

# CENTRAL MACOMB VICARIATE NEWS

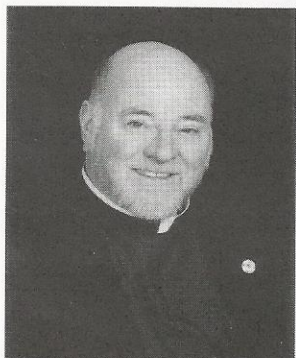
## March 2014: Into the Wilderness with Jesus of Nazareth

Father Ronald Milligan, Vicar

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In high school, I used to catch the "Gratiot bus" at 8 Mile and Gratiot. In the winter months it was a freezing walk from my house on Carlisle, three blocks to Gratiot and a 15¢ ride (with a student pass) from 8 Mile to East Grand Blvd. That was my exit to St. Anthony High School on the west side of Gratiot. The high school sat, proud but hidden, just behind some stores that lined Gratiot. It seems only yesterday I was sitting in the first room at the top of the stairs for Freshmen English. Like most freshmen entering high school back then, I was scared to death. I had gone from "big man on campus" as an eighth grader at St. Raymond's in June to a dorky freshman at a school that required a half hour bus ride to get there at 6:30 am each morning. Classes didn't start until 7:50, but I loved going over to the coffee shop on East Grand Blvd for my morning coffee and donuts and studying what I hadn't finished the night before in homework.



From the Vicar

For the next four years, I was a captive at St. Anthony's and grew from dreading the morning bus ride in the dark to loving the bus rides back home up to 8 Mile. We, St. Anthony students, filled the bus at Sheridan & Gratiot promptly at 2:45 pm, which meant that no students from Nativity High School (Gratiot & McClellan) or St. David's High School or De La Salle (Gratiot & Conners) could climb aboard when we stopped at those two bus stops to let students off.

We were educated by the School Sisters of Notre Dame, for the most part, at St. Anthony's. They wore huge habits- somewhat like the nuns in the Flying Nun series. Their habits were black and so were the veils they wore. I think for us, as students, one of the real memorable moments came in junior or senior year when they began to wear a "modified Habit." Their short veils showed their hair for the first time and the short dresses showed their legs. It was such pandemonium in the school with the nuns in their new habits that, finally, school was dismissed and the student body was sent home.

Anyway, I was reflecting on the old times in my high school not too long ago because one of our parishioners brought me two souvenir bricks from the demolition of the remains of the former high school. One brick was from what had been the gymnasium and the other from the high school building itself. The building was demolished because it was being repeatedly vandalized since it was closed in 2005. What had been the high

school is now an empty lot across from the beautiful edifice that used to be St. Anthony Church. The former St. Anthony church building was sold to another religious denomination in 2010. So now, I have two bricks by which to remember all those fond memories of four years at St. Anthony High School. I am grateful for those memories!

There was a twinge of sadness in my heart at learning that my old high school was demolished. But that sadness is nothing compared to what people in our vicariates are experiencing because of the closing and merging of parishes. The churches, where people baptized their children or buried their loved ones, where their families experienced their first communions, the places where prayers were lifted to Almighty God from the hearts of repentant sinners, where broken hearts prayed for healing from a miscarriage or a divorce, were closed.

People in our vicariate and around the Archdiocese of Detroit are feeling that sadness and wondering where the stability lies. Of course, it lies with Christ and our faith in Him. It seems to me that whenever our stability is called into question, at whatever level, I find myself leaning on my faith in Jesus Christ. I constantly have to remind myself that my faith cannot be in brick and mortar; rather, my faith must always be in Jesus Christ. I take great solace in this and pray for our brothers and sisters who are experiencing these closings and mergers.

At our last meeting of the Vicariate Pastoral Council we had a guest speaker, our webmaster, who introduced all of us to the new website for the Central Macomb Vicariate. What an exciting presentation he made to all of us. His name is Mr. Todd Belknap and though I am calling him the web master, I really think a more apt title would be "an evangelizer," since that is what he really does. He announces the gospel of Jesus Christ. Anyway, we hope that you will check out our new vicariate website at <http://www.cmvic.net/>. We are very proud of what Todd has brought to us and we hope that you will avail yourselves of using this website as a vehicle of communication between our parishes in this vicariate as well as enabling good communication around the Archdiocese. And if you like what you see there, let Todd know since he is responsible for setting it up for us and making it so attractive. I am also indebted to our Council members who have backed this whole project because they could see the value to our whole vicariate.

Remember to pray for our catechumens and their sponsors during these days of Lent.

Fr. Ron Milligan  
Vicar, Central Macomb Vicariate

CENTRAL MACOMB VICARIATE NEWSLETTER  
April 2014 Article Deadline March 12, 2014  
April 2014 Distribution March 29-30, 2014

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