

Carson City Gazette
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St. Mary's Catholic Church
St. Mary's Parish

Views of its Substantial Church and Home and of its Energetic Pastor

History Of Its Organization

We present in this issue views of St. Mary's church property and Rev. K. J. Whalen who directed the building of the entire plant from the first stone to the last flower.

In connection with these views it is but meet to give a short history of St. Mary's parish and property. In 1895 Rt. Rev. Bishop Richter decided to establish a parish here for the benefit of Catholic members of the surrounding community who to this time worshiped at St. John's church, Hubbardston. Rev. E.A. Caldwell of Big Rapids was commissioned to organize the parish and during the year succeeded in securing the present church site. Seeing that little could be accomplished without a resident priest. Rev. K.J. Whalen of Chebogan was chosen as the first pastor and took up his present charge of Carson City, Greenville, Maple Valley and Harvard extending sixty miles east and west and averaging twenty-five north and south Feb. 7, 1896.

With energy, determination, firmness and prudence he undertook the seemingly unsurmountable work before him, and St. Mary's church plant tells the success that crowned his efforts. St. Mary's is today an ornament to our village the neatest property of the kind in the county and probably in the state. That this property worth \$2,000.00 could be build without indebtedness by less than 100 families in such a short time seems almost impossible, but Rev. Fr. Whalen tells us that it was easy, that his people have worked in harmony, that a kindly thread has woven together the efforts of young and of old that he had the easy part of gratefully receiving what was kindly given. He thanks in particular two circumstances that his lot was cast in a farming community that cannot be surpassed and with a people who through they may differ in religion have always been his friends, in feeling, in encouragement, and in assistance. Many have asked when will St. Mary's church have a bell and we are authorized to say probably in less than a year if crops are good enough this season to guarantee the raising of one thousand (\$1,000) dollars. And that at the same time a tower clock will be placed if Rev. Fr. Whalen's friends in the community make it possible.

St. Mary's church is 45x95, built of red brick, trimmed with cut stone, neatly frescoed and in every respect a complete piece of workmanship. The furnishings are in keeping with the building and of the latest design.

St. Mary's residence is likewise built of red brick trimmed with cut stone, furnished with electric light, water, telephone and all modern improvements. It is 40 feet wide and entire length reaches 60 feet which gives ample room for office, library and such extra apartments as are necessary for such a home.

The shrine represented in this view is built between the church and residences, and presents the mother of our divine Lord in a beautiful golden statue which is circled with a bed of flowers and decked with a canopy from which shines forth three electric lights.

This view of the sanctuary only gives the faintest idea of its reality. The three altars are perfect in design, spotless white and rimmed in gold, set off with flowers, statuary and candelabra, make a most pleasing sight especially when with the touch of a button thirty electric bulbs commingle the colors red, white and blue.

Rev. Fr. Whalen was born near the city of Grand Rapids, Mich., April 17, 1863, and entered Assumption college, Sandwich, Ont., in preparation for the ministry on Jan. 7, 1884. He completed his classical course there June 20, 1888 and took up the study of Philosophy in St. Mary's seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio the following September, completing his course in Divinity at St. Francis' seminary, Milwaukee, and was ordained a priest by Rt. Rev. H. J. Richter in St. Andrews, cathedral, Grand Rapids, Mich. on June 29, 1892. He assisted for three months at Mt. Pleasant, Mich. and was then sent to St. Mary's congregation, Cheboygan where he worked until he was given his present charge.