

SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF ST. ROSE PRIORY



KENTUCKY had been a state less than fifteen years. The Indian menace was only recently overcome. Kentucky was yet a frontier territory; but there was a large settlement, a Catholic one, a group that needed the ministrations of priests. This was the situation when the Order of St. Dominic sent her first sons to the United States. And such is the memory that the Priory of St. Rose and St. Joseph's Province proudly recalls this year, the 150th anniversary of St. Rose's founding.

A three day celebration featured the sesquicentennial program. On April 24, a Solemn Pontifical Mass of Thanksgiving was offered by the Most Rev. J. A. Floersch, D.D., Archbishop of Louisville. The Very Rev. P. F. Mulhern, O.P., was the preacher. The following day the Very Rev. W. D. Marrin, O.P., Provincial, celebrated a Solemn High Mass for the living and dead. The sermon was preached by the Rev. H. J. McManus, O.P. The celebration terminated on April 26, with a Solemn High Mass for the Dominican Mothers General of the United States and their Communities which was offered by the Very Rev. J. A. Driscoll, O.P., Socius of the Master General and Visitor to the Province. The Very Rev. E. F. Smith, O.P., preached the sermon.

St. Rose is the home of the modest beginnings of the Order in the U. S., a fact that endears it to every son and daughter of St. Dominic. The priestly activity of Dominican Friars at St. Rose predates the founding (Dec. 1806), the official dedication of the Priory on March 19, 1807, and the first services held in the church (Dec. 25, 1809). The three founding Fathers worked the 130 x 70 mile "parish" from early 1805. The indirect influence of this priory during the intervening years can never be measured. With the exception of twelve of its 150 year history, St. Rose has played a prominent part in the formation of every Dominican priest. It was for him a home, either for the novitiate year or the years of study. It was the scene of the first ordination in this country to the priesthood in the Dominican Order. It was the training arena for Bishops and Archbishops, Provincials, noted

theologians and philosophers, martyrs, great preachers and apostles, and saints. St. Rose was the seed from which blossomed three great Provinces; a seed, planted by three soul-hungry Friars, which today has 1500 living Dominican children. It was the fertile soil from which sprang a congregation of Sisters of St. Dominic—the Congregation of St. Catherine of Siena, which has become the fruitful mother of three other Congregations.

St. Rose is more than an historical site of little national significance. A parish serving less than 300 families, it is the vibrant cradle of the Dominican Order in the U. S., representative of the outpouring of true Dominican zeal for God and neighbor. This is the memory that was recalled in April, 1957 when members of the Order joined with parishioners and the present prior, Father Musselman, in grateful thanksgiving to God.

OLDEST CHURCH UNDER THE AMERICAN FLAG

The Church of St. Thomas Aquinas in San Juan, Puerto Rico, (now called San Jose) is the oldest Church on American soil. It was built in 1530 by Dominican Fathers from Spain who came over with Columbus. A Monastery was also built there at the same time. (Now the Monastery is the Headquarters of the U. S. Army). The Church is used for a Catholic Parish Church today and is very little changed from the days when Ponce de Leon and his family worshipped there. Ponce de Leon's body rested in the Church from 1559 to 1909, when it was moved down the street to the Cathedral.