

## DEDICATION OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH



### The Second Church and First School

Lancaster, Nov., 1840 - The frame church, which was erected upwards of twenty years past for the use of the Catholic Congregation of Lancaster, having been inconveniently situated, as well as too small to accommodate the constantly increasing members of our holy faith, it became necessary to construct a larger and more substantial building, on a more eligible site. This pious undertaking was commenced about two years ago, on a lot purchased for four hundred dollars (yet to be paid) from Mr. Michael Garaghty. This lot is 80 by 160 feet - the building, of brick, is 30 by 45, being at an elevation of 35 feet, (including an excellent basement) from the ground to the top of the walls. Besides the organ loft, there is a gallery, extending along the sidewalls of the church to within a few feet of the Railing of the Sanctuary and capable of containing several hundreds of persons. The entire cost of the church when completed will not, it is estimated, fall short of nine thousand dollars. Of these one thousand has been already paid by the bishop; \$250, each, by three

liberal citizens, and smaller sums, but fully equal to their means, in these hard times, have been subscribed by other friends of Religion, leaving the church still heavily in debt.

Notwithstanding these pecuniary difficulties, it was judged advisable to open the church for divine worship before the commencement of winter and it was accordingly dedicated on last Sunday [November 15, 1840], by the bishop, with the usual ceremonies of the Roman Ritual, for the blessing of Churches.

The High Mass was sung by Rev. N. D. Young, O. P. The Bishop preached after the Gospel and Very Rev. Mr. Henni, at the end of Mass, addressed the German population in his usual graceful, impressive and eloquent manner. The day was inclement, but the church was crowded, and a more orderly and respectful audience we do not remember to have seen on any similar occasion. There were several first communicants at the

morning sacrifice, and seventy five persons, of whom twelve were converts, were confirmed in the afternoon, after discourses in German and English, by the Bishop and Very Rev. Mr. Henni. The choir was very effective and occasionally powerful, reflecting much credit on the musical talent of Lancaster and evincing zeal, assiduity and success with which repeated rehearsals had been attended by all the members.

In this congregation there are upwards of three hundred Easter communicants, most of whom receive frequently throughout the year, the Bread of Life; and there have been sixteen Marriages and one hundred and twenty-two Baptisms since the 8th Nov. 1839. The congregation is much indebted to the "Ladies' Catholic Sewing Society" which has been zealously engaged for many months in preparing Fancy Articles for a Fair, the proceeds of which were to be applied towards the liquidation of the debts. The Town Hall was tastefully decorated, for the holding of this Fair, with evergreens and beautiful flowers, and an array of all religious denominations who kindly united with their Catholic friends in rendering this grateful homage to the Almighty One. The citizens very generally patronized this amiable and ingenious effort to

obtain aid for the Holy Place and we believe that the young Ladies who presided last evening (9th Nov.) at the respective Tables, were well pleased with the influence exerted on the approbatory feelings and the purses of the Visitors. We took occasion to look at the Fair Scene and though fairly taxed at the "Post Office," the "Ice Cream" and the "variety" counters, were exceedingly edified at the exhibition.

It may not be uninteresting to observe in conclusion, that of the two most aged and faithful members of the congregation, one a German, Mr. Shactzle, who had longed to live only to see the completion of the "House of God," at which he daily toiled, witnessed its dedication from the Temple not made with hands, in Heaven, to which all justly believed, he had sped but a few days previously for a better - "a very great reward;" and the other, a true old Maryland Catholic, Mr. Lilly, Agent for your paper, unable, from infirmity, to attend. May such examples never be forgotten by the churches. And may the more youthful members of the congregation continue, as the light of a bright and faultless example thus bequeathed to them by the aged.