

For Immediate Release

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St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Wilder Celebrates 150 Years

WILDER, KY—The Catholic parish of St. John the Baptist Church will celebrate the 150th anniversary of its present church building with a special Mass at the church on Sunday, September 21, at noon. The Most Reverend Roger J. Foys, Bishop of the Diocese of Covington, will be the main celebrant. A reception will immediately follow in the parish hall and will include remarks from local leaders.

Located at 1307 John's Hill Road atop one of Campbell County's highest elevation points, the present church of St. John the Baptist Church was built in 1858 at time when this area of Northern Kentucky was considered "country," though just five miles from downtown Cincinnati. (The parish actually dates back to 1847; its original log cabin church was struck by lightning and burned down on the feast day of St. John, June 24, in 1857.) The 30-by-50-foot structure was built of stones from the nearby Licking River over the course of one year by five masons under the supervision of church members. St. John the Baptist Church continues to stand today as one of the oldest church buildings in Northern Kentucky having been used consistently since before the Civil War.

"A relatively small number of individuals brought this building out of the ground, to endure for now 150 years and counting," said current pastoral administrator Father Paul Krebs, reflecting on the church's history. "When you build and maintain a building that endures the rigors of time, you have a product that is genuine. Their generosity and talents were outstanding. ... and one generation after another has picked up the baton of hard work to keep our church building in beautiful condition."

Though its literal "one room schoolhouse" closed in 1981, after 134 years of educating the parish's Catholic children, the parish itself has remained strong and continues to grow. Currently, the parish boasts more than 100 families and Father Paul Krebs celebrates three Masses each weekend before a typically crowded house of worshippers.

“The faith community here really has a special quality to it,” commented Parish Council Chair Jim Klump, a convert to Catholicism who fell in love with St. John’s the first time he stepped through its doors: “Though we are smaller in size compared to most other Catholic parishes in the county, I have to say that St. John’s is mighty big in spirit.”

“This is such a wonderful parish,” concluded Father Krebs. “The cooperation and support is without question ‘extraordinary.’ ”

Members of the local community are invited to join the parish as it celebrates its past and looks forward to its future. Those interested in attending the Mass and/or reception September 21 are asked to call the church office at (859) 781-2117 to RSVP.

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Photo Cutline:

150 Years and Still Standing Strong— St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church in Wilder, Kentucky, has served as a continuous house of worship for area Catholics since before the Civil War.