

Sts Peter and Paul Catholic Church

*322 Seventh Street
Boonville, MO 65233*

Phone: 660/882-6468

*Pastor:
Fr. Patrick Dolan*

*Deacon:
Dave Miller*

*Parish Council President:
Lillian Hill*

*Weekend Mass Schedule
Saturday: 5:30 p.m.
Sunday: 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.*

Township: T-49-N
Range: R-17-W
Section: 35
Map: [Click Here](#)

Organized: 1851
Disbanded: No
Active: Yes
Updated: July 19, 2005

Cemetery: There is a cemetery associated with this church, but located some distance away.

Area: Boonville, Missouri

Records: These church records were microfilm in the late 1950s by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

History:



Photograph (1871) from Historic American Building Survey - Library of Congress



Current Church Photograph Courtesy of H. Stone

St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church

From "History of Howard and Cooper Counties Missouri", 1883

Catholic Churches-The Catholics commenced the erection of a church edifice at Boonville, in 1859. The building cost about \$10,000; with the addition which is being now built, together with parsonage and school building, the probable cost will approximate \$25,000.

The first pastor was Father George Turk, who came in 1851, and preached, and administered the sacrament of baptism. He was succeeded by Joseph Meister, Bernard Hiller, Henry Muers and John A. Hoffman -Father Hoffman coming from St. Louis, in April, 1875. The church has a membership of about one hundred families. There is a school in connection with the church, which has an average of one hundred pupils and three teachers.

St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church
From "History of Cooper County Missouri" by W. F. Johnson, 1919

St. Peter's and Paul's Parish, Boonville - Before 1850 Boonville was visited by Fr. Helias S. J. of Taos, and from Jefferson City. Rev. George Tuerk's name appears on the baptismal register from Nov. 1, 1850 to Oct. 11, 1851. Rev. U. Joseph Moister attended Boonville from Oct. 27, 1857 to July 3, 1856. He attended quite a number of places: Pilot Grove, Moniteau (Cedron) Brunswick, St. Andrews (Tipton), Glasgow, Fayette, Franklin, Round-Hill, Saline County, Chariton County, Pisgah, Boonsborough. Father Moister purchased the present church site July 22, 1856. Rev. B. Hillner took charge and may be considered the first priest permanently located at Boonville. He remained until April 18, 1869. He built a brick church and erected a small school building. He also visited Cedron, Glasgow, Cambridge and Brunswick.

Rev. Henry Meurs was in charge from May 16, 1869 to April 24, 1875. He built a two story rectory.

Rev. John A. Hoffman was in charge from May 15, 1875 to January 7, 1885. He built a transient, sanctuary and sacristies as an addition to the church at an expense of \$5,000. He took a great interest in the Catholic school and made the one story building of Fr. Hillner two stories, the upper story containing the living rooms of the sisters, and the first story having two school rooms. Rev. L. M. Porta had charge from Jan. 1885, to Aug. 17, 1895.

Rev. Theodore Kussman took charge Aug. 17, 1885, and still remains (1917). He was born in Germany, Jan. 19, 1843, and came with his parents to St. Louis in the fall of 1847. There he attended the Holy Trinity parochial school. He attended the Christian Brothers School 7th and Cherry and St. Francis Seminary near Milwaukee. After studying philosophy and theology at Cape Girardeau, he was ordained there by Archbishop Kenrick, May 27, 1866. Two years after his appointment to Boonville, he was made irremovable rector and has been in charge now over thirty-one years. Various improvements were made during his stay, the most important being the building of the new church, and putting an addition to the rectory, making it double the previous size. March 2, 1890, the old church caught fire and was damaged \$2,125. The old church was torn down. A new part with tower and side turrets, was erected and connected with Fr. Hoffmans transient, sanctuary and sacristies, at the expense of \$11,200.

May 27, 1916, Rev. Theodore Kussman celebrated his golden jubilee in the presence of a large gathering. Rt. Rev. Thomas F. Lillis and thirty priests honored the occasion with their presence. For the last seven years the parish school has been free. Since Sept. 1, 1913, Boonville has had as assistant priests Revs. P. J. Downey, F. S. MacCardle, F. J. Donovan, and P. J. Kennedy.

The societies are B. V. M. Sodality, St. Anne's Society, St. V. St. Paul's Society, Extension' Society, Propagation of the Faith, and Knights of Columbus, with a membership of 91.

The Benedictine Sisters have been here eleven years, conducting a private hospital for Dr. C. H. Van Ravensway.

The parish numbers about 500 souls, and has 65 pupils in the Parochial school.

Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church
From "Memorabilia of Cooper County", 1990

Early records of Ss. Peter & Paul Catholic Church indicate that as early as 1830, Jesuit priests came up the Missouri river from St. Louis to celebrate Mass for Catholics in the small settlement of Boonville. In writings of Fr. Helias, Apostle of Central Missouri, we find that he listed the homes of Anthony Fox and John Foy, in Boonville, as well as the Hilden home, in which he celebrated Mass.

Earliest parishioners were German immigrants, evidenced by names, Weber, Stretz, Klein, Young, Esser, Bechtold, Oswald, Miller, Schuster, Sombart, Gross, Hilden, Hoff, Vollmer, Lauer, Klenklen, and Whitehorse. Descendants with these names are still on the parish roll.

The parish has been in the St. Louis Diocese, the Kansas City Diocese, and now is in the Diocese of Jefferson City. Priests who have served the parish include Fr. Ferdinand Helias, Fr. Murphy, Fr. George Tuerk, Fr. Joseph Meister, Fr. B. Hillner, Fr. Henry Meura, Fr. John Hoffman, Fr. L.M. Ports, Fr. C. Kemme, Fr. Theo Kussmann, Fr. F.X. Jennings, Fr. P. Downey, Fr. L.J. Herzog, Fr. F. Hagedorn, Fr. F. McCardle, Fr. P. Donovan, Fr. F. Kennedy, Fr. P. Donahue, Fr. F. Biter, Msgr. William Roels, Fr. John Baskett, Fr. W. Conrad, Fr. V.A. Schroeger, Fr. Henry Schilling, Fr. E.J. Hayes, Fr. J. Hens, Fr. J. Nolan, Fr. S. O'Connell, R. Francis Whalen, Fr. Donald Paa, Fr. Clem Ilmberger, Fr. Leonard Misey, Fr. Fred Barnett, Msgr. Harold Beeler, Fr. Lawrence McNamara (later, Bishop), Fr. William Savage, Fr. Sean Smyth, Msgr. John Dreisoerner, Fr. Jim Fueemler, Fr. Kevin Gormley, Fr. Don Lammers, Fr. Edwin Schmidt, Fr. Domingo Gonzalez, Fr. Kenneth Brockel, Fr. Mel Lahr, Fr. John Condit, Fr. Don Antweiler, Fr. Tom McGrath, Fr. Rob Fields, Fr. Gerald Howard, Fr. Richard Cronin, Fr. Flanagan, Fr. Tom Waikmann, Fr. Eric Schlachter. Present pastors are Fr. Jerry Kaimann and Fr. John Henderson.

The first baptism recorded for the parish was that of John Wessing, in 1850. The first marriage recorded in English was that of Viet Eppstein and Fanny Fuchs, Nov. 20, 1851. Earlier marriages were recorded in German. No records of marriages occur during the War Between the States. The first wedding after the War Between the States was in 1867, uniting Maria Nagel and Gregory Klenklen.

The original church edifice was at the rear of the present convent. Built in 1834, it was shared by both Protestant and Catholic families, for some years. A new church was built in 1851, and after a fire in 1890, a new nave and a new part with tower and side turrets was erected and connected with the original transept, sanctuary, and sacristies. The present church was erected in 1973 under the administration of Msgr. John Dreisoerner.

In 1875 a two-story brick rectory was built under the direction of Fr. Henry Meurs. A new rectory was built in 1954 while Msgr. Harold Beeler was pastor. A parish school was established in 1910, being administered by the Sisters of St. Francis of Milwaukee. Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kansas, assumed direction of the school in 1925. At that time a new school was built on the site of the old Gantner home, on Seventh Street and an extension of Vine Street. The high school opened in 1925; four years later six young people composed the first graduating class from Boonville Catholic High School. Since 1954, lay teachers have taught with Sisters at the school. The first five lay teachers were Coach Harry Stretz, Mary Louise Schwartz, Jeanne Brunda, Mary McShane Gilson, and Dorothy Brownsberger. In 1969, the high school was disbanded, and since 1972, only eight grades and kindergarten have been taught. Presently two Sisters also serve the parish and school.

The parish presently serves around 600 families, having absorbed neighboring parishes of St. Martin's, Chouteau Springs, and Sacred Heart, New Franklin, through the years.

Parish organizations include a Parish Council, Board of Education, PTA, Knights of Columbus, Knights of Columbus Auxiliary, Daughters of Isabella, and other church related Commissions. Vocations from this parish include Fr. Paul Hartley, Sr. Neria Gross, Sister Ann Brummel of Sisters of St. Joseph, Concordia, Kansas. Father Gary Young, C.R., is a graduate of St. Peter & Paul Catholic high school. The two Permanent Deacons of the parish are Mr. John Tebbe and Mr. Paul Herman.

by Jeanne Brunda

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