 1848 to labor in the mission fields of the United States. Father Urcun, ordained at the same time as Father Weissenberger, was stationed at Leopold to assist in the work among the French speaking people.

In addition to those priests who studied at the diocesan seminary and were ordained at Vincennes, there were a number of older priests who asked for admission into the diocese. Of the fourteen who were received the greatest number were German-speaking priests, many of whom contributed years of valuable service to the church in the southern part of the state. Father Frederick J. Muller who corresponded with Father Kundek of Jasper was influenced by that zealous missionary to come to America in 1853 to assist in the work in Indiana. The first year after his arrival he was appointed

10 Thie, op. cit., p. 513.
as professor of theology at the seminary. It is quite likely that some of the other priests who joined the diocese were similarly influenced, or perhaps they were responding to the personal appeal of the Bishop and his companion during their sojourn abroad in 1851-1852. Whatever motive impelled them to come to Vincennes, the fact remains that the number of priests was appreciably increased.

In 1853 the arrival of the Benedictines in Indiana brought great pleasure to all in the diocese, but especially to the Bishop and his Vicar General, Father Kundek. These two looked expectantly to the establishment of this order for the fulfillment of their respective desires for native clergy and missionaries of a religious community. All the Ordinaries to Bishop de St. Palais had secured the greatest number of their diocesan clergy from abroad, but it was his ambition to permanently establish in the diocese a school to train American-born young men for the priesthood. Accordingly, when Father Kundek had consulted him about the advisability of procuring a religious community of priests to assist with the missionary work in Jasper and the surrounding area, the prelate had encouraged the missionary to carry out the plan. Father Kundek had hoped to obtain priests from an order already established in the United States. His petition to the provincial of the Redemptorists at Baltimore, John

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**Ibid., p. 304.**
Nepomuk Neumann, had been refused, because the order was unable to comply with the request.\(^\text{12}\) Father Kundek then turned to the Benedictines in Switzerland and made a similar petition. In the meantime the Bishop had gone to Rome and on his return from this "ad limina" visit had stopped at the Abbey of Einsiedeln to make a personal plea for the establishment of a house of the order in the diocese of Vincennes. The Abbot was unable to grant the request, for the Benedictines had just taken over the work of the Jesuits who had been expelled from Switzerland after the civil war.\(^\text{13}\)

A year later, 1852, Father Kundek made the same petition, and this time the Abbot gave a more favorable reply. In July, 1852, the latter wrote that he was willing to attempt a foundation even though he had but few priests and meager funds for such an undertaking. He stated explicitly in a later letter to Father Kundek that his objective in sending his priests to Vincennes was "to establish a monastery in the diocese, affiliated with Einsiedeln, in which the monks were to be primarily missionaries and secondarily teachers to develop a native clergy."\(^\text{14}\) Since the plan coincided with that of the Bishop and of Father Kundek, definite arrangements were made for the foundations of an abbey in Indiana.

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\(^{12}\)Kleber, op. cit., p. 41

\(^{13}\)Indiana Catholic and Record, Aug. 30, 1935, p. 24.

\(^{14}\)Ibid., p. 25.
In December of the same year two priests, Father Bede O'Connor, O.S.B., originally from London and Father Ulrich Christen, O.S.B., of Stanz, who was Father Bede's first professor at Einsiedeln, were selected as the pioneer missionaries. The Warheits Freund of St. Gall, Switzerland, published the following details on the occasion of the departure of these two Benedictines from the Abbey of Einsiedeln:

On Monday, the 20th of December, two religious monks of the chapter of Benedictines of Notre Dame d'Einsiedeln took leave of their fellow brothers, and being provided with passports sanctioned by the Federal Council, they began their journey over the seas. A very grand plan has been conceived; it consists of the foundation, in North America, of this old and celebrated abbey, in order to diffuse the benefits of religion and Christian civilization in these countries, which, till now, were deprived of those divine consolations. The barbarity of the Jessinian vandals, who, by an act of violence, have deprived the convent of its home and its mission at Bellinzona, has at length matured the plan. Rev. Abbot Henry caused it to be submitted to the approbation of the Holy See by his envoy, the Rev. Gall Morel, and the Holy Father, with his heart filled with joy, gave his consent and his apostolic benediction to that noble and fine undertaking. The new world of true liberty will then open its arms and cordially receive those apostolic men of Saint Benedict, whom the degenerate children of Switzerland endeavor to banish from their scene of action, and even deprive of their means of existence.\textsuperscript{15}

They reached New York on January 31, 1853 and three weeks later arrived at Vincennes where they were warmly received by Bishop de St. Palais. They were appointed to missionary work as had been planned, Father Ulrich assisted Father Kundek at Jasper and the stations attached to it, while Father Bede was appointed to help in the missions about

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{New Albany Daily Tribune}, April 12, 1853.
Vincennes. The latter also accompanied the Bishop on journeys through the diocese blessing churches and administering confirmation. Father Bede, vivacious, energetic, talented, was the ideal type of missionary, as well as companion, to the Bishop. His fluency in speaking the English, French, and German languages served to the utmost advantage on the trips with the Bishop where they encountered English, French, German, and Irish parishioners. In May, 1853, Father Bede was sent to St. Mary parish, Madison, and three months later to Ferdinand. He and Father Ulrich looked about for a suitable location for an abbey which they intended to establish as soon as additional numbers arrived. They selected and purchased one hundred sixty acres of cultivated and timber land in Spencer County five miles south of Ferdinand.

In October, 1853, two more Benedictines, Fathers Jerome Bachman and Eugene Schwertzmann, arrived at Ferdinand and assisted Father Ulrich in attending the surrounding missions while Father Bede took care of Cannelton in Perry County. In the meantime the necessary preparations were being made to convert the little log cabin, which was on the ground bought by the monks, into presentable temporary living quarters for the young community. By the spring of 1854 all was in readiness at St. Meinrad, as the place was called, and on the feast of St. Benedict, March 21, the

St. Benedict, March 21, the humble monastery was solemnly blessed by Father Kundek.  

The following weeks Fathers Eugene and Jerome assisted by a brother candidate and a hired man began to clean the grounds and build four additional rooms to the monastery. On April 17 a school was opened with an attendance of two students from Cannelton, Robert Huntington, son of Judge Elisha W. Huntington, and Joseph Key, son of Judge Key. Within the next few months the lands were being cultivated, the enrollment of the school increased, and in July, 1854, seven new candidates for the order arrived from Wurtemburg, Germany. Then, in August the community suffered its first great loss in the death of Father Eugene. In the fall Father Jerome, the Prior, was called to Einsiedeln by the Abbot who was concerned about the welfare of the new community. After having reassured the Abbot that in spite of the hardships endured by the American community, there were evidences of a promising future, Father Jerome returned to St. Meinrad's with two more priests, Fathers Athanasius Tschopp and Chrysostom Foffa. Within a year, however, the former, again accompanied by Father Jerome, went back to Einsiedeln because of ill health. Father Chrysostom was stationed at St. Meinrad and was given charge of the monastery, school, and neighboring

17 Ibid., p. 60; Indiana Catholic and Record, Aug. 30, 1935, p. 25.
18 Alerding, op. cit., p. 548.
missions. He immediately set about to complete the new school building which had been started the previous year and he also continued the work on the frame monastery and Gothic chapel which was under construction. These undertakings which he assumed in addition to his regular duties made his work quite arduous. Consequently, when Father Isidore Hobe, O.S.B., arrived from Europe in April, 1857, he took over the care of the missions and the school which then had about fourteen pupils. Thus four years after the arrival of the Benedictines the community had four priests, two devoted entirely to missionary work and two at St. Meinrad. A school had also been opened and other new buildings had been erected.

In December, 1857, the diocese suffered a tremendous loss in the death of Father Kundek. Through his colonization project in the Jasper area, a relatively vast Catholic settlement had been effected. For twenty years he had spent himself in the interests of the Catholics, especially the German immigrants of Spencer and Dubois Counties. He directed immigrants to settle in and around Jasper where the missionaries could minister to them more regularly. His letters to the Leopoldine Association, a foreign mission society,

19 Ibid., p. 549.
not only attracted German Catholic farmers and tradesmen, but also served as an incentive for priests to volunteer to come to the Indiana missions. The colony at Jasper thus built up, developed from a small band of twenty-five families living in a wilderness to an industrious well-advanced town with the Catholic congregation numbering about three hundred families; the town of Ferdinand had as many, if not more, Catholics under the care of Father Ulrich, while Fulda boasted of a hundred eighty families and a resident pastor as early as 1852. There were about a hundred fifty Catholic families at Celestine still attended from Jasper. Troy, Rockport, St. Thomas parish at McLaughlin, and Mary Help of Christians at Spaethsville had all developed into large missions.

Father Kundek's ambitious colonizing plan had stimulated a neighboring missionary to attempt a similar project in Perry County. When Father Augustus Bessonies was appointed in 1840 to go to a place some fifteen miles from Rome, he found conditions similar to those which the Austrian missionary had discovered in Dubois County in 1837, and like his confere he decided to build up a Catholic center to attract Belgian immigrants.21 By 1852 he, too, had a flourishing parish at Leopold and several prosperous missions, one of which, Cannelton, was soon to become a center for

21 Ibid., pp. 76-79.
the labors of Father Bede O'Connor, and later for Father Michael Marendt. From the time of their arrival the Benedictines assisted in these missions of Fathers Kundek and Bessonies in Dubois, Spencer, and Perry Counties. So gratifying were the results of their combined work that by 1857 not only the two mother churches had resident pastors, but the parishes at Ferdinand (1853), Fulda (1852) and Cannelton (1854) also enjoyed that privilege. The good people of Ferdinand had helped their pastor build a beautiful stone church and even acquired an organ, while at St. Boniface parish, Fulda, the parishioners for the time being merely enlarged their log church. The English speaking people of Cannelton erected a modest little church in 1852 and placed it under the patronage of St. Patrick.

The religious activities and development in progress in these districts were rivalled by those of other southern and eastern areas affected by immigration. By the middle of the fifties pastors found the number of their parishioners doubling and tripling within a year without a similar increase in resources and assistance. Indeed, the Bishop and his priests encountered serious difficulties in their attempts to minister regularly to all the Catholics. Father Du Pontavice wrote to Bishop de la Hailandière that the diocese could well use four times the number of priests and churches that it had. There was great danger of Catholics drifting away from the practice of their faith because of
the evils that beset the immigrants. And yet, as well considered opinion holds, it might be said that the majority of the German immigrants who were practical Catholics attending church regularly when they arrived in America remained loyal to their religion the remainder of their lives. It was not unusual for them to seek out settlements located near a mission church or to heed the invitation of their fellow countrymen and select a town where they would be assured of regular parish services. These German groups were frequently well enough organized to have a resident pastor long before the Bishop was able to send one to them. If they happened to be in an English-speaking parish, the priest, if possible, often arranged to set aside a special time for the German portion of the congregation when they could attend as a group and occasionally a German priest visited them. At these parishes where the pastor was not able to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass every week the devout German Catholics would invariably appear in church on Sunday morning to pray the rosary and perhaps listen to the reading of a pious book. Father Frederick Pepersack had thus assisted at St. Wendel's prior to his entrance at the seminary at Vincennes. On those Sundays when Father Roman Weinzoepfel, the pastor, attended neighboring missions,

Frederick Pepersack, school teacher and choir master, would sing sacred Hymns with the choir, lead in the recitation of the rosary and finally read the Epistle of the Sunday Mass.\textsuperscript{23} Thus much good was accomplished.

This practice of forming German, French, and English parishes was quite common in this period of the Church in southern Indiana, as also in other parts of the United States. The members of the hierarchy sanctioned the practice and even urged pastors to encourage people to attend that church where their native language was spoken in order that they might participate in the services. This was to continue as long as it was deemed necessary and advantageous for maintenance of the practice of religion. It was the duty of the Bishop, however, to safeguard the uniform character of services of the church. These national groupings together with the facts of distance and scarcity of priests could easily have led to laxity in discipline and in several places it did. There was a danger, too, of introducing and over emphasizing nationality at liturgical functions as happened in the Jasper missions. It was through Father Bede O'Connor that the external pomp of the cavalcade, music, and musketry demonstrated on solemn occasions by the German parishioners of St. Joseph's gave way to a more liturgical spirit in the parish.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{23}Thie, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 358; Alerding, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 235.

\textsuperscript{24}Kleber, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 58-59.
Other problems and difficulties appeared from time to time while the parishes, especially the German parishes, were being founded, and churches erected, for this was a great period for organizing German immigrants into regular parishes and building separate churches for them.

In the episcopal city the number of German parishioners in 1851 was sufficiently large to warrant their having a church and thus separate from the Cathedral parish. Up to this time the German assistant priest at the Cathedral had ordinarily had services for them on Sundays in St. Francis Xavier Cathedral at eight o'clock. Fathers Charles Opperman, Conrad Schneiderjans, and Nicholas Stauber had at different times attended the German people at Vincennes. It was Father Stauber who undertook to direct the building of the new church which he placed under the patronage of St. John Baptist. Upon its completion in June, 1852, a solemn celebration took place at which Father Corbe, the Administrator of the diocese during the Bishop's absence, officiated with Fathers Chasse and Staph as assistants. Clergy, seminarians, Sisters of Providence, orphans, and members of the two congregations met at the Cathedral and walked in procession to the new church where a Solemn High Mass was celebrated and the ceremony of blessing performed.

The parishioners were justly proud of their new church situated on the most elevated site in the city and in that section of the town where the majority of the congregation lived. One of the enthusiastic parishioners sent an
account of the dedication services to the weekly Catholic newspaper, the Catholic Telegraph, hoping thereby to attract other German families to Vincennes. He pointed out that the members of St. John Baptist parish were not only fortunate in having their own church and a German priest but the educational and business opportunities were unrivaled in the West. The school was already in session, classes being held in a private home. The farms in the surrounding area were in splendid shape. There was rich soil which sold at a very low price, and the facilities for obtaining a market for produce were already good. Transportation was available; ever since February, 1852, there had been uninterrupted steamboat navigation by which means the entire surplus produce could be taken to market. There was also the Evansville railroad which terminated at Princeton, not more than twenty-five miles from Vincennes. The writer sincerely hoped that German Catholics would heed the invitation to join the settlement at Vincennes. The parish did continue to grow and within two years the Bishop appointed as regular pastor, Father Leonard Brandt who labored among them until 1856 when Father William Engeln was designated as the first resident pastor of St. John Baptist parish of Vincennes.

25 Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, June 26, 1852.

26 Alerding, op. cit., p. 249.
South of Vincennes, in Gibson, Posey, and Vanderburgh Counties, the missions of Father Weinzoepfel were evincing signs of steady growth. The German parish at Evansville had already been turned over to the care of a resident pastor, Father Kutasssy, who had immediately been charged to undertake the construction of a new church. During the cholera epidemic the work had been seriously interrupted, but in 1851 it was imperative that the building be resumed, for the congregation needed a place of worship. Through the excellent business management of the building committee and the generosity of Catholics and non-Catholics, foreigners and neighbors, the church was completed in 1851 and furnished in all details—altars, pulpit, organ, pews, and bells. The beautiful oil painting of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin placed over the main altar was a gift of King Louis of Bavaria. On the Feast of Pentecost the Bishop attended the solemn blessing of the church by the pastor. 27 A year later when the well-known Jesuit, Father Francis X. Weninger, was conducting a mission at this parish, the crowds attending the services were so large that they could scarcely be accommodated in the new church.

The neighboring parishes still under the care of Father Weinzoepfel were experiencing the same perplexing problem; churches built in the last decade were now too

27 Ibid., p. 279.
small. At St. Wendel's the members of the congregation set about wholeheartedly with their pastor to obtain the funds and material necessary for a new church. Fortunately, most of the building material was donated and a five thousand dollar subscription was secured, so that work immediately begun, was far enough advanced by April, 1853, to lay the corner stone. The Bishop was invited to officiate on the occasion while Father Brandt was asked to preach in German and Father Bede o'Conor in English. This church was scarcely completed when a neighboring parish, St. James in Gibson County, was compelled to build in order to accommodate its ever increasing congregation. Again Father Weinzoepfel with untiring zeal undertook the burden of subscribing money, material, and labor needed for the building of a larger church. The same was begun in 1855, the year in which the parish received its first resident pastor, by Father Papercack who lived at St. Wendel's while Father Weinzoepfel continued to supervise the building of the church and parsonage. At the time when St. James Church was solemnly blessed (1857) plans for two new churches in Posey County were well under way, St. Philip and St. Matthew, the latter parish but recently formed.

The missionaries at work in the New Albany and Madison areas were equally active in spreading the Faith, organizing parishes and building new churches or remodelling old ones to suit the needs of the congregation. Enterprising
priests like Father Louis Neyron of Holy Trinity, New Albany, and Father John Dion of Lanesville seemed to penetrate into the most remote districts to seek out Catholics who were eager to receive the comforts afforded by holy religion. There was hardly a parish or station in and about New Albany that one or other of these two priests did not visit. Father Neyron regularly cared for the German people in New Albany until 1854 when the congregation was formally established and given a resident pastor; he also took a special interest in the two French villages in Floyd County, at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs and French Creek. The former, the earlier of the two settlements, had in its formative period received visits from the venerable Bishop Flaget who offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass several times in the log church. While this little parish made no notable advance as far as numbers were concerned, it managed to retain a steady, continuous existence. French Creek, on the other hand, was destined to decline after a short period of prosperity. This colony came to the neighborhood of Perry County about 1830 and settled at a place which they called Porrentry from the native canton of many of the settlers, but which was popularly known as French Creek. The people for the most part were honest and industrious Belgian French;

28 Ibid., p. 341.
they planted vineyards, vegetable gardens, and orchards; and the colony prospered. When Father Neyron was pastor the community was in its prime, yet he would not consent to their building a church. He persuaded them to attend services at New Albany which was not far distant. Once each month, however, he visited their colony and held Vesper services.

In 1855 those Catholics who resided at Whiskey Run Township in Crawford County separated from St. Bernard parish at Frenchtown. Under the guidance of Father Dion they organized a new parish and adopted St. Joseph as their patron. Two years later a disastrous fire destroyed the church which had cost them so much labor and money. In 1855 Father Dion also helped the people at St. Croix, Perry County, form a new parish. To the east of New Albany, in Clark County, there were new Catholic centers in formation. The villages of Starlight, St. Joseph Hill, and Charlestown were responding favorably to the appeals of the missionaries. In the extreme southern part of the county in Jeffersonville, the German immigrants were swelling the numbers of parishioners attending St. Augustine Church. Until 1854 these Catholics depended upon occasion visits from diocesan clergy and priests from Louisville. Urged by the appeals of the people

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and the clergy of Louisville who were needed in their own diocese, Bishop de St. Palais at last appointed a pastor, accompanying him inperson on March 17, 1854. Father Augustine Bessonies was the first pastor to reside at Jeffersonville.30

Father Du Pontavice found that thousands of immigrants, German and Irish, selected the prosperous river city as their future home. In 1852 about two thousand Irish people had settled in his parish and almost as many German people.31 There was, of course, a new German congregation being organized but only with difficulty. It was not infrequently the case that the German people caused a little trouble for their pastors. Mother Theodore thought them even more headstrong than Bretons and quite difficult to manage.32 Father Kundek, however, experienced in work among them, effected a change for the better at St. Mary parish when he resided there temporarily in 1851-1852. In the latter part of 1852 Father Du Pontavice had submitted plans to the Bishop for the erection of two churches, one at North Madison and the other at Vevay about twenty miles east of Madison. When he visited the little Swiss colony in the fall he learned from the

31Du Pontavice à Hailandière, Oct. 22, 1852, U. N. D. A.
32Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, Jan. 6, 1854, in Mug, Journals and Letters, p. 364.
inhabitants that he was the first Catholic priest to visit them. On that occasion when he had preached in the public hall of the village, the cordial treatment accorded him seemed to indicate the possibility of establishing a mission. Some time later Father Du Pontavice bought a lot 100 by 48 which he gave to the Bishop along with a subscription for $500 to help build a church. Within the next few years Catholicism made progress and although the number of Catholic inhabitants was not numerous, nevertheless it was worthy of note that most of them were converts to the Faith.

Considering the fact that the counties west and northeast of Madison were not so densely populated as those in the south it may be said that the progress of Catholicism in this territory was quite favorable. Numerous settlements and established parishes located there were indebted to Father Alphonse Munschina and later to Father Edward Martinovic for their constant hard work among the people. In the years of his pastorate at St. Anne's, Jennings County, Father Munschina found time and means to begin two new parishes and to build and furnish churches for several older parishes. Through his faithful work he initiated the people of St. Magdalen's, Ripley County, into

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33 Du Pontavice à Hailandière, Oct. 22, 1852, U. N. D. A.
the first steps toward parish life, while at North Vernon he was the first priest to say Mass regularly for the Catholics. He assumed the responsibility to erect spacious churches at Millhausen and Napoleon and to furnish the new church at Buena Vista.

Although Father Martinovic did not distinguish himself as a "church builder," he did very much good ministering to the needs of his widely scattered missions, many of which were formerly under the care of Father Daniel Maloney: Shelbyville, Greensburg, Acton, Edinburg, Mount Erin, and, for a while, the German congregation at Indianapolis. To travel such great distances on horseback regardless of weather was no easy task. Nor was it encouraging for the missionaries to observe what good had to remain undone because time would not permit them to remain at any one place long enough to accomplish it. If only these obstacles could be overcome, if the Bishop had but a few more priests to send as assistants, the work of the Church would benefit greatly. Splendid achievements were attained in this area, though they were neither as spectacular nor as quickly gotten as in those regions more forcefully affected by immigration.

One of the most intensely active centers of Catholicism in the diocese was the German district in the eastern counties, the Catholic settlements there being among the earliest established. In the thirties Father Joseph Ferneding, early missionary of southeastern Indiana, had
organized congregations in Dearborn, Ripley, and Franklin Counties. From experience he had learned the advantage of grouping Catholics in order to prevent loss of Faith through isolation, therefore, when German Catholics came through his district, he directed them to one or the other of the settlements. In the latter part of the year 1836 and in 1837 financial depression urged many German families to leave Cincinnati to seek farm lands. Even though the land in the area of Oldenburg, Franklin County, was not the best for farming, many settlers were attracted there because of the low price on the land. In 1836 Father Ferneding offered the Holy Sacrifice several times at Oldenburg in the home of one of the townspeople. Within the next two years the parish was well enough organized to receive a resident pastor. At New Alsace, Dearborn County, where Father Ferneding resided, there were about one hundred fifty families. Dover, Dearborn County, and St. Peter, Franklin County, both had resident pastors in 1844.

Father Ferneding had attended the missions in this eastern district from New Alsace, but after his departure from the diocese in 1842, the center of activity shifted to Oldenburg where Father Francis Joseph Rudolf was appointed


pastor in 1844. Through his indomitable zeal he became the acknowledged leader in spiritual, educational, and civic affairs at Oldenburg and its missions. He was the counselor, friend, and helper of priests and laity of the area. During the years 1851 to 1857 when churches were built and parishes were being more thoroughly organized, the people appreciated having in their midst a priest like Father Rudolf who understood their problems and found ways to solve them.

Until 1853 only four of the seventeen or more parishes in the Oldenburg district had had a resident pastor. In that year both St. Nicholas and St. Leon were singled out among the parishes and given a pastor; Millhousen and St. Mary-of-the-Rock were accorded that same privilege in 1856 and 1857 respectively. There were no fewer than seven churches constructed despite the fact that most of these parishioners were hard working German farmers whose main wealth lay in the land and its produce. The recently established parish at Yorkville erected a neat little church in 1852. The log church at St. Peters, which had become entirely too small for the congregation, was replaced by a new brick building completed and blessed in 1853 by Bishop de St. Palais.36 The following year a similar building project was undertaken at Dover, while the St. Pius congregation, until 1854 members of St. Nicholas, erected their first

36 Alerding, op. cit., p. 383.
parish church. In 1856 three churches were being built, one at St. Anthony, Morris, another, a large brick church at St. Nicholas, and an elaborate stone edifice at Enochsburg. The building of these churches was remarkable evidence of the sincerity and devotion of these German people to the cause of religion. They were most anxious to have a place in which the holy Sacrifice might be offered and that this church which was literally the house of God should be the very best; hence they willingly volunteered to assist in the work, to share with their pastors the labor and sacrifices which such enterprise entailed.

No less ardent was the Catholic population north of Franklin and Decatur Counties where the number of missions was decidedly not as great as in the Oldenburg area, and where distances between them made constant regular attendance rather difficult. The pastors of Richmond, Wayne County, and St. Vincent, Shelby County, ordinarily attended these Catholic communities, though it is known that the pastor at Oldenburg extended his circuit of labor as far north as Connersville. 37

In 1853, however, when the Bishop sent two priests to this region, Father John Marl at St. Andrew, Richmond, and Father Henry Peters as first resident pastor at St. Gabriel, Connersville, the smaller missions were divided between them. It was so arranged that from Richmond where

Mass was to be sung every Sunday the following places were to be visited once a month: Centerville, Hagerstown and the settlers along the canal, New Castle, and Winchester.

Father Peter's field of labor included parts of the counties of Union, Franklin, Rush, and Wayne, and all of Fayette County; the outposts were Liberty, Laurel, Rushville, and Cambridge City.\(^\text{38}\) Liberty was a prosperous mission and Laurel was also a parish of importance during the time when the White Water Canal was under construction. As long as Laurel maintained a position of importance as a shipping station, Catholic settlers were attracted, but the subsequent loss of commerce retarded the development of Catholicism.\(^\text{39}\) Cambridge City was the most accessible station since it was on the road en route to Richmond where Father Peters frequently went to consult his confrere on matters pertaining to their work. Rushville was a considerable distance from Connersville, yet the missionary visited it regularly. It is quite probable that Father Peters was the first priest to administer to the needs of the Catholic families at Rushville.\(^\text{40}\) He found the people most anxious to have a pastor and eager to attend Divine Services. As

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\(^{38}\) Ibid., p. 44.  
\(^{39}\) Ibid., p. 43.  
\(^{40}\) Ibid., p. 44.
soon as funds were sufficient a little frame church was erected.

The territory west of Rush County was also a little slow in its development of Catholicism. At the capital, for instance, there was but one organized parish prior to 1856 when Father Brandt from Madison visited the German people of St. John Parish and initiated the formation of a separate congregation. When the cornerstone of the German church was laid on August 30, 1857, it evoked great pleasure and satisfaction not only from the parishioners, but also from the clergy and laity from all parts of the diocese. It was made the occasion of elaborate celebration at which the Bishop officiated, assisted by Fathers Maloney and Brandt. 41

In and about Vigo County, there was little of the feverish church building and parish organization taking place as in some portions of the diocese. There were two churches already established in Terre Haute, St. Mary-of-the-Woods and St. Joseph. Terre Haute was, of course, quite an important commercial center and did not lack the hustle and bustle commonly found in prosperous business towns of the 1850's, but many parts of the Catholic element were Irish who worked on the railroads which were under construction in the 1850's. 42 Their poverty and transient

41 Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, Sept. 12, 1857.
42 Corbinière, op. cit., p. 383.
residences naturally prevented the formation of a stable parish life. They were eager to receive the ministrations of a Catholic priest and they were delighted when their relatives died in the neighborhood of a Church where they could expect a Christian burial. "I was afraid," one young man said, "that my father would not die this week. Had he lived longer he could not have had the priest nor have been buried in consecrated ground." Many of the people were astonished at such sentiments which they considered very peculiar. There were many willing Irish hearts in these parts waiting and hoping that soon a priest could be sent to them to care for their spiritual welfare. But again, the Bishop had no priest to send.

There was, however, a force at work in the diocese which was steadily providing more and more assistance to the Bishop and his limited number of priests in their endeavor to instruct Catholics more fully in matters regarding their beliefs and practices, and to provide opportunities to those not of the faith to learn the truths of the Catholic religion. Through Catholic education fostered by the religious communities established in the diocese the work of instruction begun by the clergy was supplemented and continued. The Bishop was cognizant of this fact, hence he exerted every effort to develop further the wonderful educational system initiated by his predecessors. He encouraged

43 Ibid.
pastors to open and maintain parochial schools at their parishes and, if possible, at the missions attached to it; and he also manifested a great interest in the religious institutions founded for the purpose of teaching the youth of the diocese. From the date of the establishment of the Sisters of Providence at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, (1840), Bishop de St. Palais had always furthered the welfare of that community in whatever way he could. He was anxious that the institution flourish for he relied upon it as the source for teachers for the parish schools. It was impossible to calculate the amount of good accomplished through the schools already under the supervision of the Sisters at Vincennes, in the parochial school and the two orphanages, Jasper, Madison, Evansville, Terre Haute, Lanesville, and St. Mary-of-the-Woods. In 1854 Mother Theodore wrote to their former ecclesiastical superior in France, Bishop Bouvier, that the community then numbered eighty persons and that in their schools in the entire state of Indiana they were teaching almost a thousand children. At the Academy alone there were eighty-five boarders, thirty-seven of whom were Catholic. Speaking of the girls at St. Mary-of-the-Woods Mother Theodore continued:

It is impossible to estimate what a Christian education does for these young people. Brought up among non-Catholics, they are ignorant of everything relating to our holy religion; they scarcely know how to kneel down when they come to us. But when they leave, they
become little missionaries and do incalculable amount of good to those around them.\(^4^4\)

In another letter to Bishop Bouvier the same thought is reiterated:

The Catholics of this locality have for the past thirty years seen a priest only once a month, in passing, and some even only once a year. They are Christians, yet for the most part, very ignorant, scarcely knowing what is absolutely indispensable. Their daughters, brought up in our school where there is, I may say, a good spirit, return home like little apostles. They are listened to so much the more willingly because they are so greatly loved.\(^4^5\)

In many localities there were no other schools for the children to attend but elementary and secondary schools conducted by the Catholics. The public school system was much discussed and debated, but had not as yet become a reality. The law of 1849 which was introduced in order to increase and extend the benefits of common schools was left to the voters of each county to accept or reject. While sixty-one counties accepted it there were twenty-nine that rejected,\(^4^6\) thus education was still left to the schools under private control. The later bill which was passed in 1851 and revised in 1852 and 1855 secured the consent of the

\(^4^4\)Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, April 20, 1854, in Mug, Journals and Letters, p. 376.

\(^4^5\)Mother Theodore to Bishop Bouvier, Jan. 6, 1854, in Mug, Journals and Letters, p. 363.

majority to have state supported schools, but it did not immediately bring a system of schools into existence. Catholic schools, therefore, continued to find a great portion of their students coming from homes of non-Catholics. At St. Mary-of-the-Woods there were young ladies from all parts of southern Indiana, and at the parish schools children of all denominations were enrolled. In those districts where the German people were preponderant there was an evident interest in education. The German Catholic families were willing to sacrifice nonessentials in order to maintain a parish school. With the great increase in the German population in the decade of the 1850's, adequate lay teachers were not always available for the numerous parish schools that were opened. It was in answer to a plea to meet this need that occasioned the foundation of a religious community of Franciscan Sisters at Oldenburg, Franklin County.47

Father Francis J. Rudolf, who had been appointed Pastor of Holy Family Church in Oldenburg in 1844 had from his arrival at the parish devoted much attention and thought to the question of education of the youths under his charge. Although he had been fortunate in finding a man well-educated and of excellent character to act in the capacity of teacher, Father Rudolf was not quite satisfied. He had conceived of a plan whereby the schools of his entire pastorate would

47 Annals, O.S.F.A.
in time be supplied with religious teachers and was determined to carry it out. When Father Rudolf made known to Bishop de St. Palais his desire to establish in the diocese a new community of Sisters who would devote themselves to the education of youth, the Bishop was somewhat adverse to the idea. He believed that the Sisters in the diocese would in the course of time be able to supply all the schools with teachers, but after reconsidering the matter and realizing that too long a delay might prove harmful, he gave his consent to the establishment of the order. Father Rudolf without delay addressed a letter to the Cardinal Protector of the Franciscan Order at Rome in which he vividly described the great difficulty of obtaining teachers for his poor schools, and entreated the Cardinal Protector to secure the necessary approbation from the Holy See to found a convent at Oldenburg. When his request was granted, immediately he set himself to the task of the actual establishment. He wrote to Father Ambrose Buchmaier, a Franciscan missionary in New York City, asking him to procure professed Sisters of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis to undertake the beginning of a new congregation in Oldenburg. When Father Buchmaier was abroad in 1850 he made several attempts and was finally successful at Vienna, Austria. There two Sisters, Sister Theresa and Sister Veronica, volunteered when the Mother Superior proposed the matter to her community, and after obtaining the consent of the Franciscan Provincial
they departed for the American mission. But Sister Veronica, probably realizing more clearly than before the difficulties involved and believing herself lacking the requisite qualities to meet them, returned to the Motherhouse leaving Sister Theresa to pursue her journey alone. 48

In December, 1850, she landed at New York where Father Buchmaier received her most kindly and directed her to her Indiana mission. Sister Theresa arrived at Oldenburg on January 6, 1851, and was most warmly welcomed by Father Rudolf and the three postulants who were waiting to join the community. Since the convent building was not yet completed the Sisters lived in the little frame house which Father Rudolf had rented for them. There they began their conventual religious life, devoting their time to prayer, study, and work. As soon as the convent was completed they were to begin teaching in the parish school; until then Mother Theresa daily assembled the children of the parish for religious instruction. During these months of waiting the Sisters also began a course of study under Professor J. N. Probst, a learned and pious man who made his home with Father Rudolf. While studying for the priesthood Mr. Probst had lost the use of his right arm, a loss which incapacitated him for the sacerdotal office. He now instructed the Sisters in pedagogics and they eagerly availed themselves of this

48 Ibid.
opportunity to prepare for their future work. 49

In June, 1851, the Sisters welcomed a new member, Miss Teresa Dreer, who was destined to become the leading figure in the pioneer educational work of the community. Miss Dreer of Rorshach, Switzerland, was well educated and endowed with noble qualities of mind and heart. She was conversant with the best methods of schools in Europe and was also an excellent disciplinarian; consequently, when the Sisters took definite charge of the parochial school in November, 1851, it was she, then known as Sister Antonia, who was placed in charge.

The community received the approbation of the Holy See in 1852 to admit novices to profession, thus the first step toward permanency of the establishment had been made. This same year witnessed the humble beginnings of a boarding school when six girls from the neighborhood were admitted: Catherine Bennet of Dover, Dearborn County, was the first listed with Sarah Moorman of Richmond, Wayne County, and Lena Homan of Brookville, Franklin County, next in order of time. Others soon applied for admission and classes were begun at the Convent. The Sisters also continued to teach at the parochial school even after it was made a district school. In the autumn after successfully passing the examinations the Sisters were appointed

49 Ibid.
public school teachers of the district schools with Sister Antonia again placed at the head. Within a year the number of pupils had increased from twenty girls to sixty. A male teacher was employed to teach the boys. Each child was expected to pay a nominal fee of ten or twenty cents each month. 50.

Notwithstanding the arduous hardship the young community was compelled to endure because of poverty and their ambitious undertakings on behalf of youth, the membership continued to increase so that at the beginning of 1855 there were nineteen Sisters. In addition to their religious duties, these nineteen Sisters managed and cultivated the forty-acre farm, sheltered and cared for eleven orphans, conducted a boarding school, taught at the district school, and in the spring accepted charge of another school at Dover where the number of pupils was one hundred.

In September, 1855, at the urgent request of Father Koering, Sisters went to St. Leon, Dearborn County, and several months later to Brookville, Franklin County. In 1856 three more missions in Franklin County were accepted, St. Mary-of-the-Rock, St. Peter, and St. Philomena. This last mentioned was taken with "the agreement that the congregation provide a dwelling-house for the Sisters and furnish provisions, in addition to a tuition fee of ten

50 Ibid.
cents per month for each child. But alas! this agreement was soon forgotten. The school house and Sisters' dwelling were the property of a parishioner who was to receive a monthly rent of eight dollars. When this was no longer forthcoming, he seized, one evening, the Sisters' belongings, set them out on the public road, and ordered the Sisters themselves to leave his premises at once. They returned to the Mother-house, resigned to the decrees of Providence."

Hardships, humiliations, sacrifices were the daily visitors in the early years and no matter when they were encountered or in what guise they came, the Sisters met them unflinchingly. Even in January, 1857, when the entire convent was destroyed by fire the members of this community did not merely accept the calamity calmly, but set about resolutely to rebuild. The disastrous event exhibited clearly their indomitable energy of character and zeal for education, for during this time when they were homeless and dependent upon others for the necessities of life, teaching was never discontinued. Because of such valor and courage on the part of this Franciscan congregation in persevering in their efforts to establish a teaching order, the German parishioners in the surroundings counties were privileged to have religious teachers for their schools.

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51 Historical Sketch of the Convent and Academy of the Sisters of St. Francis (Oldenburg, Indiana, 1901), p. 41.
This spread of Catholic education served as so much fuel heaped upon the already kindled fire of anti-Catholic sentiment sweeping over Indiana. The growth and influence of the Church consequent upon the great influx of foreigners into the state during the 1850's caused native Americans to look upon it as a foreign institution, and they despised foreign dominance. The spiritual allegiance to the Holy Father was misinterpreted as loyalty to a foreign power and opposition to republicanism. The fact that the immigrants formed little settlements and retained their own national habits and customs aroused the antagonism of native Protestants who looked upon such action as un-American. It is no wonder then that "the whole Roman system" which encouraged the formation of separate congregations for various nationalities, was regarded as "a great conspiracy to ensnare the Protestant America." The influence exerted through the various parish schools was resented. In Madison where the Sisters of Providence had been successfully conducting a school for several years, the Protestants now made attempts

\[\text{52}^\text{th}\text{ Although the foreign element in Indiana has always been comparatively small, yet the period under consideration witnessed the greatest and most rapid increase in the number of immigrants from northern and northwestern Europe. Robert L. LaFollette, "European Immigrants in Indiana Since 1850," Indiana Magazine of History, XXV (March, 1929), 14-27.}\]

\[\text{53}^\text{th}\text{ Carl Fremont Brand, "History of the Know Nothing Party in Indiana," Indiana Magazine of History, XXIII (March, June, September, 1922), 57.}\]

\[\text{54}^\text{th}\text{ Ibid., p. 58.}\]
to draw away the patronage.

The Protestants of Madison are annoying us a great deal. They are opening school after school in order to destroy ours. They want to subject our Sisters to their examinations of the Catholic Schools. Moreover, they wish to make us pay taxes, which is contrary to the laws of the state. We positively refuse. It embarrasses them a little to have women resist them about the law.\textsuperscript{55}

They continued to devise ways to disturb the Sisters. The Mayor of Madison tried to effect a change of text books used in the Catholic schools by informing the Sisters that a Father Purcell approved of it. Mother Theodore warned Sister Basilide, who was in charge of the schools: "No matter what the mayor may tell you concerning Father Purcell, never consent to take our books away from the Catholic children; this would be for the worst."\textsuperscript{56}

There were other demonstrations against the Church in the southern cities where the Know Nothing party was the strongest. They threatened to burn St. Michael church in Madison as well as the new brick church Father Neyron built at New Albany. On one occasion a large crowd, boys for the most part, procured a skiff which they filled with tar-barrels and at night dragged it through the main streets of New Albany to the German Church which they stoned, together with several Irish coffee houses.\textsuperscript{57} Such displays

\textsuperscript{55}Mother Theodore to Superior General, Feb. 18, 1852, in \textit{Mug, Journals and Letters}, p. 330.

\textsuperscript{56}Mother Theodore to Sister Basilide, June 9, 1852, in \textit{Mug, Journals and Letters}, p. 334.

\textsuperscript{57}Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, Oct. 28, 1854.
continued until 1856 when the slavery issue and sectionalism forced the Know Nothing-ism into the background. Strangely enough, the fury the Know Nothings vented upon the Catholics of Indiana only served to make the Church firmer and more deeply entrenched in the state. The number and quality of converts made during this period forced Father Du Pontavice to remark:

Yes! You have given us a great lesson! You have done more for the Holy Roman Catholic Church than all her bishops and priests could have done in forty years. . . . And you have done it in two.

The trouble and disorder occasioned by this fanatical outburst of hatred added to the already complex and difficult task of governing the diocese. The good Bishop had watched with anxiety the unusually rapid growth of parishes and was greatly concerned about their welfare, for he was convinced that the work was becoming too extensive to be adequately directed by one person. He had made a thorough tour of the diocese shortly after his elevation to the episcopacy and at that time had discovered that he had been appointed to a diocese which was in need of pastors rather than pioneer missionaries, substantial churches rather than temporary log structures, in fine, he was to inaugurate a system of administration whereby the potential resources of the diocese would be developed to their fullest. But under the prevailing circumstances where the growth of the Catholic

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58 Du Pontavice à Hailandièrè, June 3, 1857, U. N. D. A.
population far outran increase in instructors and institutions by which a normal practice of their religion could be assured, the Bishop was unable to carry out his episcopal duties as effectively and thoroughly as he thought proper. He realized that he could no longer adequately supervise and direct the Catholic congregations located in the northern part of Indiana. Consequently, when Archbishop Purcell announced that the Bishops of the Province hold a meeting at the archepiscopal city, Bishop de St. Palais wrote to him asking his advice on the matter of the formation of a new diocese. He pointed out that the administration of southern Indiana so absorbed his time that the northern area was without proper surveillance. Later at the Council Bishop de St. Palais' proposition was seriously considered and approved. In the decrees drawn up by the Bishops in attendance a petition was included for the erection of a second diocese in Indiana which was to embrace the northern half of the state. More than a year and a half elapsed before the decree was formally approved by Rome.

The news of the new diocese was well received in the extreme northern part of the state, but in the intermediate points there were persons whom it did not please.

59St. Palais a Purcell, Feb. 15, 1855, U. N. D. A.
60Du Pontavice a Hailandière, June 29, 1855, U. N. D. A.; Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, May 26, 1855.
The priests serving congregations in the northern area, while obedient, were yet loath to part from their Bishop.

Few Bishops were ever better loved by their priests than was Bishop de St. Palais by his. This was so not only regarding those who accompanied him from France, and those who were in the field when he arrived, but it was especially so in case of the priests who received ordination at his hands. They all respected, revered and loved him, and the instances were few where strained relations ever obtained between them.61

The Bishop expressed the desire to see Father James F. Wood nominated for the see, but whomever Providence would give him he would see with pleasure part of his burden lifted.62 Father Wood, however, was shortly after appointed to Philadelphia. Archbishop Purcell asked him for other suggestions, but Bishop St. Palais, unacquainted with priests outside of Indiana, could only recommend Father Julian Benoit, the pastor of Fort Wayne.63 The nomination, however, was given to a Cincinnati priest, Father John H. Luers. Bishop de St. Palais assisted the Archbishop at the consecration of the new Bishop and afterwards accompanied him to Fort Wayne where Father Benoit graciously received them. Bishop Luers found his congregation quite respectable, but nothing in comparison with his former parish in Cincinnati.64

61 Blanchard, op. cit., p. 79.
62 St. Palais à Purcell, December 28, 1856, U.N.D.A.
63 St. Palais à Purcell, April 15, 1857, U. N. D. A.
64 Luers to Purcell, Feb. 2, 1858, U. N. D. A.
Furthermore, he considered Fort Wayne a rather poor place for the episcopal city. There were, he conjectured, about ten or eleven thousand inhabitants without any prospect of increasing greatly. There were no flourishing coal mines or factories or any public works in progress at that time to attract enterprising immigrants. The fertile farm lands were already in the hands of anti-Catholics and only at very high prices could it be purchased. Approximately two-thirds of the parishioners resided on farms two to eight miles away from the episcopal city. All these facts taken into consideration led Bishop Luers to suggest that his episcopal residence be transferred to Indianapolis which was more promising than Fort Wayne.65 This would have necessitated a revision of the boundary and Archbishop Purcell wrote to the new Bishop that he deemed it more prudent not to petition for an alteration of the decree.66

This period of expansion which culminated in the division of the diocese was most remarkable, for the great number of parishes established, especially those whose members were of German descent, and for the advance made in the development of Catholic education despite poverty and opposition. This rapid growth necessitated a well organized

65Luers to Purcell, May 9, 1858, U. N. D. A.
66Luers to Purcell, May 17, 1858, U. N. D. A.
government whose leader was attentive to the needs of the faithful and conscientious about their proper guidance. The Bishop was then called upon, more than ever, to be the First Pastor of the diocese.
CHAPTER IV

EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE CRITICAL ERA

(1858-1866)

With the area of the diocese reduced to half its former size by virtue of the division of Indiana, Bishop de St. Palais was enabled to carry on the administrative affairs more effectively. The complex problems created by the rapid growth of the parishes in the preceding years were gradually and carefully solved through the cooperative efforts of the Bishop, priests, and people. The wise enactments and decrees of the Provincial Councils of Cincinnati proved to be faithful guides in leading the Bishop of Vincennes to advance further the organization of the diocese and to realize the fulfillment of his most cherished plans for establishment of permanent homes for orphans and seminarians.

The first of these councils was held on May 21, 1858, when the Bishop of the Cincinnati province met to discuss the problems and difficulties existing in their respective sees. These assemblies over which Archbishop Purcell presided were undoubtedly the most important provincial councils held at this time. Bishop Spalding of Louisville, who participated in them, said that they were remarkable "for the
practical wisdom and thorough ecclesiastical spirit which characterize the decrees therein enacted. They show a perfect comprehension of the wants of the Church in the West, as well as of the proper manner of meeting them."

At the meetings which Bishop de St. Palais attended accompanied by his Vicar General, Father Brandt, the Bishops discussed the duties of religion incumbent upon clergy and laity of the Catholic Church. They pointed out to the priests that their first and most sacred duty was holiness of life, that prayer and zeal for the salvation of souls were essential to missionaries. The priests were exhorted to be as Christ-like as possible, ministering to the people and fulfilling their obligations in the most perfect manner. They must also encourage and assist the laity to dutifully fulfill their obligations toward the Church. It was just to expect that the laity on their part would take an earnest interest in whatever was calculated to promote the interest of religion: the building of suitable places of worship; the erection of schools where children might be taught in a Christian manner; the founding of orphanages for boys and girls; the establishment of seminaries to provide a native clergy for their own diocese; the support of

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the religious press. Parents were urged to bestow special care in the training of their children, teaching them by example that religion consists essentially in a Christian manner of living rather than in the recitation of a few prayers. Unless families really lived their religion they would not love and support it whole-heartedly.  

The Council issued several decrees among which was one recommending the establishment of a provincial major seminary at Cincinnati where young men from any part of the province could receive their theological training, and a minor seminary at St. Thomas, Bardstown, Kentucky, where the initial instructions could be given. It was expected that the Bishops of the suffragan sees, even if they had their own diocesan seminaries, would send two or more students to the provincial seminary in order to maintain the institution. Attention was also given to the education of the youth of the province.

Pastors were encouraged to exert every effort to establish schools in their parishes at the earliest possible date. The efficiency and zeal of the German people in this regard was warmly recommended. To better meet the needs of the newcomers and until they had adapted themselves to their newly adopted fatherland and learned its language, the

\[2\text{Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, May 15, 1858.}\]
prelates deemed it advisable that the German people attend those churches and schools where German was spoken and the English-speaking parishioners, the churches and schools where English was used, and so on in regard to the various nationalities. However, in church services local and unauthorized usages were not to supersede the authorized rites of the universal Church. The clergy were to observe strict fidelity to the rubrics prescribed by Canon Law. These acts and decrees were submitted to the Holy See and were formally approved by the Holy Father in the following December. A notice of this approval was sent to the clergy of the diocese by Father Corbe, Vicar General and Administrator during the absence of the Bishop. These decrees were dutifully enforced in the diocese and proved to be an excellent guide in the direction of clergy and laity.

Bishop de St. Palais was in Rome on official business in the fall of 1858. He had left Vincennes in October, 1858, with the intention of soliciting aid in Europe as well as transacting business. Therefore, after he left Rome he stopped at the Abbey of Einsiedeln, Switzerland, where the Abbot agreed to send two more Benedictine priests to the diocese of Vincennes, and also permitted John J. Maria Gabriel, a native of Switzerland and a student at the famous

\[3\text{Ibid.}\]
Abbey and who had volunteered his services, to join the Bishop immediately. From there he went to France where, in Brittany, Louis Gueguen who had already been made deacon, heeded the Bishop's invitation to return with him to Indiana. In Alsace he secured the services of another clerical student, Gustave Michael Ginnsz of Molsheim and a priest, Father Francis Ignatius Klein of Niederbronn, who had been ordained at Strassburg in 1854 and was at the time engaged in pastoral work in his native diocese. 4

In the summer of 1859 Bishop de St. Palais, accompanied by Father Klein and the three students, returned to the diocese arriving at Indianapolis in the latter part of August. There he met Bishop Luers of Fort Wayne who, when relating the coincidence to Archbishop Purcell some days later, remarked that the trip abroad had not only brought aid to the diocese but that it had been beneficial to the Bishop himself. 5 On the feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, the Bishop conferred Holy Orders upon Louis Gueguen and five other clerics of the diocesan seminary. This was a very happy occasion for it was the first time in the history of the diocese that six young men were ordained on the same day. It was, indeed, a splendid indication that

4 Thie, op. cit., p. 220.
5 Luers to Purcell, August 26, 1859, U. N. D. A.
the St. Charles seminary was succeeding in spite of the pecuniary difficulties the Bishop was encountering in maintaining it.

Notwithstanding the inclemency of winter weather, the Bishop, ever anxious to visit his people and to bestow upon them the strengthening grace of Confirmation, as well as to advise and encourage the pastors, set out in January on a visitation of the faithful in Spencer and Dubois Counties. On the fourteenth he arrived at Jasper where he was affectionately welcomed by the pastor and his people. On the following Sunday, the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus and the eleventh anniversary of his episcopal consecration, Bishop de St. Palais sang a Pontifical High Mass, assisted by Father Ulrich Christen, O.S.B., as archpriest, Father Joseph Meister as deacon, a seminarian as subdeacon and Father Bede O'Connor, O.S.B., as master of ceremonies. After the High Mass Confirmation was administered to three hundred sixty-two children and adults, among whom were some converts. The Bishop remained at Jasper until Thursday when he visited the parish of Celestine and confirmed one hundred fourteen persons. The following day he started to Ferdinand where he sang a Pontifical High Mass on Sunday and gave Confirmation to three hundred thirty-eight children. From there he set out for the Benedictine Abbey at St. Meinrad in Spencer County where he was delighted with the "little world" the establishment comprised within itself. The lay
brothers of the abbey provided for the material needs of the congregation in the saw-mill or the grist-mill, in the fields, and in the buildings, while the priests cared for the spiritual wants of the people and instructed young men in the school that had been established at the time of the foundation of the Abbey. The Bishop was very much interested in this school where several of his most valuable young priests had received their early training. He also noted with satisfaction the splendid new church which had recently been built under the direction of Fathers Chrysostom and Isidore; improvements and additions had also been made on the small log house which had served as both monastery and chapel in the earliest days of the order. The Bishop remained at the Abbey until Thursday, the twenty-third, when he left for Fulda, Spencer County, one of the missions under the charge of Father Chrysostom Foffa, where one hundred twenty-four persons were confirmed. There preparations were being made at Fulda for the erection of a large substantial stone church, one of the four to be erected in that area,--the other three being Huntingburg and Flat-Creek in Dubois County and New Boston in Spencer County.

The Bishop was especially grateful for this evident growth of Catholicism as Father Bede O'Connor explained in an account of this visitation.

Our present Right Reverend Bishop was the very first missionary who ever visited this portion of our State. When he came here as a priest some twenty-three years ago and said Mass (the first that was ever said in Dubois County) in a little log cabin, he found only six Catholic families and in which, as Bishop of the Diocese, he has just conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation on 937 young Christians. How consoling these facts must prove to the pioneer priest, who now as chief pastor of the diocese beholds in this part of his once so denuded mission in and around Dubois County, one convent of the Order of St. Benedict, and eight churches to each of which good schools are attended, forming so many land marks of the great progress our Holy Religion has made..."

While the Church in southern Indiana was thus advancing and prospering in a country on the verge of civil war, the Bishop of the diocese called the attention of his flock to the threatening state of affairs at the seat of Christendom where the position of their Holy Father, Pope Pius IX, was becoming daily more and more critical. It seemed that Victor Emmanuel II, King of Sardinia, and Napoleon III, Emperor of France, were forming a league to dispossess the Pontiff of the small domain which he enjoyed only as a "means of securing his independence as Pastor of Souls against the ambitious intrigues of the various Powers of the Earth." These...

7Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, Feb. 4, 1860.
8Pastoral Letter of Bishop de St. Palais, in Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, March 24, 1860.
impending evils, the Bishop stated, could only be averted by the power of God, therefore, all were bidden to have recourse to fervent prayers and penance during the holy season of Lent. Certain prayers were prescribed to be publicly recited on Sundays after the High Mass, and on weekdays before the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament which was to be given as often as public service was held. Thus through the united prayers of the Clergy and the faithful hope for the speedy triumph of justice was enkindled. 9

The Bishop was not less mindful of the imminence of war in the United States itself and of the perils to which his own flock would be exposed thereby. On March 4, just a month after he issued the pastoral letter, he sent a circular letter to all the pastors instructing them to do their utmost to preserve the faith of the people entrusted to their care. This was a time, he pointed out, when religious instructions were extremely necessary, for hatred of the Catholic Church seemed to follow the rapid progress of disorder and error rampant in the nation. He further stated that writers vilified the Church in their productions, orators in their discourses, and editors of newspapers gave their assistance in attacks directed against it. The Know

9 Ibid.
Nothing party was spending its last days of existence in an effort to destroy its enemy, the Church. On occasions it seemed to have recaptured its old vitality and struck forcefully at a new strong and youthful parish hoping thereby to cripple further growth. Well trained and able leaders were needed to combat these forces and guide the faithful, hence, as much care, attention, and support as possible should be given the diocesan seminary where young men were preparing to become priests and leaders.10

Then too, in accordance with the recent decrees of the Provincial Council, he reminded parents that they were expected to send their children to Catholic schools, especially when the youth was living in an environment that was dangerous to faith and morals. The adults on their part were encouraged to interest themselves in the affairs of the United States and to keep themselves well and correctly informed in order to participate intelligently in politics. Some of the immigrants who had left their fatherland to escape from political disturbance were now withdrawing into their own little groups refusing to become entangled in a civil strife in which they had no interest. There were others, on the contrary, who engaged too heedlessly in affairs of which they had little knowledge of the purpose.

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or effect. The Bishop, therefore, admonished the clergy thus:

Advise them strongly to patronize the Catholic Press, and if they must read secular journals, tell them that they must read also Catholic papers. Such a paper as the Catholic Telegraph -- wherein true principles are vindicated and false statements are repressed. Every citizen ought to feel interested in a government like this, it is well that he should know on what platform parties stand, in order that he may decide with knowledge which is worthy of his support. But religious faith is something worth as well as political freedom. It was transmitted to us as the dearest inheritance, and no means ought to be neglected to preserve it and hand it to others pure and strong, as we received it from our forefathers.  

After the outbreak of the Civil War Bishop de St. Palais continued fatherly solicitude for his people, visiting them and encouraging them to remain faithful to their Church and country. Though his visitation tour was frequently interrupted by other pastoral duties demanding immediate attention, he nevertheless continued to make his rounds until he had seen his entire flock and supplied their needs in so far as he could. On the twenty-ninth of April he had the pleasure of officiating at the ceremony connected with the laying of the corner stone of St. John Parish in Loogootee, Martin County. The Bishop was always greatly pleased to find the people taking an actual interest in the erection of a worthy habitation for their Lord, but he

11 Ibid.
found cause for more than ordinary joy in the erection of a church in Loogootee where the parish was new and still small. Father John Mougin who was named first resident pastor this year (1860) had accomplished excellent work among his parishioners. In June he was with Father Du Pontavice at St. Michael’s, Madison, from which place he visited the surrounding missions. At Vevay the number of Catholics had now reached thirty, over two-thirds of these persons being converts from Protestant sects. In July when the Bishop went to St. James parish at Buena Vista, Jennings County, he found the congregation most faithful in attending divine services. It seemed as if the prevalent anti-Catholic tendencies had made slight, if any impression upon the rural population. Eight-three persons were confirmed and fourteen children were privileged to receive their First Holy Communion from the hands of their Bishop. The fact that this little parish composed of about ninety families, the greatest number of which were German, maintained a Catholic school was a credit to their zeal.

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12 Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, May 12, 1860.
13 Du Pontavice à Hailandière, June 11, 1860,
U. N. D. A.
14 Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, Sept. 1, 1860.
In all parts of the diocese there were signs of more settled and regulated organization in parish life. Within eight years (1858-1866) at least eighteen missions formerly attached to a more important parish and visited probably once a month by the pastor had become independent parishes with a resident pastor of their own, while several of the older parishes were sub-divided into two or more congregations. At Richmond, Wayne County, for instance, the building of railroads brought many Irish laborers into the city, and as there had also been a great influx of German immigrants directly from the fatherland as well as from Cincinnati, the German church was entirely too small for the congregation. 15

In 1860, therefore, the English-speaking people resolved to withdraw from St. Andrew's and start a new parish, St. Mary's. They purchased the church property formerly used by the English Lutherans and remodelled it to serve their purpose. In October Father Aegedius Merz was appointed as their pastor. At Terre Haute (1864) Father Fintan Mundwiler, O.S.B., organized the German families, thirteen in number, of St. Joseph Church, into a new parish which he called St. Benedict's, and two years later another group of families withdrew from St. Joseph's and under the direction of Father Michael Quinlan erected St. Ann Church near St. Ann Providence.

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15Souvenir of the Diamond Jubilee of St. Andrew's Church, Richmond, Indiana, 1846-1921, p. 15.
Orphan Asylum for girls. 16

In the district about St. Meinrad Abbey, new stations were being organized principally by the Benedictine Fathers and Father Michael Marendt of Cannelton. In 1859 Father Bede O'Connor, O.S.B., said Mass for the first time at Huntingburg, Dubois County. In the same year Father Marendt was the first to attend St. Paul's at Tell City, Perry County, the new town founded and laid out by a German Swiss colonization society the preceding year; he also initiated the parish at St. Mark's, Perry County, about 1860. In 1862 Father Chrysostom Foffa, O.S.B., organized the congregation at Henryville, Dubois County; Father Henry Hug, O.S.B., visited the families at Yankee-town, Warrick County, in 1864, saying Mass in private homes; and Father Joseph Meister formed the congregation of St. Anthony, Dubois County, in 1864. The parishes of Bloomington, Monroe County, (1860), St. Joseph's, Martin County, (1863), and Shelbyville, Shelby County, (1865), were more thoroughly organized and visited more regularly. 17

The era of isolated missions and crude log huts was definitely passing. The missionaries, no more numerous,


17 Diocesan Centennial, Vincennes, Indiana, 1834-1934, pp. 42-44.
were confronted with the problem of accommodating several hundred and occasionally even a thousand parishioners. Despite the hardships imposed upon the people of a nation at war, these sturdy villagers continued to gather funds and material to erect a much needed parish church or to make improvements on their old one. Sixteen parishes experienced the joy of seeing their first church brought to completion prior to the close of the Civil War, most of them being dedicated before 1863. In eight other congregations a second and larger church was constructed, while at Oldenburg and Lanesville the parishioners had outgrown even their second church and had undertaken and completed a third one. It was a common sight to see the pastor and the men of the parish devoting their precious spare hours to work on the church. Frequently the most ingenious methods were devised whereby seemingly impossible feats were accomplished and the building completed. At Aurora, for example, priests had been visiting for more than ten years before Father Ignatius Klein was sent to the place. It was such a backward little village that even to consider building a church there seemed ridiculous. For years the Catholics had conducted divine services in a little house in Dutch Hollow, but on January 12, 1864 under the direction of Father Klein, they began the erection of a new church. "The good God helped. St. Joseph stood by, and under extremely poor and
adverse circumstances, the pastor himself sharing the labor day and night." The building was completed from the foundation to the gleaming cross on the church tower. There had been the problem of getting the stone to Aurora. Father Klein went to Dillsborough and induced the people to haul stone to the railroad station. Then he secured a freight car from the president of the O. and M. Railroad, and thus on two Sundays, after conducting services, he brought the stones to Aurora. The cornerstone was laid on August 21, and the following December the church was dedicated.

The most outstanding building project undertaken and completed during the war was the construction of the Holy Family church in Oldenburg. When finished in 1862 it was declared to be the finest and one of the largest churches in the diocese. The thrift and piety of the people of Oldenburg were generally known and their generosity in providing for the wants of their church and school was proverbial. People had also heard of the prodigious accomplishments of the industrious and saintly pastor, yet they were not prepared to see such evidence of prosperity and religious grandeur as they found in the village. The spacious and beautiful Gothic edifice with its strong

graduated buttresses, stone coping and wooden finials, its stained glass windows and frescoed inner walls and oriel window above the elaborately carved main altar were far beyond their expectations. Visitors marvelled at what had been accomplished by a few earnest and faithful Catholics with the aid and guidance of a devoted pastor. On the day when the solemn services of consecration were held it was estimated that two thousand people came to Oldenburg. Father Rudolf recorded in his journal the names of the prelates and clergy who assisted at the ceremonies.

The Church was solemnly consecrated December 14 by the Most Reverend Bishop de St. Palais, Bishop of Vincennes. In attendance were: the Most Reverend Bishop Alcysius Carrell of Covington, Kentucky, his Vicar General Reverend Butler, the Reverends Ferdinand Huehr, St. Mary's Church, Covington, Kentucky, the Benedictine Prior, Odilo Van der Green, Peter Weber, Ignatius Klein, Leo Odrescar of St. Peter's, Reverend Gillig, Reverend Januarius Weissenberger (Carrolton), the Reverend Father Superior of the Cincinnati Franciscans, Otto Jair and besides others, your most unworthy servant, Joseph Rudolf.19

With such a distinguished gathering of clergy it was to be expected that the ceremonies were carried out in the most solemn and liturgical manner. The dedication services and Holy Mass which terminated at half past one were followed later in the afternoon by Pontifical Vespers and in the evening by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Nothing

19Journal of Father F. J. Rudolf, A. O. F. M.
marred the order of the day which was so admirably planned by the pastor and which ever remained in the memory of the good people as a day of benediction upon their generous labor.

Achievements like this and other less monumental, but not less praiseworthy, which were being multiplied throughout the diocese were attained only through the cooperation of a devoted and faithful laity with priests imbued with a truly apostolic spirit. This guidance on the part of pastors and its beneficial results were, in a great measure, to be attributed to the zeal and activity of the young missionaries who in these later years had been educated at the diocesan seminary at Vincennes and ordained by Bishop de St. Palais. Since 1858 ordinations had been more regular and numerous, twenty-seven deacons being ordained between the years 1858-1866. Among those who received Holy Orders four were Benedictines, Fathers Benedict Brunet, Meinrad McCarthy, Henry Hug, and Fidelis Maute; seven were from immigrant families who settled in Indiana, while the remaining sixteen clerics had emigrated to the United States in recent years. Then, too, among the twenty or more priests who joined the diocese during these years, there were several who contributed

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20 Statement of Father Bede O'Connor in Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, Feb. 4, 1860.
outstanding service, such as Fathers Ignatius Klein, Anton Scheideler, and J. F. Viefhaus.

But even the combined work of the veteran missions, the newly ordained, and the immigrant priests were supplemented by that of itinerant missionaries who conducted parochial missions and retreats. Previous to 1858 such missions were most frequently given in German-speaking parishes, but at the Second Provincial Council of Cincinnati, held in the spring of that year, the Bishops gave serious attention to the discussion of parochial missions, especially among the English-speaking parishes. There was included among the recommendations of the Council provision for a mission to be held from time to time in every parish of the ecclesiastical province. "It commended the good resulting from the missions conducted by the (Jesuit) fathers of the Missouri Vice-province and expressed a wish that additional fathers be employed in this promising field of labor." 21 Although in 1860 the Jesuits had not as yet begun giving English missions as systematically as they had German missions, nevertheless several of the fathers occasionally engaged in that work. The people of Southern Indiana were quite fortunate in obtaining visits from these Jesuits of the Missouri Vice-province.

21 Garraghan, op. cit., p. 72.
By far the most popular missions in the diocese were those conducted by the well-known Jesuits, Fathers Francis X. Weninger, a missionary from Austria, Arnold Damen, pastor at Holy Family parish, Chicago, Illinois, and Cornelius Smarius, travelling missionary after 1861. For sixteen years Father Weninger had preached and given missions in Austria where his efforts met with noteworthy success. In 1848 when the revolution in Europe was hampering the work of the Church, he sought the inviting fields of the American missions in order to labor among the German-speaking population. His first mission in the United States was given in December, 1848, at Oldenburg in the diocese of Vincennes. The unusual display of religious fervor attending this occasion was more or less typical of the long series of similar missions conducted for the Germans of Indiana by Father Weninger. Once he had visited a parish he continued to manifest an interest in its welfare and whenever possible sent them material aid which he himself procured from the Ludwig-Missionverein of Munich. For many years this society had the services of Father Weninger as intermediary in the distribution of its alms to needy German parishes and institutions in the United States. Although his activity brought him in contact with Germans in numerous dioceses, he was always happy to receive an invitation from the clergy of Vincennes to preach in their parishes.

22 Garraghan, op. cit., p. 53.
23 Roemer, op. cit., pp. 92-103.
especially Holy Family Church in Oldenburg where he had begun his American missionary career. He was there in 1858 when he laid the corner-stone of the new chapel erected by the Sisters of St. Francis and again in 1862 when he conducted a retreat and preached at the consecration of the new parish church. The success which Father Weninger was meeting with in his "Volks missionen" among the German parishes in the diocese was paralleled by Fathers Damen and Smarius in their ministry on behalf of the English-speaking parishes. In January 1860 Father Bessonies of Indianapolis invited the former to conduct a mission at the St. John parish in that city. The results attained by this two-week mission were far beyond the expectation of the pastor; over a thousand persons received the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist and three hundred-fifty were invested with the scapular, a devotion in honor of the Blessed Virgin. It was customary for these missionaries to establish pious societies for men and women of the parish in order to bring about a more closely knit interest in parish affairs as well as to encourage the promotion of special devotions.

Again in 1861 the missionary was in Indiana. After conducting the retreat for the diocesan clergy in September

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24 Journal of Father F. J. Rudolf, A. O. F. M.
25 Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, Feb. 5, 1862; April 23, 1862.
Father Damen remained a while at Vincennes in order to give instructions to the people of the Cathedral parish. Then accompanied by Father Ernest Audran, rector of the St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, he went to St. Simon parish in Washington, Daviess County, where he held the first of a series of missions which he was scheduled to give in various parts of the diocese. From these, without allowing himself any rest, he went to St. John parish, Loogootee where Father John Mougin was pastor. During the mission several persons were received into the Church and many lapsed Catholics returned to the practice of their religion. He visited another parish in this neighborhood, Mt. Pleasant, where evidences of fervor and devotion were manifestly displayed. People travelled distances of ten, fifteen, and even twenty miles in order to participate in the mission and even though it was winter, they camped in the woods. So numerous were the crowds attending the services that five priests were needed to assist the missionary. After the close of this mission Father Damon gave one at Richmond where seven converts were baptized and from there he went to Terre Haute. Here he baptized ten persons which was, indeed, a most unusual occurrence in this part of the diocese where the Protestants greatly outnumbered the Catholics. Later on when Father Audran was writing to his esteemed uncle, Bishop de la Hailandière, he commented on the immense good produced by these missions and stated that if there were to be no more persecutions in the United States,
and if these missions continued to be given, the country would become Catholic in a few years. 26

Sometime in 1861 Father Smarius was appointed by his superiors as companion to Father Damen whose work as pastor of a large church in Chicago and as missionary was becoming too difficult to carry on alone. This new travelling missionary, a native of Holland, was an excellent orator. It is said that the reputation which the western Jesuit missionaries acquired in the East was due largely "to Father Smarius's impressive lectures which were always a feature of the missions in which he was engaged and were generally delivered when the mission proper was over." 27 The striking results attending his missions given at St. John's, Indianapolis, in 1862, and at St. Michael's, Madison, and St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Vincennes, in 1864 had the effect of causing his services to be in demand in other sections of the diocese. 28

When Father Smarius conducted a mission the people came from every corner of the city and nearby towns, and at no little cost of inconvenience and sacrifice the faithful participated in all the services. Their generous response

26 Andran à Hailandièbre, Dec. 23, 1861, U. N. D. A.
27 Garraghan, op. cit., p. 89.
28 Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, April 23, 1862; Du Pontavice à Hailandièbre, Dec. 9, 1864, U. N. D. A.
won the admiration of the missionary. Like his confreres, Father Weninger and Father Damen, he, too, had a special affection for the people of the diocese of Vincennes. On one occasion when Father Audran wrote to the Jesuit preachers asking them to give several missions in the diocese he received the answer: "Please make out a list of the missions needed in the diocese of Vincennes and send it to me as soon as practicable. We have applications enough to keep us busy for two years, but Vincennes must have the preference. ..."29

This sincere interest of the Jesuit missionaries in the spiritual welfare of the people of Southern Indiana was truly appreciated by Bishop de St. Palais who realized that it was frequently through their ministrations that the faith was preserved in many areas. The missions had the effect of making the spirit of faith revive among all classes of people and reawakening a salutary interest in their own souls and in those of their children. It stirred parents to a renewed zeal in more regular observance of their duties and aroused within them a determination to afford their children the opportunity to attend the parish school in order to learn more about their religion. It was evident that while Catholic education had made remarkable progress in the last decade, there was yet a vast area untouched by its beneficial

29 Damen to Audran, April 7, 1862, U. N. D. A.
influence. The hardships involved in obtaining the means to open and maintain even a modest little building presented the greatest difficulty to many pastors, while the problem of securing capable teachers from among the laity was not easily solved. The most desirable plan was, of course, to have religious teachers for the parochial schools, Sisters for the girls, and Brothers for the boys; but this plan was not realized in the sixties. There were very few, if any, parishes that were fortunate enough to have such an arrangement. The number of Sisters' schools, however, were annually increasing in proportion to the growth of their religious communities, and in 1860 the Benedictine Fathers opened their second boys' school at Terre Haute where Bishop de St. Palais had hoped that the Jesuits would eventually have established an educational foundation. This latter enterprise which had been definitely abandoned in 1860 was a keen disappointment to the Bishop. In 1857 he had gone to St. Louis for the purpose of inviting the Jesuits to establish a residence at Terre Haute, for he earnestly desired to have the Society in his diocese. He offered them St. Joseph church, a flourishing parish of about 12,000 members and proposed to give the Society of Jesus exclusive charge of the mission. The boys' school was to be in their care and, if the Fathers judged it proper and useful to establish a college, the Bishop made it known that he would gladly see its erection.\textsuperscript{30} In fact,

\textsuperscript{30}De Smet to Father Beckx, Aug. 3, 1857, in Garraghan, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 38.
the Bishop was ready to accede to any proposition the Society would make, so anxious was he to have it. While negotiations were in order the Father General did send priests to assume charge of St. Joseph's, but in 1860 found it necessary to recall them because the Missouri Vice-province was overburdened beyond measure and could scarcely provide priests for its houses already established. 31

While the Bishop was endeavoring to procure the services of the Jesuits, Father Rudolf of Oldenburg was likewise attempting to bring a new religious congregation into the diocese. This indefatigable promoter of Catholic education was determined to give the children of his parishes the best advantages religious instruction could offer. He had already founded at Oldenburg the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Francis whose members were teaching the girls in his schools, and also in neighboring parishes. Now he planned to establish a community of Brothers to take charge of the education of the boys. Accordingly with the Bishop's approval, he applied to the Superior of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine in France to make a foundation of their Order at Oldenburg. The Superior, accepting the invitation, sent Brother John Mary Weidman and two other Brothers, Gabriel and Raphael, who after their arrival in the diocese

31 Garraghan, op. cit., p. 41.
established a house at Concord, a few miles from Oldenburg, which they renamed St. Maurice in honor of Bishop Maurice de St. Palais. In 1858 they began the construction of a chapel, academy, and convent which was completed and dedicated on January 1, 1859. While the main object of the institution was to educate and train young men who intended to join the congregation in order to devote themselves to the instruction of youth, the school was also open to boarding and day students who were taught those subjects ordinarily included in the regular course of studies in institutions of this kind. Boys from six years on were admitted. The tuition was moderate, eighty dollars for the scholastic year, with very few extra charges, not even for pupils who remained during the vacation. The school prospered so well that upon the opening of the second school year the Brothers were unable to accommodate the numerous applicants. As soon as they had acquired the necessary means they intended to enlarge the building. The Superior General of the Congregation in France proposed to send four Brothers to assist with the work of teaching in the parish schools and at their St. Maurice institute in Decatur County. The Bishop of the diocese had accorded the Brothers the privilege of having a

32Wilken, op. cit., p. 47.

33Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, Feb. 5, 1859.
resident priest at the convent since they were isolated from other establishments. Brother John Mary, the director of St. Maurice Institute, would undoubtedly have established a fine school well patronized by the families of the surrounding district, for in the very first year of its existence it was attended by students from Evansville, Vevay, Kingston, Indianapolis, Brookville, St. Maurice, Oldenburg, and also Germantown, Illinois, and Cincinnati, Ohio.34

The Brothers, however, met with reverses, and probably in the latter part of 1860 the school was discontinued. Brother John Mary had refused to establish an institution independent of the Motherhouse in France, and since this was not in accordance with Father Rudolf's original plan, the latter discontinued his interest in the school. There were also financial worries which ensued upon the building of the school and convent, and anxiety on the score of providing adequate teachers, for the four Brothers who recently arrived from France were not familiar with the English language. The greatest trial of the struggling congregation was the death of their superior, Brother John Mary whose health had been steadily declining for some months. Unable to continue the work, the Brothers closed the school shortly after his death and returned to France.35

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34 Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, July 16, 1862.
35 Annals, A. O. S. F.
Financial distress, undoubtedly the most decisive cause of the Brothers' failure, always threatened diocesan projects undertaken in the fifties and early sixties. It had closed the doors of the diocesan seminary the first year of Bishop de St. Palais' administration and again, in 1856 and 1860, forced the prelate to find a temporary home for the young men preparing for the priesthood. This institution so essential to the very life of the Church in Indiana passed through a very uncertain period of existence lasting for more than fifteen years and that long only by the determined effort of the Bishop to have a source from which to obtain priests for the diocese. What made it so hard to provide for the sustenance of the students and for the upkeep of the building was that the institution was entirely dependent upon the charity of the people of the diocese.

Bishop de St. Palais carried out the plan inaugurated by his predecessor of having the people donate their Easter collection to the Bishop to be used exclusively for the seminary, but the funds obtained thereby were insufficient to support the seminary faculty and students. In a circular letter sent to the priests in the spring of 1860 the Bishop revealed how deeply disappointed he was that the people took so little interest in the seminary from which they themselves derived the chief benefits. He wrote:

I see with pain that the generosity manifested for the orphans, is not shown in the same measure toward an institution less near perhaps to the hearts of many,
but much more essential to the welfare of religion. So limited are the means afforded by the collections made at Easter, that only a few clerical students can be received, and the spiritual wants of the people, who daily ask for someone to break to them the Bread of Life are not sufficiently provided for.

Whose fault is it? Certainly it is not mine; since I always did, and still do, all I can to procure worthy and faithful laborers for that portion of the Lord's vineyard, committed to my care. It is to a great extent the fault of many Catholics who, though sincerely anxious for spiritual goods, draw back if the blessing is to be purchased at the cost, light as it may be, of some temporal gift. 36

Up to this time Father John Guéguen, superior of the seminary, had evidently been able to manage affairs, for the letter also stated that the institution was free from pecuniary embarrassments; but since the seminary was discontinued in the fall of 1860, it is probable that the funds obtained at Easter were more meager than usual because of the state of affairs in the nation. Father Audran who was rector of the Cathedral parish and who lived at the episcopal residence was of the opinion that this unfortunate happening was brought about by lack of perseverance on the part of the superior. In a letter dated October 24, 1860, he described the situation for Bishop de la Hailandière who still entertained a sincere interest in the diocese and especially in the seminary:

All are well here and there is but little change in our affairs since last spring. However, Mr. Guéguen having manifested his intention to give up the seminary

Bishop de St. Palais sent the younger students who were yet at their Latin to the Small or Preparatory Seminary of St. Thomas in Kentucky, and took the Theologians into his own house. So the old college is again abandoned and we would have, so far as the Seminary proper is concerned, about entirely returned to the old state of things, if their number were not so small. Three were ordained priests last Sunday and started the very next day. Now there are only five remaining. These M. M. Guéguen and Contin teach. I did all I could to prevent the change which has taken place, but to no purpose. Mr. Guéguen formerly so very zealous refused to contend any farther against the many difficulties which prevent a regular and truly efficient course of studies from being carried out. Being in our house now and having not to concern himself about the temporal in any way he agreed to continue teaching for a while yet the few who remain. How long, will depend entirely upon his liking,-- and there will be only onething to do,--to teach myself. 37

Under the circumstances this arrangement was most likely more advantageous to the students especially the younger ones of whom there must have been about fifteen, for in the provincial minor seminary in Kentucky they received the benefits of a thorough and complete training. The theologians remained under the charge of Father Guéguen, who was, despite whatever shortcomings he possessed, a very pious and excellent priest, whose example and good advice inspired his students to become good priests. When affairs took a turn for the better St. Charles Seminary was reopened and Father Guéguen was at its head, a position which he had retained since his appointment to it in 1853, directing it with renewed courage and energy.

37 Audran to Hailandière, Oct. 24, 1860, U. N. D. A.
When the seminary which had been located at Highland since 1857 was temporarily discontinued in 1860, the Bishop transferred the orphan boys to that place where they occupied the large frame residence said to have been built for Bishop de la Hailandière. If the Bishop was not engaged in making a pastoral visitation or in blessing churches,—two functions he performed quite frequently,—he was certain to be at Highland among the orphans for whom he had a special predilection. He made a number of improvements upon the place and it gradually assumed a fine appearance.

A large barn was constructed this year (1860). The cultivated ground cannot be less than 150 acres, fifty or sixty of which are a fine level meadow. The orchard begins to produce well. It yielded a very large quantity of fine peaches this year. Father Deydier is the chaplain of the house, happy as a king and busying himself about in a thousand different ways.38

There was one thing, however, that caused the Bishop a great deal of concern, the frame house was in such a very bad condition that it was imperative to build, but the financial status of the asylum was not so flourishing that a building project could be undertaken without serious difficulties. It was only by the most careful management and the strictest economy that the Sisters of Providence were able to keep the establishment out of debt. By 1862 the Bishop could no longer delay building a new orphanage, for the

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38 Ibid.
number of orphans taken in had increased greatly since the civil war began. Therefore, plans for a large building to be erected at Highland were actually carried out in the fall. On November 6, the Bishop assisted by many priests and seminarians, laid the cornerstone of the new St. Vincent Orphan Asylum. The Jesuit missionary, Father Damen, addressed the assembled crowd in a stirring appeal in favor of the institution, taking advantage of the presence of the orphan boys and dwelling on the benefits already conferred upon those who had been sent forth from the school. His sermon produced efficacious results, for at the close of the ceremonies the Mayor of Vincennes and another prominent citizen raised a liberal subscription which was given to the Bishop. 39

This enterprise, so reluctantly taken up by the Bishop because of the adverse circumstances, assumed even more gigantic proportions than had been anticipated. The cost of the building originally estimated at twenty thousand dollars rose to almost forty thousand before its completion because of the depreciation of paper money during the war. 40 Bishop de St. Palais continued to direct the work calmly and apparently without undue anxiety, until the spring of 1864 when he was compelled to discontinue it because of serious illness. For a while the Bishop was in so grave

39 Catholic Telegraph and Advocate, Nov. 26, 1862.
a condition that the doctor entertained little hope for recovery, but in the latter part of April there was a decided change for the better. Bishop George A. Carrell of Covington, Kentucky, who visited him about this time wrote to Archbishop Purcell:

I have just returned from a visit to Bishop St. Palais, who has been dangerously sick and I left him in good spirits with a prospect of a speedy recovery. I met Bishop Spalding at Vincennes, who, as well as myself received a dispatch from Reverend Mr. Audran, announcing the Bishop's sickness. 41

By June the Bishop had fully recovered from the pneumonia and was over-seeing the final work on the orphanage which was completed during the summer. It was such an imposing structure that many persons believed it too fine and costly to be devoted to an asylum for orphans; they suggested to the Bishop that it be turned over to educational purposes, that a college be established. The good prelate had but one reply, --as long as he was Bishop of the diocese it would be the home of his destitute orphan children. 42

The following year Bishop de St. Palais was contemplating another building project more extensive than that recently completed. He intended to erect a large school for boys at Indianapolis and also a Gothic church one hundred fifty by seventy feet. The clergy inferred from

41 Carrell to Purcell, April 22, 1864, U. N. D. A.
42 Blanchard, op. cit., I, 87.
this plan that the Bishop had in mind to change the episcopcal seat from Vincennes to Indianapolis where the population had steadily and rapidly increased since 1861. The Church, too, had been making unusual progress so that there were reasons to believe it would be a splendid thing to have the episcopal residence at the capitol. The entire year passed and the plan had not been put into effect. There had been decisive changes in matters regarding the administration of the diocese and the seminary, but no action taken concerning the removal of the episcopal seat to Indianapolis.

Father Bede O'Connor, O.S.B., had been recalled from the pastorate at St. Joseph church, Terre Haute, in order to act as Chancellor of the diocese and Father Chasse was given charge of the parish. The St. Charles diocesan seminary was definitely discontinued in 1866 and the students placed under the charge of the Benedictines at St. Meinrad Abbey where the diocesan clergy has continued to be educated until the present day. About this same time the Bishop made another important move which was to produce immeasurable good for the spiritual welfare of the diocese: he invited the Franciscan Fathers of Cincinnati to establish a monastery at Oldenburg. In so doing he acceded to the

\[\begin{align*}
43 & \text{Du Pontavice à Hailandière, May 11, 1865, U.N.D.A.} \\
44 & \text{Audran à Hailandière, July 11, 1866, U. N. D. A.}
\end{align*}\]
earnest request of the saintly Father Rudolf who petitioned the Bishop some months prior to his death in May, 1866, to have the Franciscans succeed him at Holy Family parish. He wished that these Fathers who had assisted him on so many occasions, especially in the establishment of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Francis, should be permitted to continue his work at Oldenburg.

Thus at the end of the year 1866 the final steps in the organization had been taken: a more vigorous parish life had been initiated; a steadier increase in diocesan clergy was noticeable; adequate provision for the orphans had been made; a definite system of administration was inaugurated; the seminarians had found a permanent home at St. Meinrad's; and finally, another order of religious priests was introduced into the diocese. With the fundamental affairs of the diocese set in order, the Bishop now entered upon a period of eleven years in which he further developed and expanded the field of religious activity of the Church in the diocese of Vincennes.
CONCLUSION

The twenty years ensuing upon the nomination in 1846 of a new bishop to the see of Vincennes were marked by growth and prosperity hitherto unknown in the diocese. Once the threatening dangers were dispelled by the brief episcopate of Bishop Bazin (Oct. 1847 - Apr. 1848), steps toward organization and reconstruction were initiated by Bishop de St. Palais who proved himself worthy of the episcopacy. He retained what had been established and directed and developed what appeared to be of promise for the promotion of the interests of religion. In every eventuality he preserved an unshakable calm and firmness, giving his first attention to the matters of gravest importance. Hence, the problem of obtaining priests to care for the growing Catholic population was the foremost concern of Bishop de St. Palais throughout the period of his administration under consideration. Although he sought to increase the ranks of the clergy by appealing to European countries for missionaries, as his predecessors had done, his greatest efforts were spent in behalf of the permanent establishment of a diocesan seminary for the training of native priests. But it was only when adverse circumstances forced the Bishop to discontinue the seminary in 1866 and to entrust the education of the
diocesan clergy to the Benedictine Fathers at St. Meinrad's that his objective was actually realized. The Abbey proved to be a well-established institution where young men could be trained for service as priests of the diocese.

The pastoral duties of the Bishop became increasingly perplexing in the 1850's when the rapid expansion of the Catholic population followed upon the great German and Irish immigration. It was difficult to supply the much needed guidance and direction of missionaries for the numerous parishes ready for organization. The demand for German speaking priests was great, for the largest groups of immigrants of any one nationality were the German people. Within a few years they had settled here and there over a great extent of the diocese, but chiefly in the south and east. It is interesting to observe the relation of density of Catholic population and the proximity to such established Catholic centers as Cincinnati and Louisville.

With the faithful cooperation of his clergy the Bishop successfully organized the majority of the immigrants into parishes and missions and appointed resident pastors as soon as possible. The growth was too widespread and rapid by 1855, notwithstanding the opposition of the Know Nothings, to permit proper surveillance of the entire state of Indiana, hence the Bishop petitioned for the division of the diocese. When this had been granted in 1857 Bishop de St. Palais was
enabled to carry out his pastoral duties thoroughly. It was evident about this time that the increase in population was in general shifting to the northern portion of the diocese, to the capitol where economic advantages seemed more promising. Although there was a continued growth of Catholicism in the south and the east, there was also a new development in the north and the west where the Church had hitherto made little progress.

In order to aid the clergy and religious with their respective work, the Bishop had invited several orders to make foundations in his diocese, and in two instances he obtained permanent establishments. In 1851 the Order of the Sisters of St. Francis, a congregation which engaged in educational work, was founded and two years later the Benedictines came to Indiana, where they gave most valuable service to the diocese through their school at St. Meinrad. Religious educational opportunities were thus multiplied and spread over a greater area of the diocese, especially in the eastern portion where education had been mainly in the hands of lay persons. The failure of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine to maintain their establishment was a real loss to the cause of Catholic education in the diocese.

And finally, at great cost and hardship, the Bishop solved the problem of adequate care and housing of the orphans, an interest of his, second only to that of the seminary. Early in his administration he had placed both
the boys and the girls under the care of the Sisters of Providence, and in succeeding years he continually manifested his affection for the orphans in various ways. One of the most outstanding accomplishments undertaken on behalf of his orphan boys was the erection of a splendid home for them at the Highland, and this at a time, 1863, when few persons would have ventured upon such a project.

By 1866 all traces of the former confusion and dissatisfaction prevalent in the diocese had disappeared under the mild and discreet guidance of Bishop de St. Palais. In their stead were order and fidelity,--a well organized administration loyally supported by priests, religious, and laity.
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