

**MR. AND MRS. DALE OSTRANDER, 56**, a foreman on a construction crew; his wife is the former Sally Alatalo, 54. The couple make their home on West Battle Lake.

**LUCILLE LINDBERG, 20**, former Lucille Barker, married to Gerald Lindberg (Catholic). They have two children, They live in Henning.

**LAWRENCE IRISH, 43**, married to Juanita Rehm (Catholic). They have two children. Live 9 miles SE of Henning. Lawrence works for the Otter Tail County Highway department.

**LEROY LANG, 55**, works for the Pittsburgh Steamship Co., U.S. Steel. He is married and he and his wife (Catholic) have three children at home with them. They live about five miles west of Henning.

**WILLIAM CHRISTENSEN, 27**, is farming and doing a great deal of construction work. He and his wife (Catholic) have three children and live twelve miles west of Henning.

**LEONA CHRISTENSEN, 35**, lives with her father (non-Catholic) and mother (Catholic) three miles from Henning. They are farming.

**FATHER DONNAY** has been pastor of the Henning parish since November, 1961. During that period he has brought eleven converts into the Church. Previously he served as pastor of St. Joseph's parish, Clarissa, Sacred Heart parish, Dent, and founding pastor of St. Isidore's parish, Moran. While in Moran the new church was built under his supervision.

St. Edward's parish was founded as a permanent mission of St. Joseph's parish, Bertha, in 1948 during the pastorate of Father Leo Brandl. Previously the Catholic people of this area were served by St. Ann's parish, Wadena.

Father Alfred Heltemes was appointed first resident pastor of the parish in 1958. The present parish church was a former Lutheran church moved to its present site in 1949 to serve as the Catholic church.

At the present time the parish has approximately 55 families. Reflecting the growth of Catholicism in the western area of the Diocese, St. Edward's parish has 45 pre-school age children, 50 school age children.

During the summer months the parish is frequented by many tourists in the area. This necessitated the beginnings of three Masses every Sunday. The hour of Sunday Masses during the summer months, beginning the first Sunday of June are: 8:00, 9:00 and 10:00 a.m.

Henning, a community of 1,100 people is located on highway 210 in Ottertail county. The closest Catholic church is 17 miles away. The neighboring parishes are Bertha, Wadena, Parkers Prairie and Urbank.

## CONTINUED GROWTH

By the year 1972, the Church of St. Edward found we had outgrown our place of worship again. Back in 1949 when we outgrew our quarters, we bought a Lutheran church. On June 2, 1972, we bought another Lutheran church. This one didn't have to be moved! Trinity Lutheran and United Lutheran were consolidating, so the Trinity Lutheran church was up for sale. We bought it from the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd for \$3,000. (Rev. Darrell Vetter was pastor of both Lutheran churches at the time.)

The church was remodeled under the supervision of our pastor Fr. Gordon Lentfoehr. The back altar was removed and the main altar was turned to face the congregation. The walls were painted and paneled, and kneelers were added.

**COMING DOWN:** The old St. Edward's Catholic church in Henning (at right), abandoned since last spring, is being dismantled, board by board, for salvage. The church is completely gutted with only the shell remaining to be taken down. The toughest job so far was pulling down the steeple, which was done just after this picture was taken. According to one member of the wrecking crew, it took many tugs on a cable before the steeple would break loose. When it toppled, it came down top first and buried the point several feet into the ground. According to the Rev. Gordon Lentfoehr, the building was moved here from the Bertha area in 1949. Seating capacity was about 120. St. Edward's has since outgrown the building and last spring the congregation purchased their present building, seating 200. They bought the former Trinity Church from the Good Shepherd Lutheran congregation. Leroy Wegscheid and his crew are removing the building.



## OTHER FIRSTS

On January 17, 1978, a formal corporation meeting was held and it was decided that a parish council would be formed. The first elected council members for St. Edward's were the following:

William Christensen, president; Lawrence Irish, vice president; Bernal Cichy, Herb Waskosky and Marvin Bellmore, parish affairs committee; Verna Lindberg and Gene Joerger, education committee; and Lois Soutor, secretary. William Christensen and Bernal Cichy were appointed as the legal parish trustees, replacing Clarence Cichy and Harold Pikal.

The current parish council members are Duane Olson, Tom Campbell (secretary), Bernal Cichy (president), Hedy Moe, Dennis Hansen, Orville Jensen, Robert Malecha (vice-president), Stephen Hendricks, and Dick Trana. The trustees are Bernal Cichy and Robert Malecha.

The initial communion class was held June 9, 1949 with seven children.

The latest first communion class consisted of Jillian Klemek, Jesse Manning, and Naomi Swanberg.

The first confirmation class consisted of 37 children and adults. The confirmation was conducted and administered by the Most Rev. William D. O'Brien, bishop and head of the Extension Society of America (which was primarily responsible for the necessary financial aid for the beginning of St. Edward's).

The latest confirmation class consisted of Laurie Magnuson, Elizabeth Malecha, and Henry Montplaisir.

July 23, 1992, St. Cloud Visitor

# After 20 Years Catholics are at home in Lutheran Church

by Joseph Young, Visitor Staff Writer

HENNING—"When a farmer builds a new chicken coop the hens and roosters sometimes don't want to leave the old one. He's got to catch em, carry 'em in and set 'em down."

Clarence Cichy recently recalled this analogy made by Fritz Olin 20 years ago when St. Edwards parishioners purchased the former Trinity Lutheran Church and made it their home.

Cichy said he and Olin, along with Andrew Hessel, Max Klimek and a few other Henningites had gathered at a booth in a local eatery to chew the chicken fat about the sale. On the table—along with a ketchup bottle and salt and pepper shakers—was the topic of whether Catholics would be willing to worship at a Lutheran church.

After four-score seasons Cichy's anecdote may best be taken with a grain of salt, peppered as it is with chuckles, winks and eye-twinklings as he retells it. Any clucking and crowing among Henning hens and roosters about being "transpedwed" into a Luther-rooted edifice has long since dissipated in the airy prairie breezes that rustle this predominantly Lutheran community of 738 souls.

Indeed about 100 of those souls congregated at the church Sunday, July 12, for a program commemorating the sale, followed by a pot-luck picnic. The spirit was ecumenical with the Catholic/Lutheran ratio about 50-50, said St. Edward's pastor Father James Thoennes.

The sale came about when the Trinity Lutheran and United Lutheran congregation consolidated into one— Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, whose present pastor, the Rev. Darrel Vetter, was also pastor at Trinity Lutheran in 1972.

"We had actually consolidated in the late 1960s and were using both church buildings—Trinity and United Lutheran (which now houses Good Shepherd Lutheran's congregation)," Mr. Vetter explained. "But by the early '70s that became impractical—it was costing us \$3,000 a year for heat and insurance."

So they generously sold it to the Catholics for the bargain-church-base-ment price (even in 1972) of \$3,000. "Today, for example," said Father Thoennes, "it costs that much just for annual insurance."

"It is really the nicer of the two buildings with its attractive brick face and steeple," said Mr. Vetter.

"We hoisted that illuminated aluminum cross up onto the steeple—that's what made it Catholic," said St. Edward's parishioner Bill Christensen, whose wife, Jackie, coordinated the 20th anniversary celebration. St. Edward's Parish also sank more than \$30,000 in renovations and additions into its new church.

Not surprisingly, an island of Catholics surrounded by a sea of Lutherans is apt to latch occasionally onto eternal-life rafts made up of abandoned Lutheran driftwood.

In fact, St. Edward's original church was also a "converted" Lutheran church—a small wood-frame building which in 1949 was carted in 28 miles from just south of Bertha to a site just kiddie-corner from the present church. Wracked in winter by winds whistling through weathered tacked-on-plastic storm windows it was demolished in the early 1970s.

But the cozy, brick St. Edward's Church today is in no danger of making a date with the wrecking ball, even though it is 94 years old. Indeed St. Edward and Good Shepherd Lutheran congregations plan to re-congregate in 1998 to celebrate the structure's 100th anniversary.

"We didn't want just anything to happen to the church," said Mr. Vetter. "Happily it has remained in good hands and has very much remained a building dedicated to the worship of God."