

We are quite sure that you will enjoy this booklet.  
We are sure also that you will realize that this is  
a most unusual celebration; a priest celebrating his  
60th Anniversary to the Priesthood.

And... this priest is your beloved popular Pere  
Teurlings. As a token of appreciation we hope to pre-  
sent him with a purse at the occasion of his jubilee.

Next Sunday a special collection will be taken up  
for him for this purpose. If you will use this collection  
envelope and put your name on it, we'll put your name  
on the memorial scroll which will be presented to the  
~~next~~ Jubilarian.

The Parish Committee.



# JUBILEE BOOK

1894 ————— 1954

HONORING

*The Right Reverend Monsignor William Joseph Teurlings, V.G., P.A.*

on the occasion of

*His Diamond Sacerdotal Jubilee*

HONORING

*The Right Reverend Monsignor William J. Teurlings, P.A.*

VICAR GENERAL OF THE DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA

on the occasion of

*His Diamond Sacerdotal Jubilee*



PONTIFICAL HIGH MASS CORAM EPISCOPO OFFERED

BY THE JUBILARIAN

IN ST. GENEVIEVE CHURCH

LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA

SERMON BY

*His Excellency,*

*The Most Reverend Jules B. Jeanmard, D.D., LL.D.*

BISHOP OF LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA

April 29, 1954

10:00 A.M.

The Parishioners of St. Genevieve's Parish are invited to participate in a Parish Communion for their beloved Pastor on Sunday, May 2, 1954 and to be the guests of the Parish at a light breakfast which will be served in the Parish Hall after the morning Masses on this Sunday. At this time the Parishioners will have the opportunity to express their good wishes to the Right Reverend Jubilarian.

## The First Twelve Years of His Priestly Life

"He went about doing good." If all the relief America has given to Europe were to be placed in one balance of a scale, and the relief Europe gave to America sixty years ago in the person of one priest, the Right Reverend Monsignor William Joseph Teurlings, were to be placed in the other balance, the people of South Louisiana would be sure that their beloved "Père" Teurlings would far outweigh the opposing gifts. Because with him would be all the memories of the struggles, the tender experiences, the fears and triumphs, the souls he redeemed in baptism, the marriages he performed, the consolations and comfort his presence and gentle touch gave to the sorrows of death and loss.



The life of this godly man began in Tilburg, Holland, on January 27, 1872 where he was born to Cornelius Teurlings and Frances Mulders. Shortly after his birth the family moved to the historic and ancient city of Nymegen, where the little Dutch boy must have passed many happy hours in awed admiration of the turrets and towers, the high walls and protective moats which had been built some 2,000 years ago. How he must have gloried in the valiant history of his people as he trod the streets where once the Roman Legions of Julius Caesar had invaded and fought his ancestors! In these surroundings he discovered his vocation to the priesthood, and his desire to come to America to spread the Faith though he knew it would be hard to leave the tender love and care and culture of a family, whose precept and example had done so much to shape his character and his ideals. Here too was developed the great love for his homeland which has

been equaled only by his loyalty to America, the land of his adoption.

He showed such a superior intellectual aptitude that at four years of age, he was placed in the Sisters' School at Nymegen. Later he attended the Brothers' School in the same city. His higher education took him first to the Dominican College at Nymegen, and from 1890 until the day of his ordination on June 29, 1894 he was a student of Philosophy and Theology at the American College of Louvain, Belgium, where so many young men have been trained for the priesthood to serve American missions. During all these years of educational effort had he been classified by the irreverent and slangy students of today, he would have been known as an "eager beaver," for his has always been an insatiable desire for knowledge, and an intense interest and love for good music both instrumental and vocal. He attacked all of his school work and his music with that unbridled enthusiasm and energy which have been his earmark throughout the years. At the age of 22½, one year short of the required age, he was ready for ordination. Special dispensation had to be secured from the Holy Father, and on June 29, 1894, in Louvain at the hands of Archbishop Francis Janssens of New Orleans, his dreams came true and he joined that glorious band of "priests not for time but for eternity."

The ordination having been completed, Father Teurlings sought an interview with "His Grace," Archbishop Janssens, and asked for and secured permission to remain at the American University of Louvain for further study, after promising to leave for Louisiana as soon as "His Grace" felt need of him. This need was made known only a few weeks afterwards, and the new priest was soon on his way





to America. He landed in New Orleans in January, 1895 during one of the few raging snow storms Louisiana has ever known. (All that Father Teurlings knew of Louisiana was the information he had obtained in reading what would correspond to a Chamber of Commerce brochure!) His first assignment was that of assistant in Abbeville, where he served for six months.

In October of 1895, the young priest was appointed pastor of a territory stretching for 120 miles along the Gulf of Merico, and which embraced Cameron, Cheniere Au Tigre, St. John's Bridge and Pecan Island. The conditions at Abbeville, which had seemed primitive, took on a "beauty and substance of solid comfort" when he took over this, the most

difficult post in the Archdiocese. There were no roads, only muddy stretches along ridges which lay between treacherous swamps and marshes; there were no conveniences. He had a house but no cook, and the only possible means of transportation was horseback, (and this for a man who had never been astride a horse before but who afterwards rode one from Abbeville to the present site of the Bishop's home). Before him, as he made his way, lay stretches of wilderness and an all pervading and dismal solitude broken only by the "buzz" of myriads of mosquitoes, all seemingly intent on destroying a certain Father W. J. Teurlings at one sitting. In fact Monsignor will tell you that he is the original victim of whom one mosquito said to the other, "Let's eat him here, because if we try to carry him home the big mosquitoes will take him away from us."

This was Cameron! Into it went this intrepid young priest, gently born and gently bred, with an intellectual capacity, training, and a background, which fitted him for association with kings and courts, upheld by his desire to serve and be "whatever His Father willed." Two personal moral boosters he brought with him: his kodak and his piano. All of the inconveniences merely served to stiffen his resolution to supply not only the spiritual needs of this far-flung flock, but also to broaden their social and intellectual horizons and thus open the doors of a better way of life.

Perhaps the solitude and ruggedness of this new-found primitive life contributed greatly to the





improvement of Father's health, (for his was not a robust constitution). Such increased strength and vigor, coupled with the fortitude of a great missionary made it possible for him, after a trying day of sometimes 12 to 14 hours of work, to continue his studies late into the night. This nocturnal study was accomplished under kerosene lamps to the harmony of a "bullfrog and mosquito symphony" whose chanting seemed eventually to take on the monotony of a continuous "ora pro me!"



His piano was his greatest comfort; in fact the love and knowledge of music acquired in his native land has always been a solace to Msgr. Teurlings and a great pleasure to his people and his friends; but to the flock of Cameron this miraculous "box" was a constant source of wonder, which drew them like a magnet to the windows of his humble home, and caused them to stand for hours in awe-struck admiration as the Père drew such wonderful sounds from it. In one instance alone he was able to swap "Mozart and Liszt" for the services of a volunteer cook, who, in exchange for the entertainment, prepared a dinner for him so that he might entertain his good friend, Father Engerbrenk.

Fatigue, discomfort, overwork, loneliness and solitude could not daunt this intrepid spirit, but

what they failed to do was accomplished by a germ of typhoid-malaria. Dr. S. O. Carter saw Father through the worst of it and then a young school teacher gave up her job to nurse Father through a convalescence. She left the next year to become a Sister of Charity, and today still goes her merciful way as Sister Gervaise at Hotel Dieu in New Orleans. Father also likes to remember the generous spiritual bouquets received during this time, for his people tried in so many ways to show their appreciation and gratitude to their pastor. He best learned then that "the bread he'd cast upon the water was being returned a hundred-fold."

After three years devoted to this mission post, young Père Teurlings was sent to Washington, Louisiana, leaving behind, not only new mission chapels, but also an aroused flock, determined never again to sink into an apathy of spiritual, educational or cultural values. Even after Father Teurlings left the Gulf Coast area, as in every other place fortunate enough to have known him, the force of his vigorous personality left an indelible imprint upon his people.

Father likes to recall the circumstances of his arrival in Washington. The Railroad station was small and deserted — evidently no one was expecting a new pastor. An old Negro porter directed him to the rectory where he found three very flustered ladies of the parish barring him from the entrance. Their only greeting being, "You came two days too soon, and you can't get in!" They had had the rectory painted and it was not yet dry. So Washington's new pastor spent his first night in a local hotel!

In Washington, although he was expected again to serve as spiritual advisor to a wide-spread territory, and horseback riding was still the only means of transportation, Father officiated at Masses in Washington, Grand Prairie and Whiteville. During this pastorate he added two new chapels, one at Dossman, now St. Landry and one at Melville.

The town was small but its people made up a cultured, intelligent population; there was much industry; a large Convent of Mount Carmel Sisters flourished. There was a church, a priest's home, and a cook, but glory be! Father also found there a church organ, the first he'd seen since leaving Holland! True it had to be hand pumped, but still it was an instrument of beauty to the young priest-musician. On one of his visits to Holland Father brought back with him a young Dutchman, Martin Mertzans. Many parishioners suspected the chief purpose was so Martin could pump the organ! Be that as it may, he remained faithful to Father's service until Père Teurlings was transferred to Lafayette. And on Monsignor's seventieth birthday, Martin, who was then in Algiers, lost his life by drowning on his way home from shipping a turkey



as sung on Holy Saturday.

"Donnez cinq sous s'il vous plaît,"  
 (Ché-ché Mardi-yé)  
 Si tu donnes je fas danser  
 (Ché-ché Mardi-yé).



to his Father Teurlings. The depth of Father's sorrow prompted him to have Martin's body brought to Lafayette and buried in St. John's cemetery at his own expense. It was later transferred to St. Genevieve's.

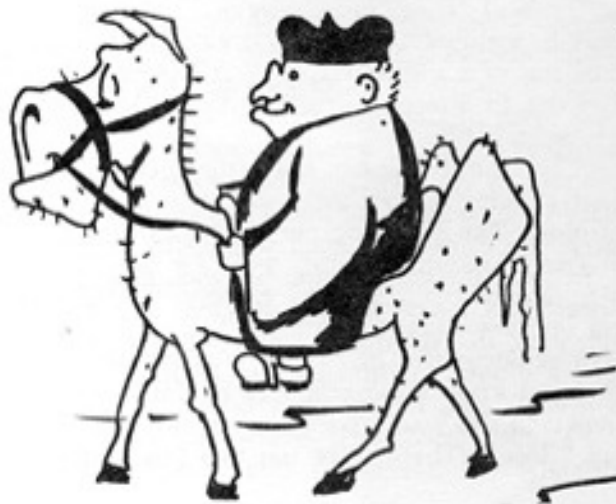
Around that church organ Father gathered together and trained a choir which became known and was in demand all over the diocese. It was his joy and pleasure to take the group to his mission churches. Often they had a picnic dinner along the way or, especially in Grand Prairie, they were given dinner by one of Father's good old "Cajun" parishoners. Always with him went his kodak, and these happy occasions are recorded in the albums of many a recipient of the photographs. This is just one example of the many friendships thus created between the townspeople and those of the country missions, which serves as a reminder of this young priest's vision and wisdom.



That choir, and their natural love for song, may have been the forerunner for the chant these people of Grand Prairie still use on Mardi Gras as they come into the town on horseback to collect money and "les cadeaux" for the Mardi Gras ball, for if one listens to their leader and his answering chorus, he is strongly reminded of "The Litany of the Saints"

A complete diary of the eight years that "Father Teurlings" spent in Washington would make most interesting, edifying, and amusing reading, but limited space permits that only a few high-lights be given.

In short order the entire population, Jews, Catholics, Protestants, colored and white, had fallen under the spell of this inspiring and dynamic personality. There occurred a great religious re-awakening. This was paced by a civic drive that followed his leadership. The church soon became the center of all the town's activities. The children of the public school were as carefully taught and guided as those of the Convent. "Going to Bible History" became a favorite passtime. Father's familiar figure on horseback was watched for eagerly. Lucky indeed was the child who was allowed to mount this horse and have his picture taken and developed by Père Teurlings. Many such photographs are still treasured by Washingtonians.



Mr. A. W. Bittle, just out of college, had come to take over as principal of the high school there and, led by mutual interests and ideals, this young Protestant teacher and young Catholic priest established a friendship that lasted until the death of Mr. Bittle a few years ago.

At Grand Prairie each Sunday, whether he had made the trip on horseback or by buggy, the same old Negro "Jo-A-chim" was there "pour attendre mon père et son cheval." Once Father took a picture of him, developed it and then gave it to him and asked if he knew who it was. "Jo-A-chim" had seen sacred pictures given by the priest but he had never seen a picture of himself, and after looking at it carefully, said, "Oh mon père! c'est Jesus Christ." Who are we to say that it was not true if measured in love and kindness? "When fed I you?" are not idle words.



At this time there was no church for the colored people in Washington and there were no funds to build a chapel, but with free labor Father Teurlings simply added another wing to the white people's church; and then, as today, the two races in perfect harmony attended the same services, sent their children to the same catechism classes, made their First Communion together, and cemented respect for the real "freedom of religion." This was somewhat in contrast to Father's previous experience in Cameron of a mixed racial First Communion when he went to church with a pistol in his pocket to prevent trouble.

The church was not only enlarged but was constantly being beautified and made worthy of its purpose. The inspiring stone plaques for the Way of The Cross; the grotto, built for our Lady; the widening of the altar, the more comfortable pews and the new baptismal font. All these Father either gave or secured. Guarding the tabernacle are two life-sized kneeling angels, and in time they became known to the young parishioners as "Miss Fonsine" and "Rose". These were the two (his white house-

keeper and colored cook) who did try to protect the priest from some of the unnecessary demands made upon his time and rest. For without them, he would indeed have spent himself to the point of exhaustion.

At about this time, two ladies from Lafayette wrote Father offering him a cabriolet in exchange for thirty-five Masses. Having no use for the carriage he felt he should refuse the offer, but one morning upon returning to his home from services in Grand Prairie, Father found it and the traders awaiting him. So the two ladies got their Masses, and he, the cabriolet.



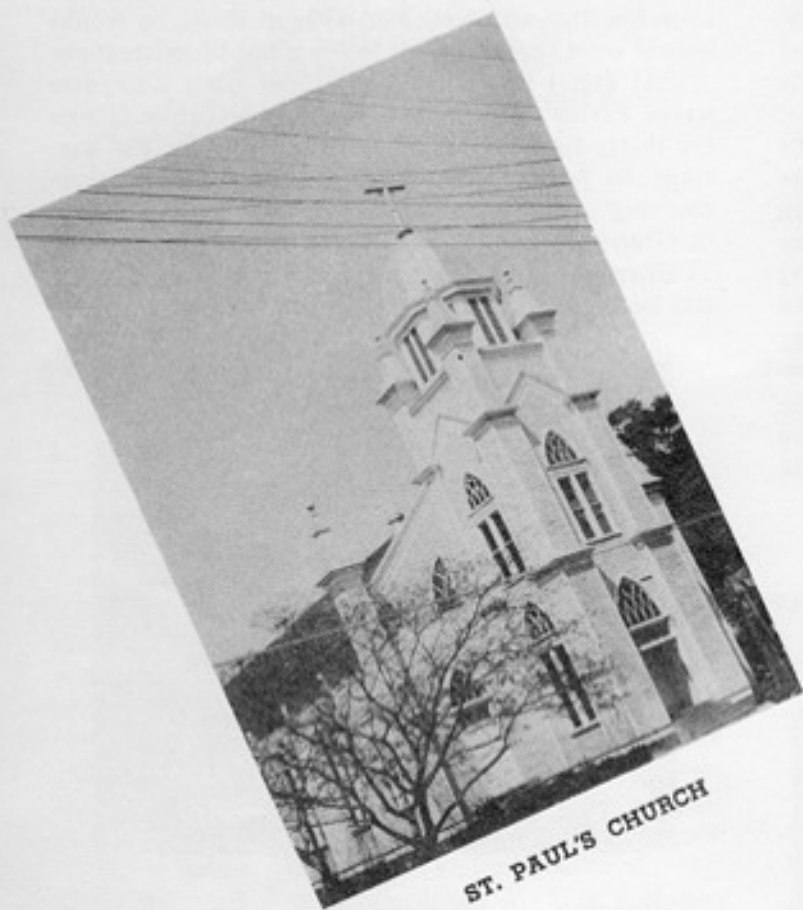
Queen Elizabeth never rode in greater pride to her coronation than did those who were lucky enough to secure rides in this "carriage of state." There Father promoted romance, for many a young altar boy became quite the rage when it was learned he could give his current flame surreptitious rides around the block "in the chariot" as he waited for Father.

When you consider the tremendous amount of work this man of God accomplished, the undeveloped roads over which he traveled, his tender care of the sick, his special love of God's poor, and the burning zeal with which he drove himself to try to spread the gospel to all people, you might wonder if Father ever found time for himself. But his people learned to listen for the sound of the piano, or the organ — often late at night — and many of them rested more easily when they heard the music for they knew their pastor to be safe **at home**.

One of Father's neighbors, a naturalized English cockney, who at that time was serving as lay-preacher for the small Methodist congregation was his chess opponent. Children used to pass and see the two bent over the board in great concentration, but they would smile to themselves, because they knew Father could not lose; had not one of the altar boys heard him say "I will check with the Bishop"?



*Monuments to God Built*



**ST. PAUL'S CHURCH**



**ST. GENEVIEVE'S SCHOOL**



**ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH**



**CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN**



**CATHEDRAL**

# *Under His Administration*



**ST. GENEVIEVE'S CAFETERIA**



**ST. GENEVIEVE'S CHURCH**



**JOHN THE EVANGELIST**



**ST. LEO'S CHAPEL**



**AL HIGH SCHOOL**



His greatest pleasure, however, was his home in which he could entertain his closest friends among the clergy, chiefly made up of young Dutch priests like himself. All Washington came to know them well. The loud-laughing Father Drossaerts, who later became Archbishop of San Antonio, the jovial Father Engerbrenk; the softly smiling Father Vande Ven, later Bishop of Alexandria, the gentle hearted Father Peters of St. Martinville, the gifted Father Vanderbilt of Delcambre, these were the most frequent visitors. They were known to Washingtonians as "The Flying Dutchmen," and their coming was the sign of music, singing, happy laughter and deep discussion, but above all it meant pleasure for



their beloved shepherd. Rose would polish up the tall steins; "Miss Fonsin" ignored the smoke from the long pipes, and a feeling of good fellowship pervaded the town, "for it's always good weather, when good fellows get together."

Those happy years passed all too soon, and in 1906 Father Teurlings was called to Lafayette, but his name, his teachings, and his ideals are still by-words in Washington. No one man has left so indelible a memory. It lives on, not only in the hundreds of Soileau, Deshotel, Roy, Stagg, Brignac and Fontenot children, who were christened "Teurlings," but also in the hearts of all who knew him. Time cannot dim his influence nor dull the realization that like St. Paul he "became all things to all men."

#### Background History of the Catholic Church in Lafayette

The establishment of a Catholic church in Lafayette dates back only to the year 1821, but the labors of missionary priests in the section began many years before when that great expanse of prairie, swampland and bayou country was known as "Les Attakapas."

The Post des Attakapas, the present St. Martinville, became the principal point of this region and a military post, under the French colonial officers and troops. As early as 1755, a Father Didier, stationed at Pointe Coupee, visited the region to give spiritual ministrations to the French who had settled there, and later Father Valentin, the Capuchin pastor of St. Francis of Natchitoches, also visited Les Attakapas.

It was not until the arrival of many Acadian settlers in 1765 that a resident priest was stationed there — Father Jean Francois, a French Capuchin. From that time on priests were stationed regularly at St. Martin's church of the Post of the Attakapas.

The first great missionary of this area was the famous, lovable and remarkable Father Miguel Bernard Barriere. A native of Bordeaux, France, Father Barriere left his country during the French Revolution and came to Baltimore, where he offered his services to Bishop Carroll.

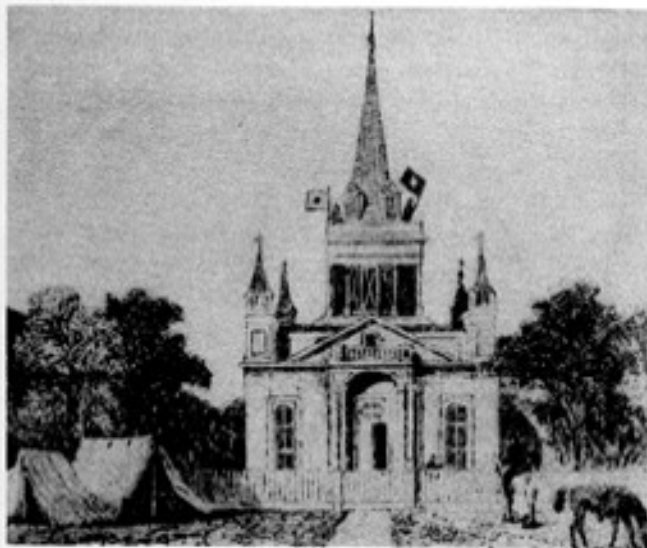
He made his way down the Ohio to Kentucky, and then to Louisiana where he took up his labors among the Acadians at Post des Attakapas. The date of this arrival has been recorded as March 8, 1795, and soon after he commenced the regular rounds of the extensive territory confided to his care.

He stopped at the homes of his parishioners, crossing the Vermillion bayou between Breaux Bridge and Carencro, and going south, re-crossed it a little south of the present site of Lafayette, whence he reached home over the Côté Gelee,

His customary stops included visits at about the present site of Carencro, at the homes of a Mrs. Arceneaux, or Pierre Hebert, Pierre Bernard, Francois Carmouche, Joseph Mire, Joseph Breaux, or the homes of Frederic Mouton, or farther south at Grand Prairie, the plantation of Jean Mouton, his brother Marin Mouton, or with Anselme Thibodeaux, Don Nicholas Rousseau, Joseph Hebert, Louis Trahan or Pierre Trahan. And still farther on down the Bayou he stopped at the home of a Mrs. Daygle, or the Landrys, while on the Côté Gelee he was the guest of Don Jean Baptiste Broussard, or Jean Baptiste Comeaux.

His successor in 1804 was Father Gabriel Isabey, a Dominican. However, Father Barriere remained in St. Martinville. In 1821, Bishop William Dubourg made his official visit to Grand Coteau and set up the limits of this parish, which had been established two years before. Vermilionville, the present Lafayette, was included in this territory, then under the care of Father Hercule Brassac.

It is recorded that on March 21, 1821, Jean Mouton, Sr., donated 5 acres of land in Grand Prairie, Vermilionville for a church and cemetery. This first church developed from a sugar mill, also donated by him. Picture I shows soldiers of the Civil War, under General Weitzel, camping around the church. The afore-mentioned Francois Carmouche was known to be one of the trustees of this first church property.



I

It is not certain whether the first church in Vermilionville was built under the administration of Father Isabey or Father Brassac, the structure was evidently built in the same year that the property was acquired for the notation "benediction de l'eglise

St. Jean de Vermilion" was discovered on some early papers, dated December 30, 1821.

Bishop Dubourg established the parish of St. John on May 15, 1822, and named Father Barriere the first resident pastor. Limits of the parish included all territory south of the present Southern Pacific line between the Vermilion Bayou on the east, and the Mermentau on the west.

Although he had been in semi-retirement, Father Barriere had continued his missionary work, and almost suffered martyrdom at the hands of Chitimacha Indians, but was saved by the arrival of the head of the tribe who extended personal protection for the missionary's safe return to his headquarters (then) at St. Martinville. Although details of this event were not recorded by Father Barriere, it was related to the late Rev. F. L. Gassler by an old Chitimacha woman of Charenton who was the daughter of Father Barriere's deliverer.

Father Barriere returned to France in 1824 and died there shortly after his arrival. His successor was not named for several months and occasional visits were made to Vermilionville by Father Francis Cellini, C.M., who was at Grand Coteau, Father Marcel Borella, who was Father Isabey's successor at St. Martinville, and Father Charles DelaCroix of St. Michael's, Louisiana.

The Reverend Lawrence Peyretti arrived in December, 1824. A native of Italy, he had been ordained in New Orleans by Bishop Dubourg. Shortly after his arrival the name of the town was changed to Lafayette. The town was growing rapidly, as evidenced by his reports to Bishop Dubourg. During his first year he reported only 42 Paschal confessions, but by 1825, with the Paschal season not yet over, he wrote that already he had heard 129 confessions.

It is interesting to note in this report that he also mentioned one of the things he had to contend with was "churchless marriages." "Over against 25 to 30 marriages that I perform in a year," he wrote Bishop Dubourg, "there are at least twelve before the Judge. It is true that the persons who do so have neither faith nor religion."

In 1840 Father Peyretti asked to be relieved of his assignment and the Rev. Peter Francis Beauprez, a Belgian by birth, was named third resident pastor of St. John's church. He remained only 18 months and was succeeded by Father Joseph Billon, another native of France. Father Billon's stay was brief and in 1842 the Reverend A. D. Megret was appointed pastor.

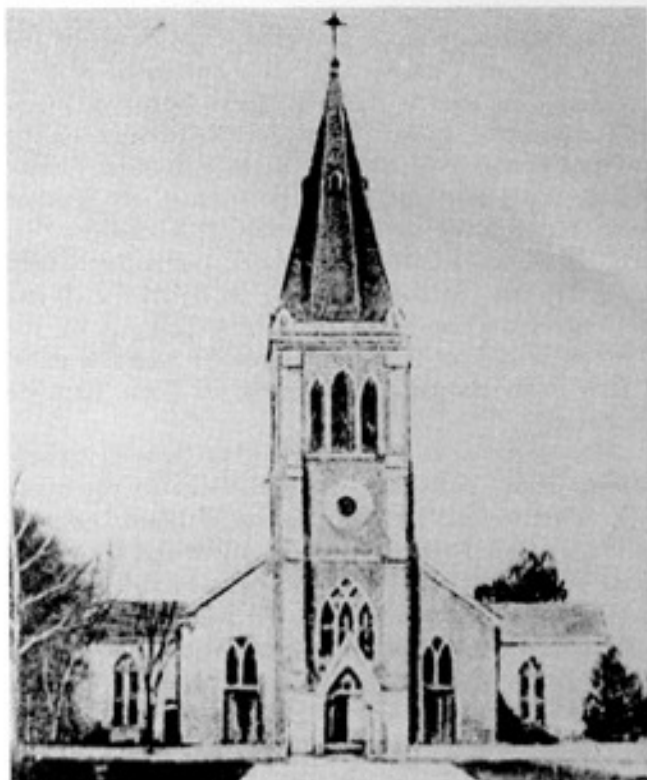
Father Megret stands out among these early pastors, not only in the number of years he devoted to work of the Church, but also his zeal in vindicating the rights of the Church. Among his many ac-

complishments, he introduced the Sisters of Mount Carmel to Lafayette in 1846, and also brought them to open a school in Abbeville.

He was founder of the church in Abbeville, and the name of the town is derived from his title. Abbe Megret died in 1853 of yellow fever.

After his death, the church was without a resident pastor for some time. The priests of Grand Coteau and St. Martinville again took care of the parish until May, 1854, when the Rev. Anthony de Chaignon, S.J., took charge. He remained until September, 1856 when the Rev. S. J. Foltier was appointed pastor. The Reverend G. Rouxel was named pastor in March, 1864. During his time it is recorded that lumber was purchased for a new church, and in 1869 the steeple was added. In 1871 a storm demolished the steeple. Father Rouxel, who remained until 1872, is best remembered as the Archbishop of New Orleans. He was consecrated in 1899. The Rev. H. Gonnellaz who had been assistant in Opelousas was appointed pastor in 1872. The Rev. E. Forge replaced him in 1881.

Father Forge enlarged the church, beautified it, installed electric lights and two stained glass windows. He rebuilt the steeple in 1877 at a cost of \$3000. The church now resembled a French village church. Father secured a new main altar which later was transferred to the Cathedral. A transept was added about this time to accommodate the growing Negro congregation. This remained standing until 1916 when St. Paul's was built. (See picture II)



## II

Father Forge received an assistant in the person of the Rev. J. B. Bollard, later pastor in Abbeville. The Reverend A. Charles, later pastor in Leonville, was assistant to Father Forge at his death in 1905. Father Charles administered the parish until the appointment of the Reverend William Joseph Teurlings in 1906.

### *Forty-Eight Years of Priestly Work in Lafayette*

The area which is now the Diocese of Lafayette was still a part of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, when Father Teurlings was appointed pastor of St. John's to fill the vacancy left by the death of Father Forge in 1906. This appointment had first gone to the Rev. A. Drossaerts, who had asked the Archbishop to revoke the appointment because of enfeebled health, the result of overwork. Father Teurlings was sent to Lafayette in his stead. Later Father Drossaerts became Bishop of the Diocese of San Antonio, Texas.

Father Teurlings was 34 years old when he assumed the pastorate of St. John's. Vigorous and more zealous than ever before, the splendid achievements that followed in his wake were true testimony of his deep and abiding interest in his chosen work.

At the time of his appointment, the city of Lafayette had a population of 8,000, and where the

magnificent Cathedral of St. John now stands, there was instead an old frame building.

Before him lay a great work — a work which when completed left an inspiring monument for all to see — the building of the Church of St. John the Evangelist. When finished it proved a proud landmark for all Catholics and a structure of beauty for all lovers of fine culture, no matter what their creed.

Other tasks however, first occupied the new young pastor. He undertook the leveling and beautifying of St. John's cemetery, at that time a dilapidated "field" badly in need of attention. Walks and aisles were created and by 1907 the cemetery was neatly groomed, becoming a clean and peaceful resting place for the Catholic dead of St. John's parish.

During his pastorate at the Cathedral Father Teurlings sponsored the organization of many groups which have accomplished much in the way of

furthering religious interest and civic good. Among these organizations, all formed in 1907, were: the Ushers' Society, Altar Society, Knights of Columbus, Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, Altar Boys' Society, and in 1908 the Apostleship of Prayer and Holy Name Society.

In 1909 the funds' campaign for the building of a new church was begun and the young pastor headed the committee working towards this great endeavor. But adverse conditions slowed the progress of the campaign. Crop failures and generally poor conditions handicapped the drive. But by 1910 plans for the new building had been completed.

Before actual work began on the new St. John's church, Father Teurlings opened his heart to the pleas of Negro Catholics of the city who had appealed to him for a church of their own. This first venture of a Negro church was a definite success and full cooperation was shown on all sides. As an example of the generous response to appeals, the sills of St. Paul's church were made of heavy railroad bridge lumber, donated by the superintendent of the Southern Pacific Railroads. And the people of St. John's offered to give the windows from their little church because they knew they were "going to have a new church anyway." It is interesting to note that the new St. John's was not completed until 1916, leaving the old church with battens on the windows for about four years! (See picture III)



### III

Archbishop Blenk of New Orleans blessed the new Church of St. Paul in 1912, and Father Teurlings conducted services there for two years when the Holy Ghost Fathers took charge. At that time it was considered the second largest Negro parish in the United States.

Meanwhile the foundations had been laid for the new Church of St. John the Evangelist. An outstanding architect, A. Cousin, whom Father Teurlings knew casually in Europe, drew the structure plans according to ideas given by Father Teurlings.

Eugene Guillot of New Iberia assisted Father in outlining the plans.

The parishioners were enthusiastic about the building of the new church and cooperation was evident as the file of wagons wound through the streets hauling material to the church grounds. This hauling was volunteer work provided by farmers of the parish for money was not plentiful and strict economy was necessary. (See picture III. This is the old St. John's while the present church was in the process of being built. The steeple, picture II, had been taken down a few years previously because woodpeckers had weakened it so much it had become a danger.)

There was no overhead expense as Father Teurlings supervised the entire construction of the edifice. On November 21, 1913 the cornerstone was laid by Archbishop Blenk. The church was completed in 1916.

In 1918 the Diocese of Lafayette (which up to this time was a part of the Archdiocese of New Orleans) was formed. It included and remains the same to this day the thirteen civil parishes in the southwestern part of the state. The church of St. John the Evangelist became the Cathedral of St. John with Most Reverend Jules B. Jeanmard, the first Bishop of the newly formed Diocese of Lafayette.

This church is recognized as one of the most beautiful in Louisiana. Worthy of note is the pipe organ which Father Teurlings obtained as a donation from the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 1920. The stained glass windows were installed in 1921. They depict the life of St. John the Evangelist. Father Bede, O.S.B., an art critic, assisted Father Teurlings in his choice.

Although the building of the Cathedral was an outstanding event in the life of Father Teurlings, it would not overshadow the good he had already accomplished or the splendid works which followed in the wake of his influence.

His deep interest in Catholic education was made manifest in 1919 when he invited the Brothers of the Christian Schools to open a boys' school in the parish. They first occupied the old Gerac home, bought a few years earlier by Father Teurlings. This home was located where the Bishop's home now stands. The new school was dedicated in 1923 and called Cathedral High.

In 1919, on the occasion of the silver jubilee of his ordination, the young priest was honored with the title of Canon of the Cathedral.

In 1923, when the Sisters of Mount Carmel planned their new school building, Father Teurlings made an outright donation of \$15,000 in the name of

the congregation. He added this amount to the debt of the church.

Almost from his earliest years in Lafayette, Father Teurlings had realized the need of an additional church on the north side of the city, but the building did not begin to materialize until 1923. A substantial sum was donated by Henry Lastrapes to start the building and St. Genevieve's was blessed on June 25, 1925. At this time Father Teurlings became a domestic prelate with the title Right Reverend Monsignor. The honor was bestowed by Pope Pius XI. As a chapel, St. Genevieve's church was attended by assistant pastors of the Cathedral.

In 1929 Monsignor Teurlings asked to be relieved of his manifold duties in Cathedral parish and be assigned to St. Genevieve's church as pastor. There he continues his labors with the result that this parish has also grown and prospered under his fatherly care. In 1938 the debts on the church were completely paid and it was enlarged to its present dimensions. During that same year a plot for a cemetery was purchased on the Breaux Bridge highway. It has been artistically landscaped and serves Catholics of the north side of the city.

Church organizations play an important role in the life of a parish. One of the first to be activated at the new chapel, even before it became a parish, was the Ladies Altar Society in 1925.

Another, the Children of Mary sodality, was begun in 1927 with a nucleus of members who had belonged to the Sodality at St. John's Church.

In 1929, along with the establishment of St. Genevieve's as an independent parish, an Usher's Society and a Holy Name society was organized.

In January, 1949, Knights of Columbus Council Number 3202 was chartered, and in June, 1951, Court Alice Boucher of the Catholic Daughters was established. A Confraternity of Christian Doctrine unit was organized in 1954. There are also Junior

Catholic Daughters, Columbian Squires, Knights of the Altar, Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops organized for the young people of the parish.

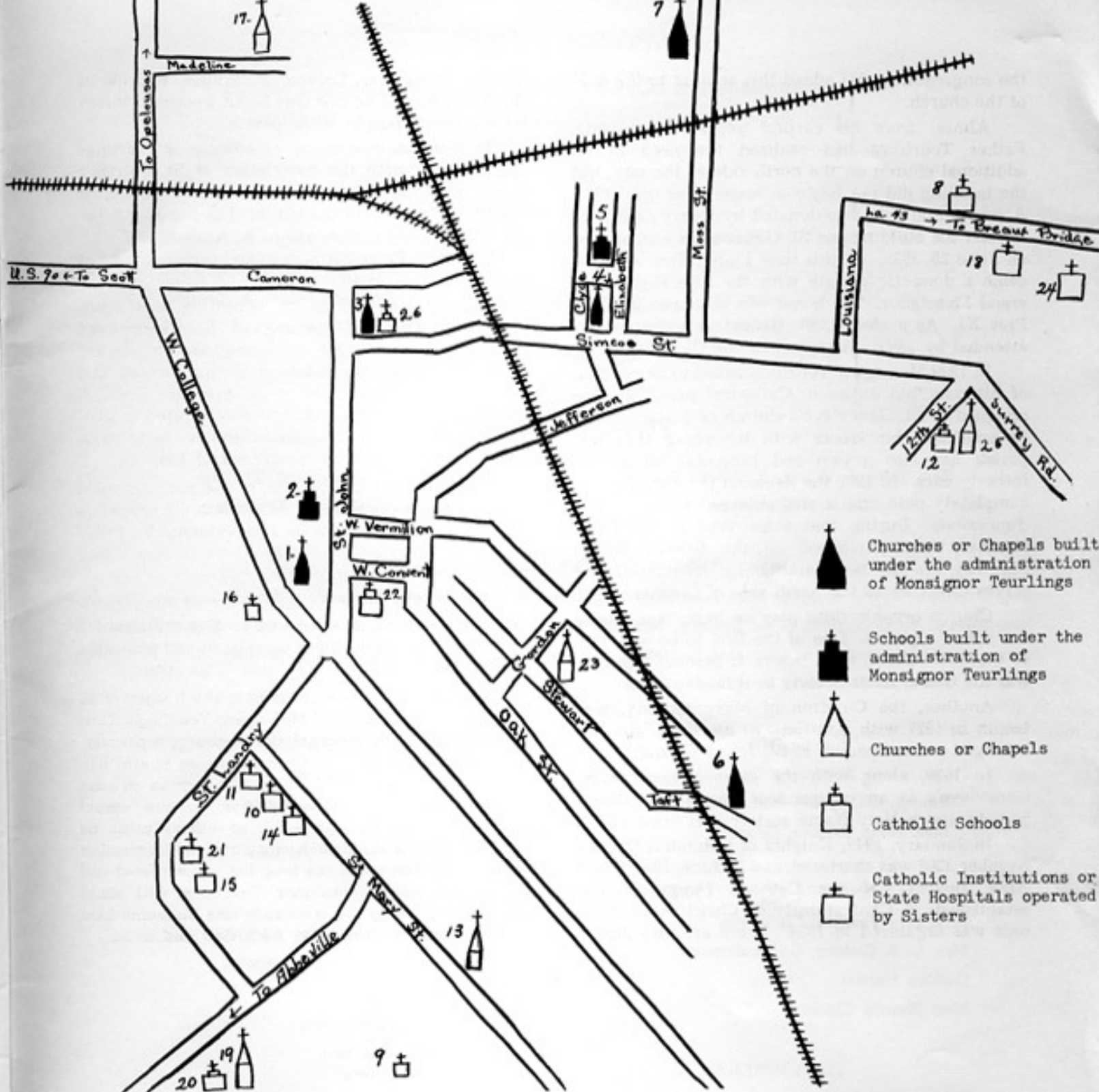
In 1946, another dream of Monsignor Teurlings was fulfilled with the completion of St. Patrick's chapel on Guidry and Forest streets. This section has grown rapidly to the extent that the chapel became an independent parish in November, 1952 with the Reverend Peter Blom, who had been assistant at St. Genevieve's, as first pastor.

Monsignor's interest in education was again evidenced with his opening of St. Genevieve's Catholic school in 1945, a three-grade elementary school, staffed by the Sisters of Mount Carmel. The Divine Providence order took over in 1950. A splendid new school building was completed in 1951. This new building takes care of grades one through eight and has a present enrollment of 456.

Meanwhile St. Genevieve's parish had continued to grow and the necessity for a Catholic chapel in the Moss Extension area became evident. To fulfill this need, Monsignor built St. Leo's Chapel which was blessed in December, 1951.

And in 1953 under the supervision of this zealous, untiring shepherd, a modern up to date cafeteria for St. Genevieve's School was completed and dedicated to Msgr. Teurlings who officiated at its opening.

Such in summary retrospect is the history of 60 years of the priesthood of Monsignor Teurlings. Thus in rough sketch is pictured the statue of a pioneer-priest of the South, the vigor of whose youth, like the strength of whose advanced age, carries an aura of amazement and wonder even to the casual observer. Certainly the work of others must be recorded for the annals of history and the inspiration of posterity; but when the long list is completed and the praises sung, Monsignor Teurlings will stand like a giant among the multitude and his name held in honor and in blessing by both God and man.



**PARISH CHURCHES**

- 1 Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
- 25 Immaculate Heart of Mary Church
- 19 Our Lady of Fatima Church
- 13 Our Lady of Wisdom Church
- 4 St. Genevieve Church
- 5 St. Patrick's Church
- 3 St. Paul's Church

**CHAPELS**

- 23 Our Lady of Good Hope Chapel
- 17 St. Anthony's Chapel
- 7 St. Leo's Chapel

**INSTITUTIONS**

- 24 De La Salle Normal (Brothers of the Christian Schools)
- 18 Immaculata Seminary (Marist Fathers)
- 16 Monastery of Our Mother of Grace (Discalced Carmelite Nuns)
- 9 Monastery of the Assumption (Recluse Missionaries de Jesus-Marie)
- 10 Most Holy Sacrament Convent (Sisters of the Most Holy Sacrament)
- 21 Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital (Franciscan Sisters of Calais)
- 11 St. Mary's Home (Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word)

**STATE HOSPITALS**

- Operated by Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul
- 14 Lafayette Charity Hospital
  - 15 Tuberculosis Annex

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

- 2 Cathedral High School
- 8 Holy Rosary Institute
- 12 Immaculate Heart of Mary School
- 22 Mount Carmel High School
- 20 Our Lady of Fatima School
- 5 St. Genevieve School
- 26 St. Paul's School

Names in bold lettering represent churches, chapels, or schools built under the administration of Monsignor Teurlings.



# *Diocesan Committee*

Most Reverend Jules B. Jeanmard, Bishop of Lafayette, Honorary Chairman

Most Reverend Maurice Schexnayder, Auxiliary Bishop, Chairman

## MEMBERS

Rt. Rev. Msgr. J. Vigliero, P.A.

Rt. Rev. Msgr. J. M. Bourgeois

Rt. Rev. Msgr. L. Boudreaux

Rt. Rev. Msgr. P. Fusilier

Rt. Rev. Msgr. A. Isenberg

Rt. Rev. Msgr. A. Martel

Rt. Rev. Msgr. A. Bacque



# *Parish Committee*

Rev. John J. Windt, Assistant Pastor

General Chairman

J. R. Jeanmard, Trustee

J. P. Gerami, Trustee

## MEMBERS

Roy Carricut, Grand Knight. Miss Inez Neyland, Grand Regent. Harold Calais, President Ushers Society. Mrs. Rex Olivier, St. Genevieve Altar Society. Mrs. W. W. DeValcourt, St. Leo's Altar Society. Biggy Dupuis, St. Genevieve Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. J. J. Babineaux, St. Leo's Holy Name Society. J. R. Robicheaux and L. J. Dore, St. Genevieve Progressive Club.

## CHOIR

Immaculata Seminary

Rev. E. O'Connell, S.M., Director

Mrs. Elmo Trahan, Organist

## CHURCH DECORATING COMMITTEE

Mrs. Rex Olivier, Chairman

Mrs. Paul Broussard, Co-Chairman

Ladies of the Altar Societies  
of St. Genevieve and St. Leo

## BANQUET COMMITTEE

Mrs. Ray Theaux, Chairman

Mrs. L. B. Guidry, Co-Chairman

Dudley Hebert

Mrs. Harold Chiasson

## COMMITTEE FOR PARISH HALL ARRANGEMENTS

Earl Foco, Chairman

Harold Calais, Co-Chairman

Knights of Columbus and  
Catholic Daughters  
of St. Genevieve

## TREASURERS

Wesley Delahoussaye

Ernest Jeanmard

Joe E. Robicheaux

Special Printing: Dan J. Boudreaux



# *Jubilee Book Committee*

Very Rev. Msgr. Ignatius A. Martin  
Chairman

Miss Inez Neyland

Miss Kathleen Toups