



St. Columbanus Church

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122 OREGON ROAD CORTLANDT MANOR, NY

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The history of Saint Columbanus Parish.

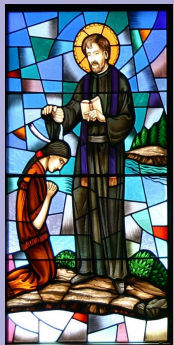
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The history of Saint Columbanus.



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The history of the Church of the North American Martyrs and Saint Isaac Jogues.



The History of St. Columbanus Parish

St. Columbanus Church was dedicated on October 30, 1966 by His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman. In so doing, Cardinal Spellman must have felt a deep sense of spiritual satisfaction, for it was he who had planted the seed for the St. Columbanus Church 16 years earlier.

The history of St. Columbanus Parish, up to the dedication of the new church, is the history of four dedicated servants of God who as pastors served a vital need as spiritual architects in both the building of souls and a house in which to worship God. All of this started on June 27, 1950 when the Rev. James J. Weber was notified that he was to establish a new parish in Van Cortlandtville, in the town of Cortlandt, north of Peekskill. The name of the parish was to be St. Columbanus and there were to be missions in Lake Peekskill and Lake Oscawana. Until that time, the two missions had been in the Yorktown Parish.

Father Weber was appointed to take charge of St. Columbanus Church and its Missions effective as of July 8, 1950. The church, then called St. Columbanus Chapel, was situated in the old Donnelly house at 123 Oregon Road. Father Weber moved into the building to be on hand during construction operations. With winter approaching and the walls of the old building partially dismantled, Father Weber accepted an invitation to stay with Mr. and Mrs. Emit Wahl at Lake Peekskill.

When the first Mass was celebrated on Ash Wednesday, February 7, 1951 the parish included about 200 Catholic families and extended from Bear Mountain Parkway to the north end of Lake Oscawana. A distance of over 12 miles. It became evident that the mission churches of the North American Martyrs, at Lake Peekskill, and St. Paul's Chapel at Lake Oscawana, were a necessary part of the spreading the parish. St. Columbanus Chapel was formally dedicated on October 27, 1951 by his eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman. Since 1966, when the new St. Columbanus Church was opened, St. Paul's Chapel has been closed and the property sold.



St. Columbanus Church

Father Weber's plans were ambitious from the start. He realized the spiritual needs of the children of the parish had to be met. St. Columbanus School was one of his dreams and within five years he was able to announce a fund-raising campaign for this project. In 1956, under the guidance of Father Coleman as campaign moderator, volunteer workers conducted a door-to-door campaign, aided by appeals and earnest work on the part of the clergy. Initially, the campaign goal was set for \$100,000.

Ground-breaking ceremonies in December, 1956, were attended by about 300 persons. The design called for eight classrooms, a kindergarten, a principal's office, a nurses room, a kitchen, storage facilities and the bookstore. To provide more ample facilities for Masses and other religious services, an all purpose Auditorium was included in the plans. It was to seat 400 and include a sacristy, confessionals, and a stage. Space at the rear of the school was available for parking and a play area. The school actually cost \$385,000. The school was formally blessed and dedicated by his eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman on June 14th, 1958 and it was on this day that Father Weber was elevated to the rank of Right Reverend Monsignor.

At once, upon coming to St. Columbanus, Father Hannafin made the completion of the new church's his first concern. It was under his direction that the various steps were taken leading to the day of dedication. The cornerstone was solemnly blessed and laid by His Excellency the Bishop Edward Dargin on April 28, 1966 and was Bishop Dargin who returned on June 27, 1966 for the consecration of the main altar. These two milestones passed, Father Hannafin saw the fruition of the long-standing plans which reached their culmination on Sunday, October 30, 1966 when the church itself was solemnly dedicated by His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman.



Saint Columbanus

Saint Columbanus

Feast Day: November 23rd

Patron Of: Motorcyclists, Against Floods

Columbanus was born in 543 at West Leinster, Ireland.

He studied Scripture extensively and wrote a commentary on the Psalms. In the middle age, Columbanus felt a call to missionary life. He travelled to Scotland, England, and then to France in 585.

Columbanus, to find solitude in prayer, often lived for long periods in a cave seven miles from the monastery, using a messenger to stay in touch with his brothers.

Problems arose early in the 7th Century. Many Frankish bishops objected to a foreign missionary with so much influence, to the Celtic practices he brought, especially those related to Easter, and his independence from them.

In 602 he was summoned to appear before them for judgment, instead of

appearing, he sent a letter advising them to hold more synods and to concern themselves with more important things that which rite he used to celebrate Easter. The dispute over Easter



continued for years, with Columbanus appealing to multiple popes for help, but was only settled when Columbanus abandoned the Celtic calendar when he moved to Italy.

Columbanus always enjoyed being in forests and caves, and as he walked through the woods birds and squirrels would ride on his shoulders. Toward the end of his life came word that his old enemies were dead and his brothers wanted him to come back north, but he declined. Knowing that his time was almost done, he retired to a cave for solitude and died as he had predicted. His influence continued for centuries as those he converted handed on the faith, the brothers he taught evangelized untold numbers more and his brother monks founded over one hundred monasteries to protect the learning and spread the faith. He died November 21, 615 in a cave in Bobbio, Italy of natural causes.



The North American Martyrs

SAINTS ISAAC JOGUES JOHN DE BREBEUF, PRIESTS, MARTYRS and COMPANIONS

Feast Day: October 19

Saints Isaac Jogues, Johns de Brebeuf, Charles Garnier, Anthony Daniel, Gabriel Lallemand, Noel Chabanel, John de Lalande and Rene Goupil, French Jesuits, were among the missionaries to preach the gospel to the Huron and Iroquois Indians in the United States and Canada. They were martyred by the Iroquois Indians in the years 1642, 1648 and 1649. Pope Pius XI beautified them on June 21, 1925, and 1930 they were canonized by the same Pope.

St. Isaac Jogues, in particular,

is outstanding. In the course of his labors preaching the Gospel to the Mohawks in Canada, he penetrated to the eastern entrance of Lake Superior, 1000 miles inland and became the first European to do so. In 1642, he was taken captive by the Iroquois and imprisoned for 13 months. During this time, he underwent cruel tortures and ultimately lost the use of his hands. After being rescued by the Dutch, he returned to Canada two years later and, in 1646, he visited Auriesville, New York, to negotiate peace with the Iroquois. He is said to

be the first Catholic priest to have set foot on Manhattan Island.

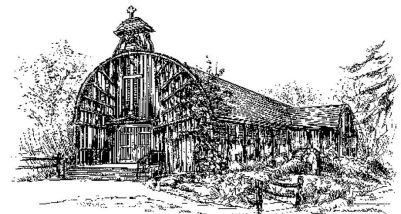
On a third visit to the Iroquois, the Bear clan, which believed that he was a sorcerer, blamed him for an outbreak of sickness and the failure of their crops. Accordingly, in 1647, he was seized, tortured and beheaded.

When he was 17 Isaac Jogues had expressed a desire to be a missionary. After his ordination he was told: "You will go to the New France to die."

The History of The Indian Church

Founded in 1937 as part of Saint Patrick's Parish, Yorktown, the Church of the North American Martyrs became a Mission of St. Columbanus Church when St. Columbanus Parish was founded in 1950. Father Patrick O'Leary, of Yorktown Heights, later elevated to the rank of Monsignor, was a last guiding spirit in the construction of the Church of North American Martyrs. The building was patterned after a typical meeting house of the Five Nations Tribes. The design of the Church was inspired from the records of The Life of Isaac Jogues by Francis Talbot, S.J. The Church of the North American Martyrs, or Indian Church, reflects the influence of Christian culture upon the Indian tribes. The architecture and the architectural appointments are all symbolic of an era of transition and a gradual infusion of ideas and practices of Christian civilization built into the form or style to which the Indians were accustomed.

St. Paul's Chapel, at Lake Oscawana, was named a Mission of St. Columbanus Church when St. Columbanus Parish was formed in 1950. Priests from St. Columbanus served it when it was open for two months each summer. It was permanently closed in July 1966. It would be impossible for the pastor and one assistant to offer the number of Masses required to fill the spiritual needs of the parish. It is only possible through the assistance of the good Friars from Graymoor. This long-standing warm relationship is part of spiritual growth of St. Columbanus.



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