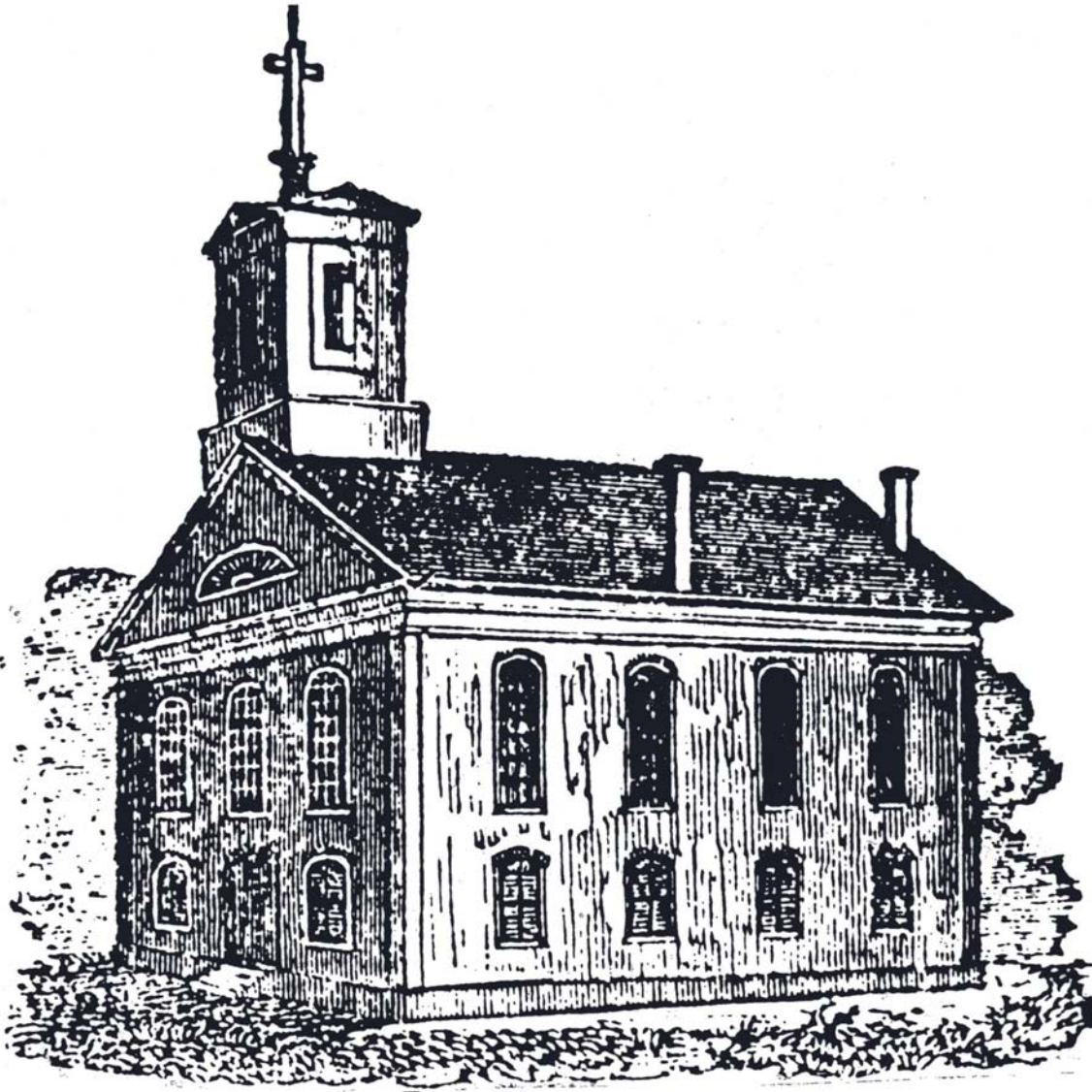


St. Mary's Catholic Church, Burlington, Vermont



The History of St. Mary's Catholic Church

The history of St Mary's Catholic Church in Burlington is the history of the early Catholic Church in Vermont. It was the first church and had the first resident priest, Father Jeremiah O'Callaghan, who was also a missionary for northern Vermont. Because of this, there is no particular history of St Mary's Church. The following is an article about the early church in Vermont. Alas, we are missing the stories of those early Catholics; both Irish and French, who contributed so much of their efforts into making this first church a success.



The Second St Mary's Church in Burlington

Built in 1841 and used until the new Cathedral was completed in 1867

Facing West on St Paul Street at the corner of Cherry Street

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCHES OF CHITTENDEN COUNTY

Prepared by the Rt. Rev. Louis De Goesbriand, bishop of the Diocese of Burlington, and very Rev. Thomas Lynch, V. G. (About 1886)

The first organization of the Catholic Church of Burlington and of Chittenden county took place in 1830, when Rev. Jeremiah O'CALLAGHAN, a native of the county Cork, and a priest of the Diocese of Cloyne, Ireland, was sent by Bishop FENWICK, of Boston, to this place, Vermont at the time forming part of the Diocese of Boston. There were some French Canadian and Irish families in Burlington and the surrounding villages of the county of Chittenden who

were probably visited by priests from Canada and other places, but before 1830 they had no resident priest. The same year Colonel HYDE deeded to the Bishop of Boston the land which is now used as a cemetery, and which with other lands since purchased is known as Mt. St. Joseph's Cemetery. Rev. Mr. O'CALLAGHAN commenced the erection of a church on this property in 1832, for which he collected money in other parts of the county and in Canada. The building stood a little northeast of the present gateway of the cemetery on Archibald Street. This building was destroyed by incendiaries it is believed, in 1838. It was attended by all the Catholics not only of Burlington, but of the surrounding country, both Irish and French Canadians, who formed the bulk of, if not the entire Catholic population.

Rev. Father O'CALLAGHAN was assisted at different times by the following clergymen: Rev. Messrs. PETITHOMME, O'BYRNE and ANSE. After the burning of the church the Catholics assembled for divine services in the basement of the court-house. In 1841 Father O'CALLAGHAN commenced another church, which was afterwards enlarged, and which, with some more additions, is now known as St. Mary's Hall. At this time the French Canadians under the direction of Father ANSE built another church on the hill near the place where the first church stood, and the Catholics, French and Irish, had services at different times.

In 1850 St. Joseph's Church was commenced, near the cemetery. It was intended to accommodate the French Canadians of Burlington and Winooski and of the surrounding country. This church is still used, though much too small for the congregation, and far from the body of the people who attend it. A large substantial stone building is at this time receiving the finishing touches of mechanics and artists, and will in a very short time be ready to accommodate the large number of worshipers who anxiously await its completion. This church is located on Allen Street. The old St. Joseph's was commenced by Rev. Joseph QUEVILLON, who had the direction of the congregation until October 8, 1854. Since then the congregation has been under the care of the Oblate Fathers M. I., the Rt. Rev. Bishop who took charge of it for a short time, Rev. H. Cardinal and the present pastor, Rev. Jerome M. CLOAREC, who is now assisted by Rev. Francis YVENEK. A new church was erected at Winooski Falls for the French Canadians, and now St. Joseph's Church was in the very edge, if we may so express it, of the people who attended it. Besides, the people began to increase in the city, so that the church was entirely unsuited for their accommodation. The present pastor purchased the lot on Allen street, and after commencing work had the cornerstone of the new St. Joseph's blessed and placed in position July 4, 1884. This is the church which in a very short time will be occupied by its people, and give that accommodation which is so much needed.

Rev. Jeremiah O'CALLAGHAN continued to attend the congregation of St. Mary's, and besides, the French Canadians in the absence of a resident French priest, up to the time that St. Joseph's Church was commenced, or even until 1853. At this time the Diocese of Burlington was created. This diocese comprises the State of Vermont. Rt. Rev. Louis DE GOESBRIAND was appointed its first bishop. The Diocese of Burlington was erected July 29, 1853; the bishop was consecrated October 30, of the same year, and arrived in Burlington on the 5th of November following, and took possession of St. Mary's Church as his cathedral. He also took charge of the congregation and was assisted at various times by Rev. Thomas RIORDAN, who arrived in Burlington March 13, 1854; Very Rev. James CONLON, V. G., of Cleveland, Ohio, who acted as administrator of the new diocese during the absence of the bishop, who went to Europe to

provide priests for his extensive but poor diocese; Rev. Thomas LYNCH, who arrived from Ireland October 3, 1855, and remained until November 1, 1859, having been appointed vicar-general December 23, 1858; Rev. James QUINN, who was ordained priest in St. Mary's Cathedral January 1, 1859, and remained until August 30, 1860; Rev. Joseph M. DUGLUE, who came August 30, 1860, and remained until November 26, 1862; and Rev. Jerome M. CLOAREC, who came September 16, 1861, and remained until October 12, 1869. With the above-named priests the following labored at different times: Revs. George W. CAISSEY, D. RYAN, P. CUNNINGHAM, P. O. CARROLL, M. McCAULEY, John GALLIGAN and Thomas HALPIN.

On the 12th of October 1869, Very Rev. Thomas LYNCH, V. G., returned to Burlington from West Rutland, as rector of the Cathedral. He has been assisted since then at different times by Revs. Henry LANE, W. MURPHY, E. R. MALONEY, William J. O'SULLIVAN and P. BARRETT. Rev. J. M. COATHUEL also lived and is now in this city, and did some work, but acted principally as secretary of the bishop.