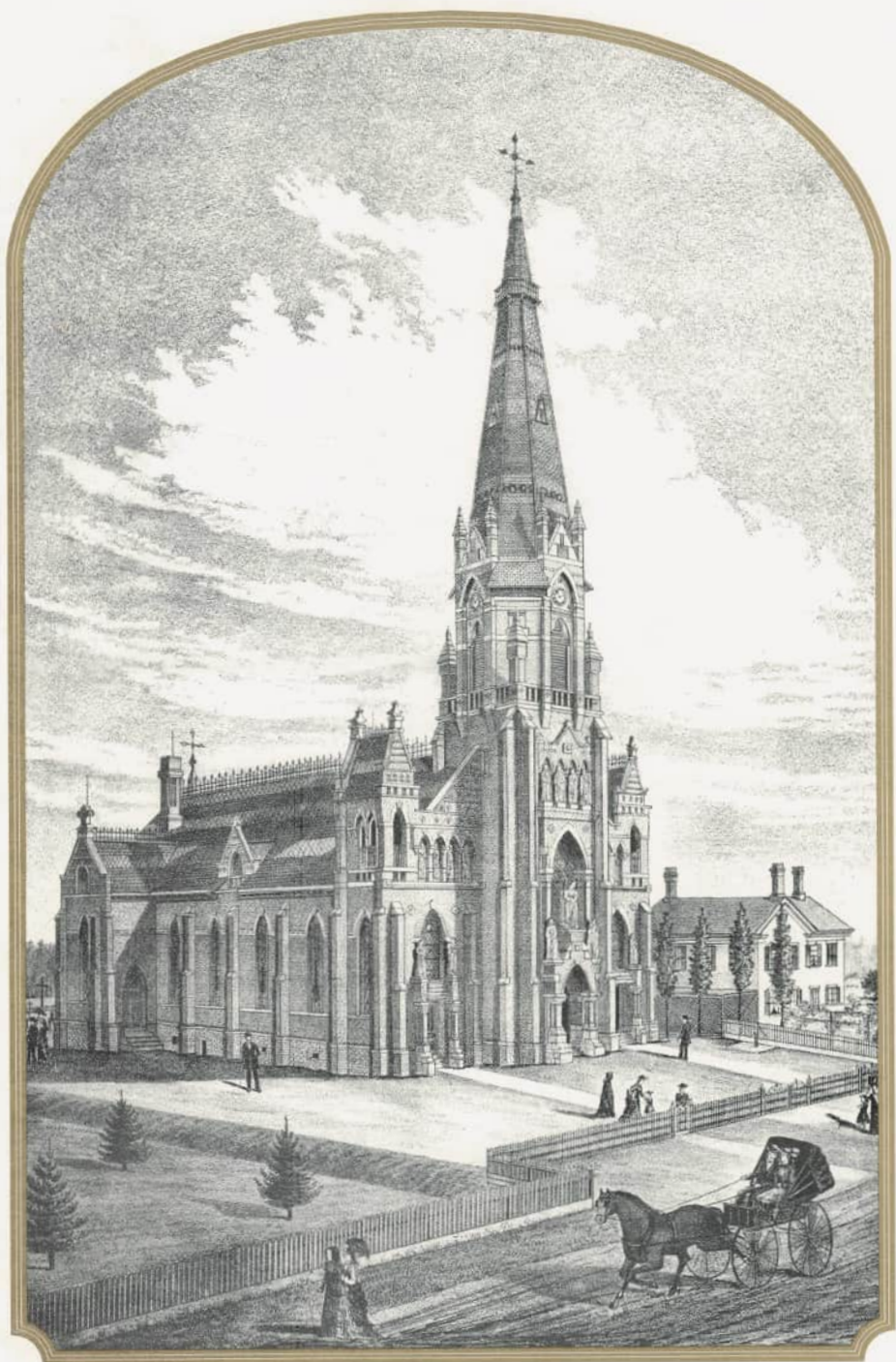




St. Michaels Church
Ft. Loramie, Ohio

Rising in stately fashion on the western side of Ohio's central plateau, St. Michael's Church dominates the Fort Loramie area of Shelby County. Erected more than a hundred years ago, it is a testament to the faith and substance of the predominantly German Catholic pioneers of this area.

Front Cover: Architect's Rendition - Cudell and Richardson

provided by Shelby County Historical Society

Page 1: Sketch by Dr., William Schrimpf

Book Compiled by Mary Lou Bornhorst & Virginia Hoehne

*ST. MICHAEL CHURCH
HISTORY AND ART*

1749 ---- 2000



PRAYER TO ST. MICHAEL

Holy Michael the archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our protection against the
wickedness and snares of the devil.

May God rebuke him,
we humbly pray, and do you,
O prince of the heavenly host,
by the divine power thrust into hell
Satan and all the other evil spirits
who wander through the world
seeking the ruin of souls.
Amen

Jubilee Year 2000

Dear Parishioners and Guests of St. Michael Church:

It is with great pleasure that we present you with this booklet on the history and art of St. Michael's Church. The Catholic faith in our local community began some 250 years ago with a mass being celebrated on the Ferd Fleckenstein farm. Since then, with men like Jesuit missionary, Pierre Loramie, Fr. Louis Navarron, Fr. August Berger (our first pastor), and Fr. Wilhelm Bigot, the Catholic faith continued to prosper. I am very honored to be a successor of these dedicated priests.

The church not only prospered but numbers of parishioners grew also. From a log cabin, to the first brick church (our present chapel), to its enlargement and finally to the building of the present church, the parishioners of St. Michael Church have always met the needs of their growing faith community. This has not been done with little expense or sacrifice. The Catholic Church is an integral part of the local community and parishioners sacrificed time, talents and treasure to make sure St. Michael's continues to grow and be their spiritual center. This is most evident in the adornments and art that make our church so very beautiful and so very Catholic.

We encourage you to use this booklet to learn more about the history and art of St. Michael's Church. We continue to be a faith-filled community, responding to God's call to holiness, as we celebrate the great Jubilee Year 2000.

Sincerely Yours in Christ



Rev. Steven L. Shoup
Pastor

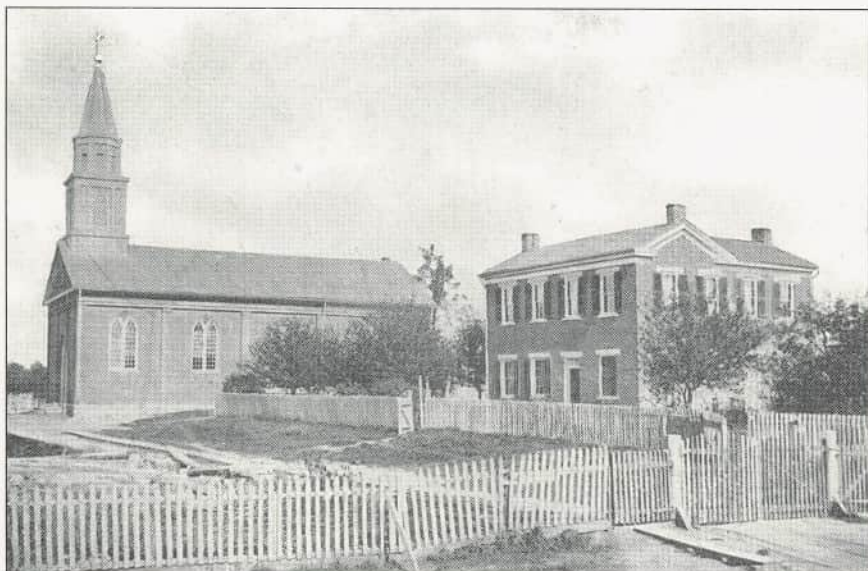
HISTORY OF ST. MICHAEL CHURCH

By Margie Wuebker

St. Michael's Catholic Church continues to be the spiritual center for more than 940 families today as it has been in the past.

It is the place where the faithful worship, where babies are brought for baptism, where couples come to exchange wedding vows and where deceased parishioners are carried for a final farewell.

Even when it existed only in the dreams of settlers, the church was a unifying force. The first step came in 1838, when they formed St. Michael's Church Society at the home of local businessman James M. Pilliod. The Rev. Louis Navarron offered the first Mass in Pilliod's storeroom. In later years, the faithful worshipped at a log house, where W. H. Quinlin formerly operated a drug store.



By 1849, the parish had grown to 100 families and the need for a new church was clearly evident. Later that year, workmen began laying the foundation for a structure that would measure 30 feet wide and 60 feet long. A cholera epidemic that claimed 28 lives in a two-month period delayed the completion until 1851. The first church, which is now used as the chapel at the northeast corner of the present-day church, was starkly plain with a tower and a belfry containing two bells. The congregation quickly outgrew the brick structure and the building was lengthened by 20 feet. A high altar was installed and the addition included a large sacristy, where the priest vested for Mass and children received catechism lessons during the winter.

On January 20, 1874, Archbishop John B. Purcell assigned the Rev. William Bigot as pastor. "In Berlin (as Fort Loramie was called in those days), you will find much work to do; a large parish and there you must build a new church."



With the church and the choir loft packed to capacity on Sundays and Holy Days, the congregation agreed a larger structure was needed. Parishioners launched a subscription drive with donations totaling \$30,000.

In his writings titled "Annals of St. Michael's Parish" Bigot noted parishioners favored construction of a barn-like structure. He envisioned one with three aisles like Gothic style St. Joseph's Catholic Cathedral he had visited in Cleveland.

Architects from the Cleveland-based firm of Cudell and Richardson estimated the project would cost more than \$40,000 without decorations. In keeping with the original

specifications, the parish was to furnish necessary sand and lime as well as all the lumber and nails needed to erect the scaffolding. The lumber was to be of the best quality Norwegian pine. In addition to providing a nearby source of water, parishioners were also responsible for seeing that the sand was adequately sifted to remove any lumps before being added to the mortar.

Foundation stone came up the Miami and Erie Canal from Piqua, with farmers unloading the heavily-laden boats. The cornerstone for the 170' by 64' church was laid October 11, 1879.

Anton Gohr of Minster supervised the entire construction while local merchant Henry Quatman was commissioned to make more than one million bricks and deliver them to the site. The bricks for the exterior of the church and the interior of the belfry were to be stained with venetian red and oil. The staining was done to give the bricks a rich red color when burned in a wood-fired kiln.

Bills for some of the church work and appointments included: \$3,800 for laying of masonry; \$2,600 for plastering; \$1,000 for flooring and doors; \$1,810 for benches and pews; \$2,300 for the high altar; \$2,050 for the side altars; \$850 for two confessionals; \$1,200 for the chancel-communion rail with statues; \$3,100 for the organ; \$1,725 for 14 stations of the cross; \$1,300 for remodeling of the existing church for use as a chapel; and \$2,315 for fresco work.

Bishop W. H. Elder came to Fort Loramie to consecrate the new church due to the illness of Archbishop John Purcell. This was considered quite an honor, since only three or four churches in the archdiocese had been accorded such recognition.

Churches had to meet five requirements before earning the distinction:

*The church had to be substantially built and the high altar had to be ready for consecration at the same time.

*There had to be a congregation able to support the building and a regular priest in residence at all times.

*No outstanding debts were permitted.

*The church is not allowed to be used for anything else but service to God, without the Bishop's permission.

*The church must be put in the Bishop's trust.
St. Michael's, the ninth oldest of 260 parishes in the archdiocese, met all the requirements.

Forty parishioners on horseback greeted Elder's coach that autumn day, with some 4,000 people lining the village streets. Bells chimed from the 200-foot church tower and cannons boomed. The bishop brought sacred relics for the new altar and adoration rites continued through the night. Clergy from the surrounding area and thousands of friends and relatives of parishioners attended the four-hour consecration Mass, which began at 6 a.m. Festivities continued until the last visitor headed for home after midnight.

The ceremony and pageantry was recreated in November 1981, when Archbishop Joseph Bernardin came to mark the centennial anniversary of the dedication of the church.

Many interior and exterior improvements have been made over the years, among them adaptations mandated by the Second Vatican Council. The altar of sacrifice and the pulpit became the focus of the sanctuary with a new altar constructed so the priest could face the people.

The \$195,000 refurbishing project in 1987 also included painting of the interior, carpeting the floors and installing recessed lighting. In 1988, the new altar was dedicated and the pulpit was blessed during a Sesquicentennial Mass marking the 150th anniversary of the founding of the parish.

In 1993, a new entryway was added to the east side of the church, providing easy access for the disabled and elderly. The \$144,900 project also included the addition of a new rest room facility and parking lot. A garage and storage room was built on to the nearby parish rectory.



STORY OF THE BELLS

By Margie Wuebker

The Rev. William Bigot and members of St. Michael's unknowingly paved the way for a larger church with the purchase of not one but four bells.

In February 1878, news of the death of Pope Pious IX reached Fort Loramie. The bells were tolled three times a day for nine days to mark his passing. Mass servers were assigned to the task and Bigot writes in the "Annals of St. Michael's Parish" that they did the job a little too well -- the bell cracked.

The discordant sound convinced the congregation a new bell was needed. The collection yielded \$800, more than enough to buy a bell. The St. Ann Sodality decided the church needed a second bell and then school children rallied to the cause, collecting money to purchase a third.

They arrived by canal boat from the Cincinnati firm of Vanduzen and Tift. The largest, weighing 1,800 pounds, was to be called St. Michael. The second, weighing 1,200 pounds, would be Maria and the 500-pound one was to become John Leo.

Bigot blessed the bells on the feast of St. Peter and Paul. The people quickly noticed the bells did not sound as loud in the tower as they had on the ground.

"I decided they should have one that rumbled," Bigot wrote. He ordered a 3,600-pound bell to harmonize with the others. It would be called Wilhelm because he had donated a year's salary for the purchase.

Men on the canal boat rang the bell miles before Fort Loramie came into view. People heard it far and wide and came to help with the unloading. It was transported to the church on a sled pulled by four horses. However, it proved to be much too big for the existing tower. Even a temporary 40-foot tower built by Anton Gohr did little to improve the sound. A new church with a high tower became the solution.

1878 CONTRACTOR'S SPECIFICATIONS 1881

Cudell & Richardson, Architects of Cleveland, Ohio, who were the Architects for the St. Joseph's Church in Cleveland, Ohio, were recommended by Fr. P. Guardian, priest of the Cleveland Church.

Size of St. Michael Church to be as follows:

Length of the church building 170' - Width 64' with three naves. The center vault 55' high, the side vaults 32' high and the tower 200' high.

Building material - brick, trimmed and decorated with sandstone. The front facade to be constructed by a stately appearance. The columns of the church, arches and window sills to be of stone. The Architect assured him the style would be a rich Tuscan-Gothic. The bare brickwork without windows and decorations to cost not more than \$45,000, burning their own brick and the congregation hauling the stone and sand.

In August, 1879, they prepared for construction.

Foundation stone was furnished by Stadler of Piqua, Ohio. The farmers delivered the stone from the canal boats on the Miami & Erie Canal. Southerland & Company, noted bridge builders, had the contract for the foundation and ground floor to be finished by October 1st. **The Cornerstone was laid Sunday, October 11th.**



Anton Gohr of Minster, Ohio, supervised the entire construction. Henry Quatman agreed to deliver one million eighty thousand bricks at \$4.50 per thousand. John Deman of Defiance, Ohio, did the masonry work for \$3.50 per thousand. Worthington of Berea Sandstone near Cleveland, delivered eight thousand cubic feet of sandstone for 16 cents per cubic foot. This same firm furnished the sandstone for the Shelby County Court House. John Bayer & company did the work of the eight thousand cubic feet sandstone for the exterior and interior of the church.

The firm Sanflect of Toledo, Ohio, furnished labor and material for all the carpentry of vaults, roof and tower.

The sand and lime came from Sidney, Ohio, and Piqua, Ohio, and sand from the Loramie Creek. Mr. Hayes of Sidney, Ohio, did all the plastering. John D. Inderriedon of Fort Loramie, laid the foundation and remodeling of the existing church building.

The firm Booth & Riester of Buffalo, NY, furnished twenty two windows, most with life size figures. Mr. Hefele of Cincinnati did all the Fresco work. Mr. Schroder furnished the high altar, side altars, chancel and communion rail, the statue of Jesus and the archangels and confessionals. The eighteen statues and fourteen stations of the cross came from the firm Fustet, Munich, Germany, through a firm in Cincinnati.

Firm of Schafer, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, furnished the organ with twenty two registers. A firm from Delphos, Ohio, furnished the pews to seat eight hundred.

The church was dedicated October 1, 1881.

A breakdown of the cost follows:

Preparation of side and foundation	\$ 900.00
Foundation - Stone, sand, lime contract	4,800.00
1,080,000 bricks - 8,000 white color & black	4,600.00
Laying of masonry at \$3.50 per thousand	3,800.00
7,600 cubic feet Berea Sandstone	3,750.00
Setting all stonework	3,700.00
Iron work for tower-cross and bell support	4,600.00
Tin galvanized iron labor and material	1,100.00
Slate work for church and tower	2,350.00
All plastering	2,600.00
Flooring and doors	1,000.00
Fresco work	2,315.00
Twenty-two windows	3,900.00
Benches and pews	1,810.00
High altar - statues stonework	2,300.00
Mary and Joseph side altars	2,050.00
Sacred Heart of Jesus and Guardian Angel	775.00
Two confessionals	850.00
Chancel-Communion rail with statues	1,200.00
Organ	3,100.00
Fourteen Stations of the Cross	1,725.00
Stoves	975.00
Sand and lime delivery	1,050.00
Remodeling of existing church	1,300.00
Three large statues in front of church	1,500.00
Architects plans and specifications	850.00
Supt. Anton Gohr Supervision	490.00
Parsonage	8,000.00
Painting	575.00
Heating	450.00
Work of the cemetery cross and iron fence	<u>760.00</u>

Total cost \$69,175.00

INTERIOR OF CHURCH

PODIUM ALTAR PRESIDER CHAIR

Main focal points of the church

Furniture new in 1981 and designed to match the altars.

Note: The symbols of the four gospels are carved into the wood around the Podium.

BAPTISMAL FONT located in front of the center altar.



CHI RHO the symbol for Christ
on the sanctuary walls.

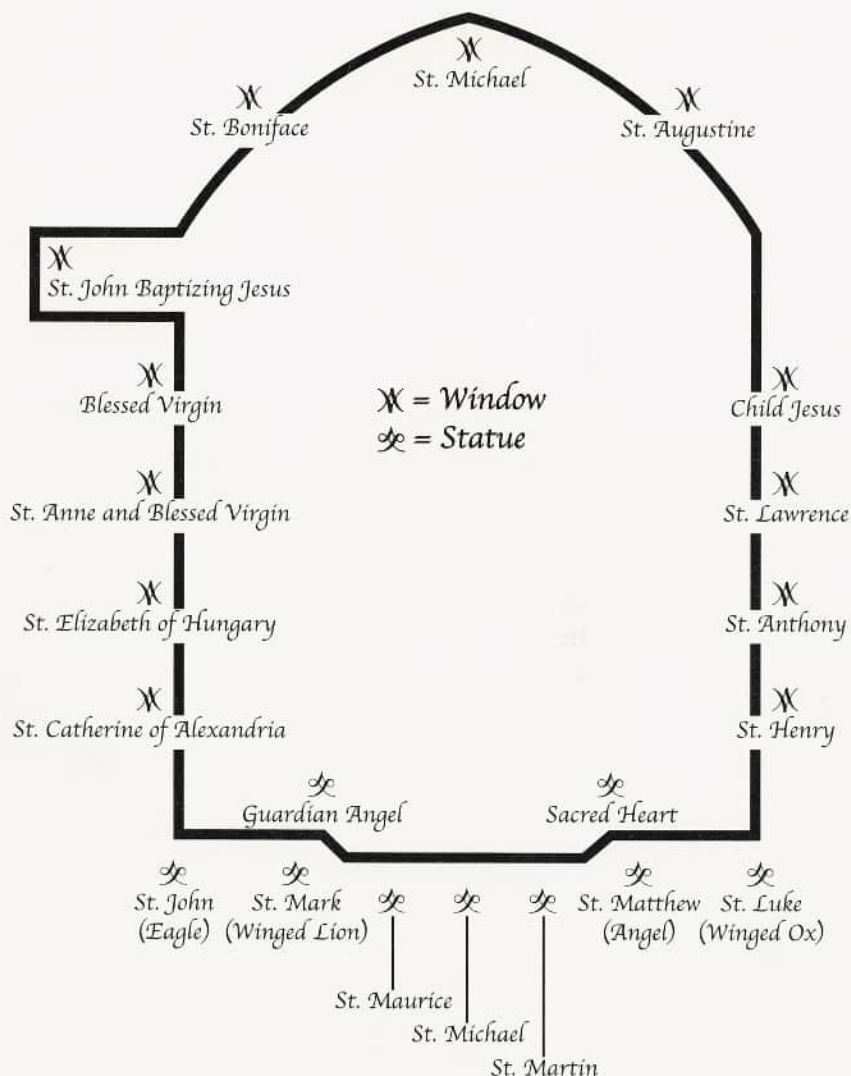
CROSSES on Pillars and Side Walls

The crosses signify that the church has been
consecrated and has met all of the requirements.



WINDOWS OF ST. MICHAEL CHURCH

Booth and Riester of Buffalo furnished the windows.



(Begin tour in the back left--up to the center--around to the back.)

ST. CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA - 310 AD

(Donated by Catherine Hummer Merz)

- Came from a noble family
- Converted to Christianity by a vision of Our Lady and the Holy Child
- Rebuked the Roman emperor for his persecution of Christians. He tried to find ways to refute her beliefs. When he could find none, he had her tortured on a wheel, the symbol of Catherine as a saint. The emperor then had her beheaded.

ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY 1207-1231 AD

(Donated by Elizabeth Back, sister of Rev. Bigot)

- Daughter of the King of Hungary. Married at 13 to a nobleman.
- Extremely happy marriage. Had 3 children.
- Despite her wealth, she dressed simply. She was loved by the common people because of her generosity to the poor.
- After her husband's death in the Crusades, she was driven from court by her wicked relatives. She and her children took shelter in a pigsty until she was given shelter by some Franciscan brothers.
- She was recalled to court by friends of her husband.
- Founded a Franciscan convent. Had a hospital built. Cared for the sick.
- Died at age 24. Patron of Catholic charities.

ST. ANNE WITH MARY

(Donated by St. Anne sodality)

- Married to Joachim
- Mary was born to them when they were older.
- She and her husband are patrons of grandparents because they are Jesus' grandparents.

- Thousands of pilgrims go to the shrine of St. Anne de Beupre, Canada, where many miracles are said to have occurred.

BLESSED VIRGIN MARY--Immaculate Conception
(Donated by the Holy Mary Young Ladies sodality)

ST. JOHN BAPTIZING JESUS

(Donated by John H. Willman, Clemens Hilgefort, and Herman Broering)

- Son of Zachary and Elizabeth (Jesus' cousin).
- Leaped for joy in his mother's womb when Mary greeted her.
- Purpose: to prepare the way for Jesus by preaching, penance, and baptizing people.
- Lived in the desert on locusts and wild honey. Wore animal skins.
- Spoke out against Herod's sin (adulterous marriage). Arrested by Herod; beheaded at the request of Salome, Herod's stepdaughter.

An Early 1900 Remembrance

Em Nutt recalls that her mother often did housekeeping for Fr. Moeller. Em's job was to collect eggs from the chicken house behind the rectory every day after school. One day she could find no eggs, and told Father her dilemma. Father asked her if she had looked everywhere. She told him she had, and Father smiled at her, and told her he was teasing her, that he had collected the eggs earlier.

ST. BONIFACE - 755 AD (Apostle of Germany)

(Donated by Heinrich Barhorst and family)

- Born in England; became a monk; dream was to convert Germany.
- Pope Gregory made him a bishop to Germany. Preached Christianity to the pagans.
- Founded monasteries and churches; brought missionaries from England.
- Attacked by a band of pagans; killed by a blow to the head at age 75.

ST. MICHAEL (Patron of St. Michael Church)

(Donated by Heinrich Schluter, Sr. and Heinrich Hoelscher)

- Archangel (one of three mentioned in the Bible)
- Considered the leader of God's powers against Satan.
- Patron of the Church and policemen.

ST. AUGUSTINE - 354 - 430 AD

(Donated by Justus Wise, Sr.)

- Born in North Africa Mother was very religious.
- Led a sensual early life; fathered an illegitimate son.
- Brilliant teacher. Mother pleaded with him to return to Christianity.
- After hearing a sermon by St. Ambrose, he was so moved that he began restudying Christianity. Baptized by St. Ambrose.
- Sold all his estates; became a priest. Became Bishop of Hippo.
- Fought false religious teachings; protected people from corrupt officials and invaders; cared for the sick, poor and imprisoned.
- Wrote hundreds of books and other writings; one of the Church's greatest theologians. Died 430 AD after some vandals stormed Hippo.

CHILD JESUS

(Donated by the Child Jesus Sodality - 300 children members)

ST. LAWRENCE

(Donated by the St. Lawrence Young Men's Sodality)

- Assistant to Pope Sixtus II, who was arrested by the emperor.
- Was ordered to deliver all the wealth of the Church to Rome.
- He gave all the wealth to the poor. The next day he returned to the emperor, followed by sick, poor people, saying, "Here is the wealth of the Church."
- Because of his trickery, he was ordered to be roasted to death over a slow fire. Even in death he kept his humor. "I'm well-done on this side," he told his torturers. "turn me over to the other."
- He died praying for Rome.
- He is the patron of cooks and protection against fires.

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA - 1195 AD

(Donated by Francisca Ronnebaum)

- Joined Franciscan order of monks because he was impressed by the martyrs that were brought back from Africa.
- Lived in a cave on the island of Sicily, near a monastery, coming out only for prayers and to sweep the monastery.
- When a speaker failed to show one day, he was asked (probably as a joke) to deliver the sermon. Everyone was amazed at his eloquence.
- He became very famous throughout Europe for his speaking abilities and converted many.
- Pleaded for the release of people imprisoned because they could not pay their debts.

- According to tradition, Anthony had experienced a vision of the Child Jesus and is often shown holding him.
- Prayed to for protection of horses and to find lost objects.

ST. HENRY - 973 AD

(Donated by George Heinrich Eilerman and family)

- Emperor of Bavaria, who, because of his outstanding qualities was elected emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.
- Brought about reforms; encouraged missionary activity; founded monasteries and dioceses.
- He was unlike many of the leaders of his time.
- He is called "the most Christian prince" because of his work for the Church.

An Early 1900 Remembrance

Frances Rethman recalls Sunday Masses being held at 6:00, 8:00 and 10:00 AM, with vespers at 2:00. *Once a month Father would have the sermon in German. She remembers the children having a hard time staying awake, because many didn't understand the language. Weddings and funerals were at 9:00 AM. Every Saturday confessions were held, with each week being for a different group of people. One week was for married men, another for married women, then for singles, etc. They were also not to receive communion unless they first had gone to confession. The babies were often baptized on the day they were born. If it was cold, a brick was warmed and placed in the buggy to keep the baby warm. Confirmation was held every five years or so. The church was filled with children, and one row was sponsor for the row in front of them. Collections were generally nickels, dimes, and quarters, with an occasional dollar. The dollar, of course, was a lot of money 75 years ago.*

REAR of the church:

GUARDIAN ANGEL

(Donated by Margarete Quatman, widow)

SACRED HEART

(Donated by Reverend William Bigot)

OUTSIDE FRONT of the church.

(Right side)

ST. LUKE (Winged Ox)

(Left side)

ST. MARK (Winged Lion)

ST. JOHN (Angel)

ST. MATTHEW (Eagle)

(Represents the four gospel writers with a symbol for each.)

OUTSIDE CENTER of the church.

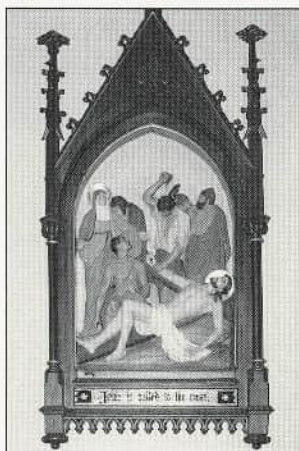
ST. MARTIN

ST. MICHAEL

ST. MAURICE

In 1891 the three center statues were ordered by Rev. Bigot from pictures in a magazine in Paris, France, for \$1,500 while the pastor was on sabbatical.

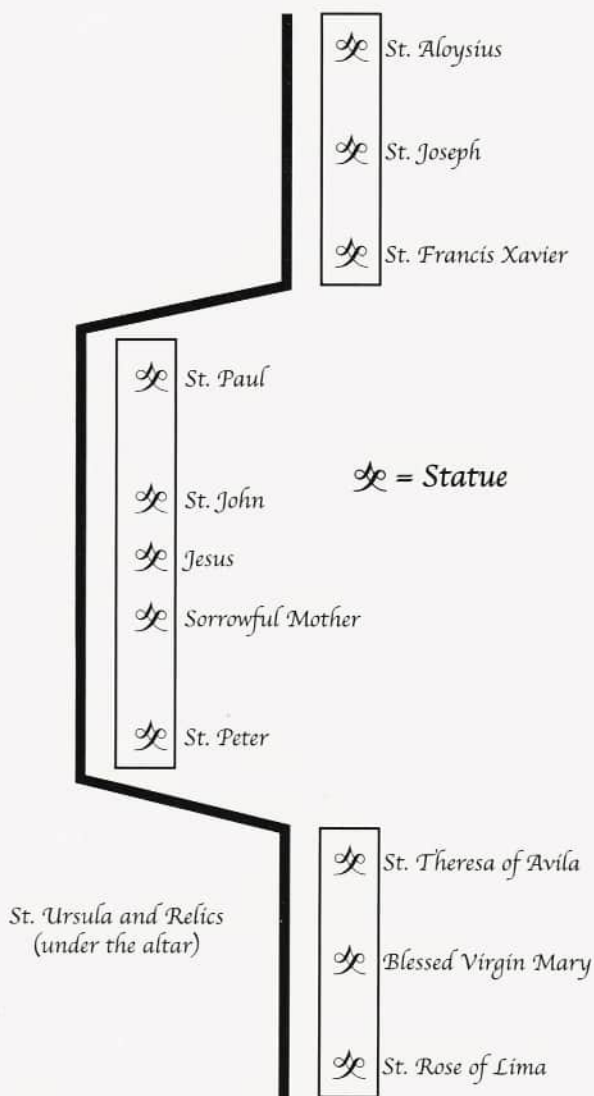
STATIONS OF ST. MICHAEL CHURCH



The 14 stations were purchased from the firm of Pustett in Munich, Germany and delivered through their branch in Cincinnati. The wood frame was built in the US.

STATUES OF ST. MICHAEL CHURCH

Pustett in Munich, Germany furnished the Statues.



BLESSED VIRGIN ALTAR

(Altar donated by Bernard Pille)

Small Wooden Box Left Of The BVM Altar

Retains the blessed oils.

ST. URSULA - 4th Century (under BVM altar)

- When the Saxons invaded England, she led a band of British maidens in escape to Germany. They defended their faith and virginity against a band of pagan Huns and were put to death.
- A church was built in their honor in Cologne, Germany.
- Patron saint of school teachers.

ST. ROSE OF LIMA - (Peru)

- A beautiful child, but devoted herself to fasting and penance to avoid becoming too vain. In love with God. Said to have had visits into heaven
- Worked in her home garden to raise money for the family by selling flowers.
- Joined a Dominican order of nuns.
- Set up one room in her parents home as a free medical clinic for the poor and elderly.
- Died at age 31, from poor health.
- First canonized saint of the Americas.
- Example of patience. Patron of gardeners.

BLESSED VIRGIN MARY with CHILD JESUS

ST. TERESA OF AVILA - (Spain) 1515 AD

(Also called Teresa of Jesus)

- One of ten children, she ran away from home at age seven to fight the Moors, with the hope of being beheaded in order to become a martyr. An uncle returned her home.

- Became a Carmelite nun; displeased with the easy life of the order, she decided to reform it.
- With the Pope's permission, she established a stricter order: lived in poverty, wore sandals instead of shoes, slept on straw mats, ate no meat, and supported themselves by spinning and sewing.
- Founded 35 convents.
- Prayers and sufferings brought her to the highest degree of mystical life.

An Early 1900 Remembrance

Victoria Albers, at the age of 14, began playing the organ for the parish and continued to provide this service for a number of years. She recalls that during Easter Holy Week the children did not have school, but were expected to attend Holy Hour service on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Holy Saturday services were held at 5:30 in the morning when families would get holy water for home use if they wished. Vic remembers bringing a half gallon bucket to take the holy water home.

CENTER ALTAR

St. Laetus, St. Prosperus and St. Reparata
are the relics imbedded in the high altar.

ST. PETER

- Originally Simon, a fisherman, whom Jesus invited to follow Him.
- Jesus named him "Peter" (rock)
- Present at all major Gospel incidents. Witnessed Transfiguration (1 of 3 persons)
- Denied Jesus three times after the arrest.

- Jesus forgave him after the Resurrection and ordered Peter three times to take care of the people of the Church.
- On Pentecost, he was the chief spokesperson and leader of the Apostles.
- First Pope. Performed miracles. Imprisoned 3 or 4 times.
- First to welcome non-Jews into the Church
- Was crucified upside down (at his own request) by the emperor Nero.

BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

JESUS ON THE CROSS

ST. JOHN (Apostle & Evangelist)

- Invited by Jesus to be one of His disciples.
- With Jesus at Transfiguration (1 of 3 persons)
- Sat next to Jesus at the Last Supper.
- Jesus entrusted John with Mary's safekeeping at the Crucifixion.
- Was arrested and exiled.
- Lived in Asia Minor on an island called Patmos to teach and to write his Gospel, Epistles and Book of Revelation
- Died a very old man, still teaching.

ST. PAUL

- Was a devout Jew, strongly opposed to Christianity.
- Was present at the stoning death of the first martyr, Stephen.
- On his way to Damascus to arrest some Christians, he was struck to the ground and Christ appeared to him. From that moment on he devoted himself to the spread of Christianity.

- Traveled throughout Asia Minor to spread the good news.
- He was arrested several times.
- He was beheaded in Rome, about three years after Peter's crucifixion, about 67 AD
- His many epistles are the basis for Catholic teaching.
- He was the right man to build the bridge between Jewish religion of the Old Testament and the Christianity of the New Testament.

An Early 1900 Remembrance

Joe Borchers *recollects Saturday religion classes. Fr. Moeller, now an older man, would sometimes doze during classes. A student, Fritz Anthony, was from a family who were avid hunters and fishermen. On one instance, Father suddenly jolted awake and said, "Anthony, wake up, the fish are biting!" Another time he called out to Paul Gaier, whose parents had a bakery on the north end of Main Street, "Paul, wake up, your bread is burning!" The children thought this was hilarious, but could not laugh too much out of respect for Father.*

ST. JOSEPH ALTAR

The tabernacle has been moved from the center altar to the St. Joseph Altar.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER - 1568 AD

- From a wealthy, noble family of Spain. Well-educated.
- Ignatius Loyola converted Francis from a life of materialism to the service of Christ.
- Along with 5 other men, formed the Society of Jesus.
- Baptized tens of thousands. Worked miracles; had gift of tongues.

- Favorite prayer: "Give me souls."
- Lived and worked among the poor.
- Greatest missionary of the modern Church
- His greatest dream was to work in China, but he died just as he was approaching China in 1552.
- His feast day is December 3.

ST. JOSEPH

- Husband of Blessed Virgin Mary, foster father of Jesus.
- Carpenter in Nazareth.
- Descendant of King David.
- Was warned in a dream to flee with Mary and Jesus to Egypt to escape the jealousy of King Herod.
- Died before Jesus began his public life.
- Held in great esteem by the Church for his care and love of Jesus and Mary.
- Patron of Carpenters.

ST. ALOYSIUS 1568 AD

- Born to a noble Italian family.
- His father, who wanted him to be a great military leader, had him associate with soldiers when just a child. He learned rough, coarse language.
- At age 7 he decided to reform and to devote himself completely to God.
- At age 11 he made a vow of perpetual chastity.
- At age 17 he entered the Society of Jesus
- Died at age 23, a result of an epidemic at a hospital where he worked.
- Patron of youth.

An Early 1900 Remembrance

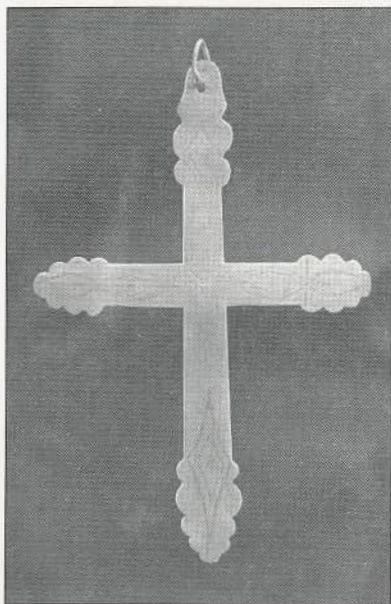
Alfred (Curly) Boerger, *remembers that Fr. Moeller, was pastor of St. Michael's for 42 years. When Curly was a small boy, Fr. Moeller celebrated his Silver Anniversary as priest. The parish held a social for him, and Curly recalls the children singing a song to Father that was directed by Marie Quinlin. Curly can still sing the song that goes as follows:*

*Twenty five eventful years since thou beganst to labor,
Worked for God and for thy neighbor.
Speed the hours, and smiles or tears,
Worked for God and for thy neighbor.*

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

1749 First Mass September 13 to 20, 1749.
Offered by Father Joseph Peter Donnecamps
on the Ferd Fleckenstein farm.

1769-1782 A Jesuit missionary, Pierre (Peter) Loramie, worked in the area. In 1872 a solid Silver Cross was unearthed with the removal of a tree at the site of the original Loramie store and station. This was proof that Christianity was part of life at that time. The cross measures nine inches long and six inches wide.



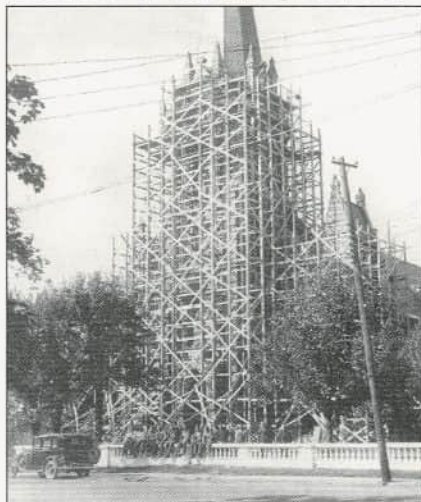
- 1838 “This parish, named St. Michael’s was established in the year 1838, July 4.”
The parish had 50 families.
- 1838-1848 Mass was celebrated by Rev. Louis Navarron in the home of James Pilliod.
Rev. Navarron was not a permanent pastor.
He was in charge of the territory from Greenville to Lima.
- 1849-1851 First brick church 60’ x 30’ was built (present Chapel).
Parish of 100 families was served by Precious Blood missionary priests.
- 1851-1858 First resident pastor was Rev. August Berger
- 1864-1874 First Church was increased by 20’ and a high altar was added.
- 1879-1881 New church was built.
Rev. Wilhelm Bigot was pastor.

The **PIPE ORGAN** was installed when the church was built. The early organ was hand pumped by bellows near the pipes. In 1910 more pipes were added. By 1921 an electric motor to pump the air for the organ was used. The pipes reached their current collection of over 1,100 pipes by 1985. At that time the organ was electrified, meaning that stoppers for the pipes were now opened by magnets rather than by air from the console. This allowed the console to be moved forward in the choir loft so the organist could directly see the action of the liturgy.

- 1891 Father Bigot added the statues of St. Michael, St. Martin, and St. Maurice to the facade in the front of the Church at a total cost of \$1,500.

1920-1926

First renovation of church and steeple cross was gilded, by DeCurtains of Lima. After WW I German language was no longer used in sermons, bulletins, reports, etc.



1939

Church receives face lift. Louis Seger contractor.



- 1954-1960 Church renovated. Removed decorative wood and ball from the arches. Enlarged basement and added steel beams and iron posts to reinforce the sagging floor.
- 1960-1966 The Latin Mass was replaced with English. A temporary altar facing the people is now used. The bells and clock were electrified.
- 1971-1973 Chapel opened for weekday use in summer.
- 1973-1980 Chapel renovated, furnished, and a heating system installed. Moved tabernacle and hanging votive candle to side altar.
- 1980-1991 Church renovated, maintaining historic value while making Vatican II adaptations, renovated organ, upgraded lighting, built new west side entrance and added handicap accessible east side entry.



- 1994-1995 St. Patrick parish, St. Patrick joins St. Michael parish.

- 1991-1999 Entrance on east side was completed. Built a new rectory garage, new sidewalks on the east side of church, handicap parking added, and completed face lift of the front of the church.
- 2000 Marian garden constructed between rectory and the church in honor of Jubilee 2000. The Statue of Mary was formerly located at St. Patrick's church.



Permission was given for written material and pictures from the books: History of Shelby County Ohio by Shelby County Historical Society; Annals of St. Michael's Parish, by Reverend Wilhelm P. Bigot and Early History of Ft. Loramie by the Ft. Loramie Historical Association. Thank you to Margie Wuebker for her articles on the "History of St. Michael Church" and the "Story of the Bells". Further, thanks are given for contributions from: Dr. William Schrimpf, Alfred Boerger, Joseph Borchers, Emma Nutt, Victoria Albers, and Frances Rethman.

RENEWAL PRAYER FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Gracious God, we are your people
embraced by your love. We thank you for
your presence with us throughout all time.
As we celebrate the 2000 years since the
birth of Jesus. . . Create us anew.

Liberate us from that which keeps us from
you. Enable us to recreate our world and
restore justice. Heal us from every form of
sin and violence. Transform us to live your
Word more profoundly.

Reconcile us so enemies become friends.
Awaken us to the sacred;
nurture our relationships;
enliven our Parishes;
reunite our families.
Fill us with joy
to celebrate the
fullness of life.
Empower
us to be a
community
of love
growing
in your
likeness.
Amen.



