



New St. Antoninus Church, Newark, N. J.

DEDICATION OF ST. ANTONINUS CHURCH

J. M. D.



HE newly-completed edifice of St. Antoninus Church, Newark, was dedicated on September 21, 1941, by the Most Rev. Thomas J. Walsh, D.D., Archbishop of Newark. His Excellency presided at the dedication Mass which was offered by the Very Rev. Walter G. Moran, O.P., Prior of St. Antoninus. Many dignitaries, including the Most Rev. Stephen J. Donahue, D.D., Auxiliary Bishop of New York, attended. The preacher was the Very Rev. John E. O'Hearn, O.P., P.G.

Assisting Archbishop Walsh were the Right Rev. Monsignor John C. McClary, Vicar General of the archdiocese, as archpriest, and the Right Rev. Monsignor James F. Kelley, president of Seton Hall College, South Orange, and the Right Rev. Monsignor William F. Lawlor, archdiocesan superintendent of schools, as deacons of honor. The Very Rev. Monsignor James A. Hughes, chancellor of the archdiocese, was master of ceremonies.

The deacon of the Mass was the Rev. Eugene Brady, O.P., of St. Vincent Ferrer Church, New York City, and the subdeacon was the Rev. Joseph Gilsenan, O.P., of Sacred Heart Church, Jersey City, former members of St. Antoninus' parish.

Chaplains to Bishop Donahue were the Right Rev. Monsignor Ignatius P. Szudrowicz, pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Church, Jersey City, and the Right Rev. Monsignor M. A. Thimmes, pastor of St. Peter's Church, Newark.

Present at the Mass were the Very Rev. Terence S. McDermott, O.P., S.T.Lr., Provincial of the Dominican Province of St. Joseph, and the Very Rev. Benedict Bradley, O.S.B., representing the Right Rev. Abbot Patrick O'Brien, O.S.B., of St. Mary's Abbey, Newark.

The exterior design of the church is of simple English gothic treatment of brick and limestone trim. Tympanums over both doorways are carved and contain the Papal and Dominican Arms. High in the south gable is a niche for the stone figure of St. Antoninus. Simplicity and warmth are the two qualities striven for in the construction of the church. In cruciform plan, the church will accommodate approximately 1100. The warm color of the interior is enhanced by the use of blue, gold, and green in the decorations, dossals, and other fitments. The main altar is a liturgical altar table set on three steps of cream and black-colored marble. A cross in a diamond-

shaped red numidian marble is set in the center of the frontal piece. Over all is a suspended polychrome wooden rood. The communion rail, pulpit and sanctuary lamp are of wrought iron in half-polished style. The baptismal font is of the same material, embellished with symbols relating to the rite. The stations of the Cross are painted in mosaic style, forming spots of color with the cream colored walls of acoustic plaster and limestone trim. The woodwork is for the most part oak. It is hoped that the temporary windows will be replaced later by more elaborate stained glass.

St. Antoninus' was the first Dominican parish to be founded in the state of New Jersey, and is, moreover, the only one in the United States bearing the name of St. Antoninus. It was established on May 16, 1875, in a rented three-story private home on the outskirts of the city. The first Mass was offered by Rev. Stephen Byrne, O.P., who was appointed pastor after Bishop Corrigan of Newark had requested the Rev. John Antoninus Rochford, O.P., then Dominican Provincial, to take steps for the erection of a church and house of the Dominican Order in the episcopal city. For several months Father Byrne used the first floor of the building as a church and the upper floors as living quarters.

The pastor soon purchased a large plot of ground which fronted on South Orange Avenue and contained twenty-two building lots. On the land stood a residence and a barn, and the latter was forthwith converted into a church. The name chosen for the plain little chapel was St. Antoninus, after the great Dominican Archbishop of Florence. Bishop Corrigan dedicated it on July 18, 1875, and preached the sermon on its patron Saint. The residence on the plot became the home of the Dominican Fathers. On Sunday, July 25, 1875, a week after the dedication, Father Byrne received his official appointment as Vicar and that date marks the erection of the Vicariate at St. Antoninus.

In 1910 Rev. Joseph R. Heffernan, O.P., was made pastor and began plans for a magnificent new church in Gothic style. That the cost might not be too burdensome, it was decided to erect at first only the basement which would serve until such time as it would be feasible to complete the super-structure. Finally work on the building was started and the cornerstone was laid on May 12, 1912, with Bishop John J. O'Connor, D.D., of Newark officiating.

The new edifice is built atop the basement church which has housed the parish since 1912. The present Prior of St. Antoninus and the guiding spirit of the work of the new church is the Very Reverend Walter G. Moran, O.P.

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