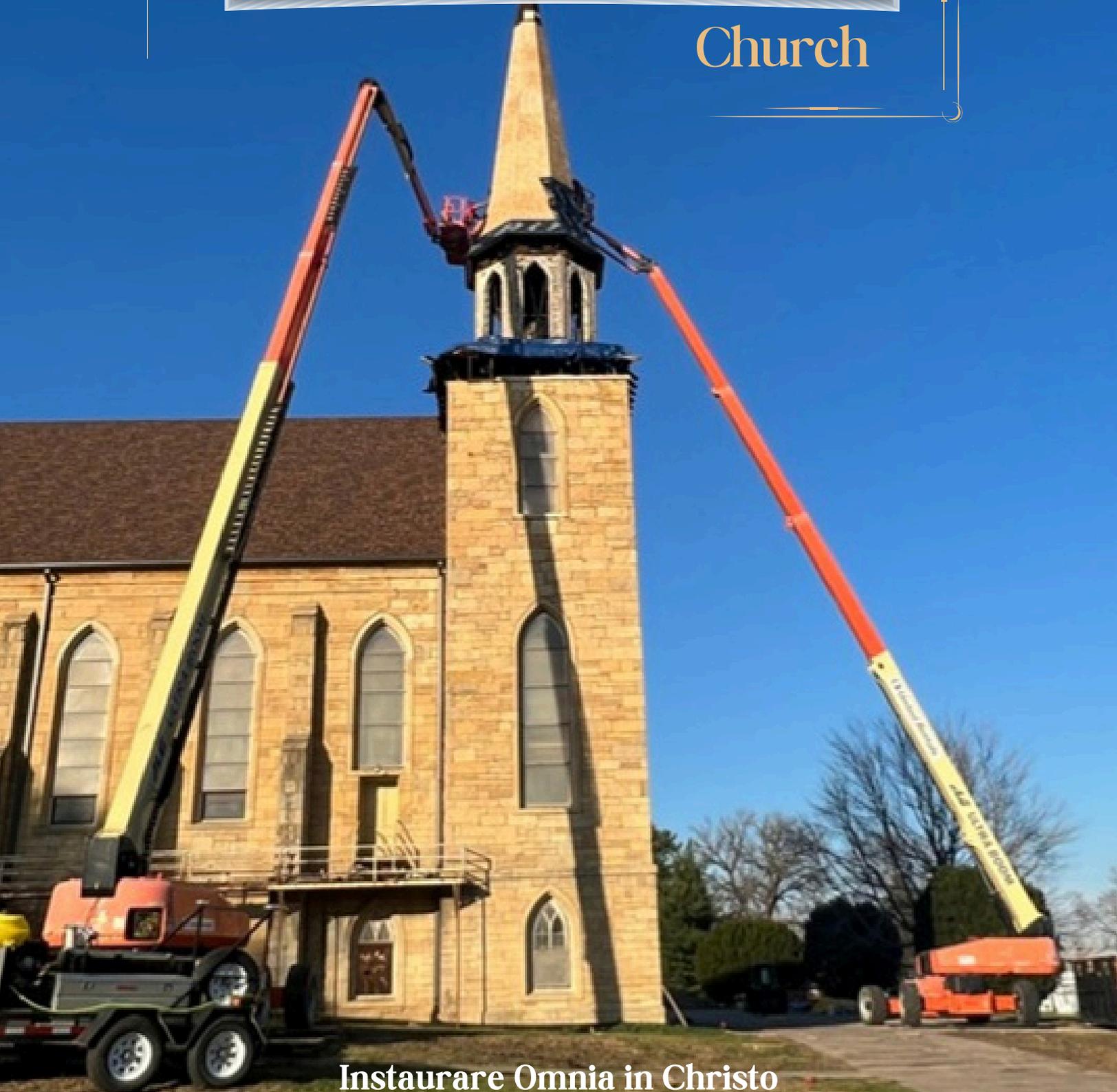


Restoring

St. Irenaeus

Church



Instaurare Omnia in Christo

Volume 1: 2021-2025

To Restore All Things in Christ

This is our motto and goal. It has helped us through many great trials and brought us many great blessings. Through headaches and heartaches this motive has guided us through all our troubles.



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Foreword

In the fall of 2021, Matthew Gabbard asked if I could join the board of directors with him on a new project called St. Irenaeus Chapel. Since saying yes, I have been involved in many ways, such as communications, fundraising, demolition, lawncare, accounting, paying bills, painting, building and tearing down scaffolding, snow removal, wiring, cleaning the toilets, etc.

Sometimes the biggest challenge is perseverance. Continuing with the restoration. To completely rebuild a church without a guarantee of a priest takes a leap of faith. However, God continues to bless us with many graces that give us much hope and encouragement for the future. The community of Catholics who pray and fast for this restoration is a huge part of the success so far. We couldn't do anything without this community. So many sacrifices have been made to make St. Irenaeus a beacon for the future. So we continue on - for the future. For the souls that need to be saved. The conciliar Church continues to consolidate and retreat. This is what going on offense for Our Lord looks like.

Memories? There are so many. The first seven months were very memorable. From preparing for Maximilian's funeral, to building a new sanctuary floor, to installing an HVAC system, putting on a new roof, then hosting the U.S. District Superior of the SSPX for a tour and a Holy Mass. That was a very memorable period. But we continue to make great memories! Watching our kids grow up and learn how to serve at Holy Mass, lead a choir, play organ, become sacristan...this is very fulfilling!

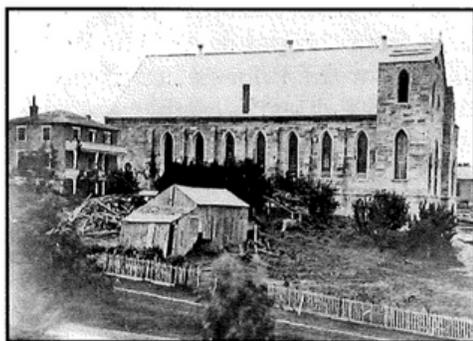
This is the project of a lifetime. What is so great is that it will last beyond mine. It's a project worth doing.

- Keith Dexter, Vice President

History

It all started in the spring of 1864 when Bishop Smyth of Dubuque laid the cornerstone of the present day St. Irenaeus. Fr. Frederic Cyrille Jean managed the church construction. He poured his heart and soul into the project. He started by designing the blueprints and even went as far as donating almost half the funds for the building, since he came from a wealthy family in France. The members of the parish built the church themselves. The stones were hewn from the bluffs and quarries north of the town and hauled to the site with horse drawn carriages. Some of the stones came from as far up as Galena, Illinois, which is roughly 50 miles north. These stones were floated down the Mississippi river on rafts. Fr. Jean was actively involved in the physical labor, working side-by-side with his parishioners. The parishioners loved and admired Fr. Jean.

In 1870, Fr. Jean brought back from France a beautiful sanctuary lamp as a gift from the Bonaparte family. The sanctuary lamp was a golden replica of the crown of France. The church was dedicated in 1869 even though the steeples were not completed until almost 20 years later in 1889. The majority of the building was completed for \$45,000. One of the biggest marvels with the church was the 50-foot, huge vaulted ceiling that had no visible pillars or supports to brace it. The secret about the buttresses on the outside of the building was kept from the public.¹



*St. Irenaeus in the final building stage, spring 1869, with the original rectory of Father Jean's which stood until Father Comerford built the new rectory at the turn of the century.
J. Jackson Collection*



*St. Irenaeus as it looked with the east entrance and steps about 1900.
J. Jackson Collection*

¹ Eckelberg, M.E. *The History of the Five Catholic Churches in Clinton, Iowa*. Clinton Printing Company, 1999.

Renovations

Pre - 1906

The original altar was made of stone. The crucifixion scene stained-glass window shined through as a backlight. The sanctuary lamp was also bigger. Here is one of the only known photos of the original altar.



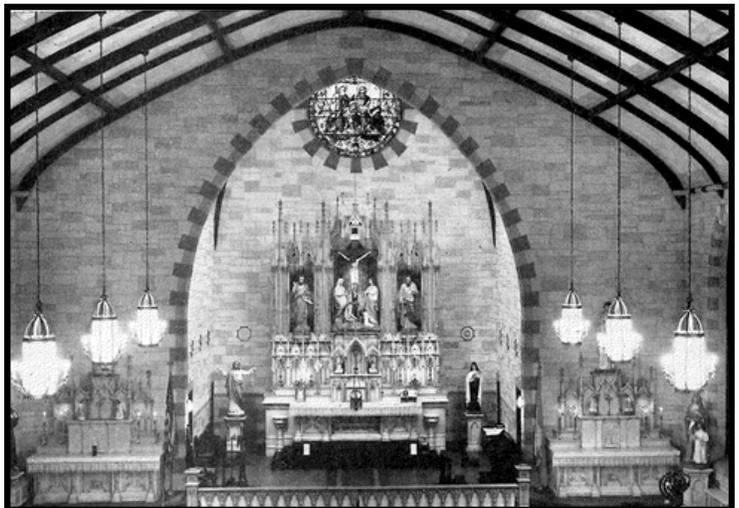
1906

In 1906, the entire interior of the church was flipped. It was hard for the elderly parishioners to climb the 21 stairs up to the main doors so the main entrance was flipped to the west side. The new entry was now off the main street and it was easier to enter at ground level.



1947

After WWII the interior was again renovated. The plaster on the walls and ceiling started peeling. Fr. Jackson, who was the pastor at the time, started fixing the interior. The walls and ceiling were covered with a faux stone to match the exterior. New Stations of the Cross were also added.



Recent Years



On June 28, 2008, the Davenport Diocese closed St. Irenaeus. There was talk of the church being bulldozed, but the idea was voted down since so many of the townspeople opposed it.

In 2009, the Clinton County Historical Society bought the church and turned it into a cultural center. It was put on the National Registry of Historical Places on September 3, 2010. The Clinton County Historical Society attempted to fix all the damage that had been caused by years of neglect but failed to do so.

In the meantime the original altars were sent to Japan, various items started to be collected in the church, layers of dust settled on everything, and dozens of pigeons moved into the church steeplets. The steeplets and roof were also in a poor state.

Acquiring St. Irenaeus

St. Irenaeus is well known by almost everyone who lives in and around the city of Clinton, Iowa. It sits majestically looking out over the Mississippi River and is hard to miss. Matthew Gabbard, the current president of the St. Irenaeus board, had known about the church for a long time but had never given it much thought. However, on March 19, 2021, the feast of St. Joseph, he noticed the poor condition of the roof and steeples and wondered if it was ever going to get fixed. It didn't take him long to find the Clinton County Historical Society. When Matthew asked the President of the Clinton County Historical Society about the church, she looked at him and said, "I'll sell it to you right now for a dollar". It would be a huge project to take on, as the church was in desperate need of work, so Matthew went home to pray about it. However, that summer was a busy summer and due to work the idea was put on the back burner.



That August little Maximilian was born and that is when things started happening. Maximilian was the newest member in Matthew and Elizabeth's family. He was a beautiful baby and loved by everyone. However, he had a serious genetic disorder; life expectancy was less than a year. He lived for four months and died on Our Lady of Guadalupe's feast day. This was an extremely hard four months. No words can describe the pain of losing someone you love. Every day little Maximilian suffered from severe nerve pains as his organs slowly deteriorated. On the other hand, everything started coming together with St. Irenaeus. Great graces come from great crosses. There was enough support and everything was lining up perfectly. This shows how God's ways are not our ways. Three days before Maximilian died St. Irenaeus's deed was officially transferred to the restorers.

First Mass



Installing new organ



Testing new organ



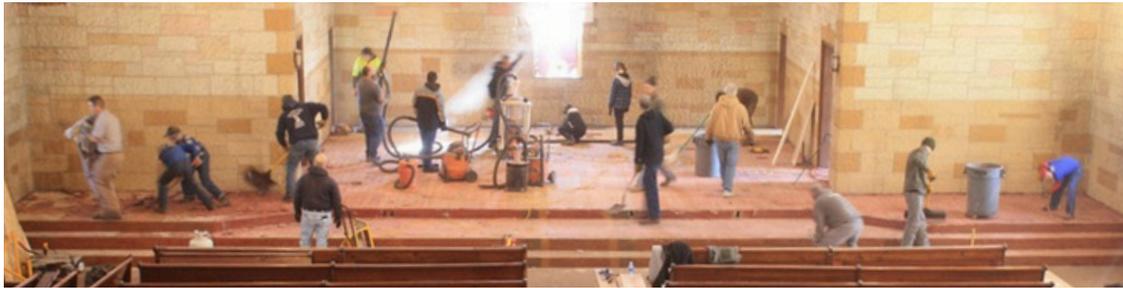
Building predella



December 18, 2021

After Maximilian's death, preparations were quickly made in order to have his funeral Mass at St. Irenaeus. Someone generously donated a beautiful new organ, and the team quickly built a temporary predella (the altar steps) and put together an altar. It was the first Mass in St. Irenaeus in over ten years. The Mass of the Angels was beautiful. The choir sang the *Ave Maria* and the restoration began.

Demolition



One of the first steps taken to restore St. Irenaeus was demolition. Over the past several years, thousands of hours of grueling demo work has been performed. It has played an essential role in the restoration.

The plaster in the sacristies was torn out.



The old ceiling came down, along with the sawdust insulation.



The dirt underneath the confessional room floor was dug out in order to support the joists and accommodate new duct work.



Tearing out the old chimney was an intense process. It took over five days to remove **800 cubic ft.** of double-lined chimney bricks.



Due to the insane amount of dust that was created from the demolition, different tools were designed to help with air control.



The old sanctuary floor was sagging and unstable. It was torn out in order to rebuild it.

Cleaning

The Irish Rover and Ice Water
-February 2022



One sub-zero day in February, some of the men decided that the church was too dirty! Hours of laboring on framing, wood cutting, and more to build the sanctuary floor had taken its toll on the pews. Quite simply... they were pretty filthy. Every pew had about an inch of sawdust and who knows what else covering it.

It was definitely the perfect day to correct this problem... below zero, and no heating in the church. It was a no brainer of who to choose for the job.

Floating from the basement could be heard quite the racket of Irish folk songs. (I personally think we didn't sound too bad.) Our small band of guitar, violin, pot and pan percussion, and of course singing (In our defense, we do actually work... sometimes we just take little breaks) were called away from our songs. Myself and three others had the privilege of being nominated to wipe down all eighty-plus pews. Because it was so cold outside and the church had no heating, naturally the water to clean the pews was freezing! After about 20 seconds of working, we decided that it was way too cold, so someone had the bright idea to use the ancient microwave from the basement.



We grabbed an equally ancient glass pan, poured the ice water in it, and turned on the microwave. The water took what seemed like forever to reach the lukewarm stage and got cold after about two minutes... but hey! It made us feel better.

After lots of groaning, laughing, and singing, the pews were clean as can be.

- A volunteer

P.S. In about two weeks they needed another cleaning!

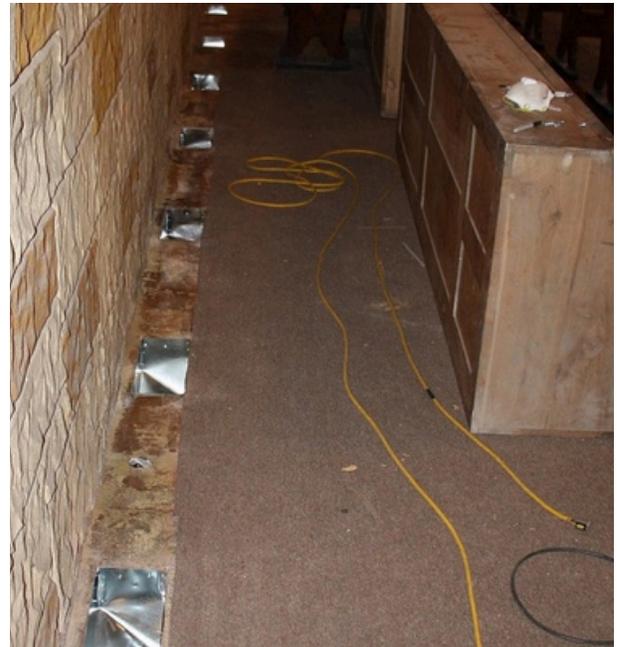
New HVAC System



A brand new HVAC system was installed. The system was massive and included eight different main units. The vents were cut into the main nave floor. This new HVAC system replaces the old boiler system that was ripped out in 2008.



HVAC furnace units



Duct work vent holes

New Roof

March 4, 2022



One of the big highlights in March was the new roof.

The previous roof was very old and falling apart. A telehandler and scissors lift were used to help transport the roofing crew and materials up and down. It was labor intensive job; the old roof was completely stripped and then re-sheeted. New gutters were also added in April 2022.

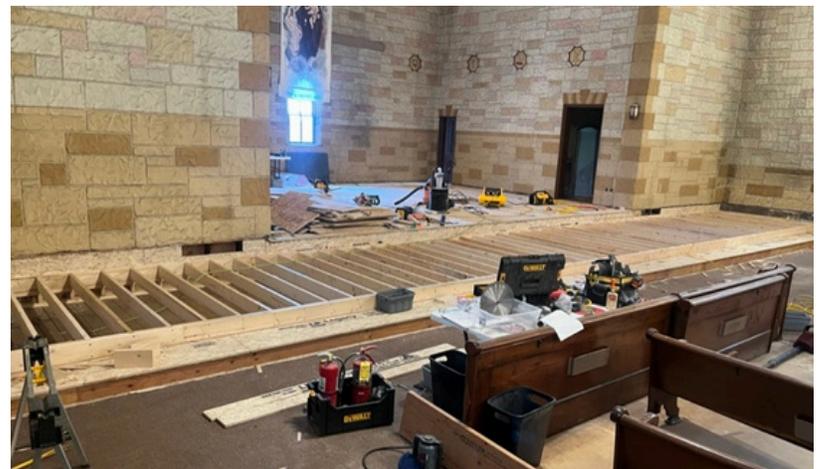
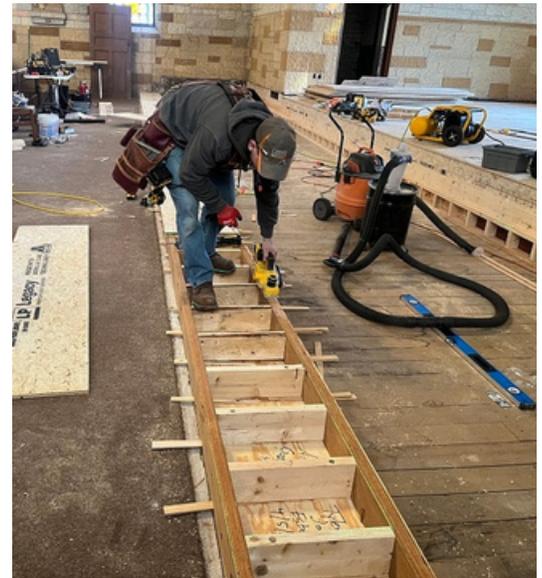


Telehandler used to lift materials to the roof



Installing gutters

Sanctuary Floor & Predella



The new sanctuary floor was built with laminated veneer lumber. It is extremely strong. The floor needed to be able to support the weight of the future high altar. The duct work runs underneath the floor. It took some careful engineering to get the duct and floor joists to fit together just right.

“My most memorable moment of quality was when I saw—with pride, an 8ft level (tool) glide across the sanctuary joist, which span 27ft, without catching a single one, all because we took the time to use LVL and laser level the floor. This reassured me that whatever problem occurs we will take the steps to overcome them the right way with quality and a pursuit of excellence, which is all done for the greater glory of God.”

— Volunteer

Confessional Floor

March 24, 2022



The room that the new confessionals would be built in needed some major reconstruction. The old joists were rotting; the dirt had to be dug out from around them so they could be reinforced. Even though this was a very dirty and thankless task, it could not be put off until later.

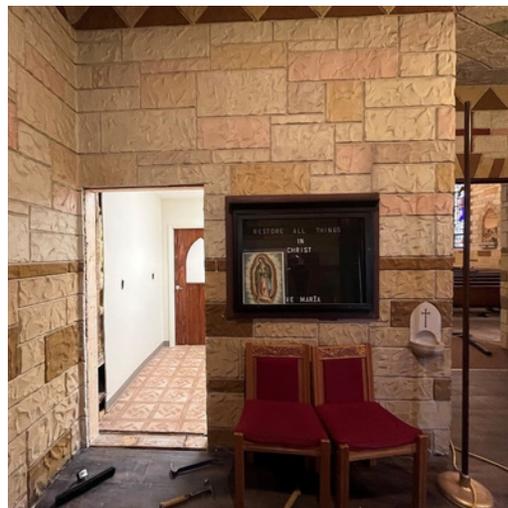
Bathroom Doors

April 3, 2022

Before



After



The bathroom doors were switched from inside the church to the vestibule. A lot of thought has been put into efficient and convenient bathrooms.

Steeple Roofs

Mid-October
- Nov. 22, 2022



Finished with new shingles

These steeples that proclaim the Cross to Clinton have always been a gigantic task. At their construction in the 1870's, it took a decade to complete them. Now again, it also takes much time and effort to restore them.

The two steeples tower at a height of 124 feet and 136 feet. One crane, one 150ft boom lift, one 135ft boom lift, two 125ft boom lifts, two 80ft boom lifts, and an 80ft tall scaffolding tower have all been used in the steeple work. (see more on page 31)



Constant mess to clean up



Actual Work Report from Working on Site:

“Last Saturday there were nine volunteers working and a lot of work got done. All the old shingles were picked up, swept up and put in the dumpster. Also, the plywood was measured and cut on the ground ready to be installed. It was a very productive day. There is always work to be done so contact us if you want to come and help restore the church.

The lifts can only hold 500 pounds of weight so only two men can be in the basket at one time. One has to be a skilled operator and the other the roofer – both wearing safety harness. The lifts are very complicated to run – there is so many controls. One lift broke down twice in mid-air and left the two men stranded for a time. The lift technician came and said that lift needs a new part and is now out of service. It is a very slow process to work on steeples.”

- General Contractor



Ten-minute ride to the top



Workers trying to stay joyful and warm

Steeple Roofs



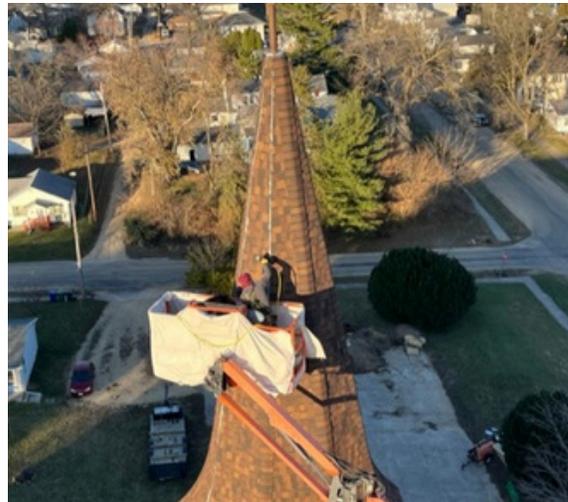
Stripping old shingles



Laying sheathing



Attaching underlayment



Laying shingles

Throughout the St. Irenaeus Church restoration there have been countless problems to overcome and hardships to face; however, restoring the steeples has by far been the most challenging part of the project. Every problem has to be solved over 100 feet up in the air which makes it extra tricky. There was a multitude of different steps to the steeple restoration, which also lengthened the process. Some of the days/nights were way below freezing so the crew wrapped the lift buckets in tarps and put in electric heaters to help keep the heat in and the wind out.

Framing



Framing in the basement



Work site meeting



One cut of thousands



Ironwork on beams

The framing in the basement has been a slow and steady process. The kitchen, bathrooms, doors, walls, and ceiling all need new framing. Thousands of boards have been cut and screwed together to frame in the basement. Every structure needs a solid foundation.

“The St. Irenaeus team has overcome many challenges. From the old framing in the basement, which covered ancient sawdust insulation packed between the joists, to shoveling and vacuuming the six inches of pigeon [droppings] in the steeples—the team doesn't cut corners.”

-Project Foreman

Painting

November –
December 2022



A temporary platform was built so the scaffolding could reach the ceiling. Volunteers used the month of December to completely repaint the sanctuary. After one of the more modern renovations the ceiling was painted with pastels. It was repainted with neutral colors to give it a clean and calm look.

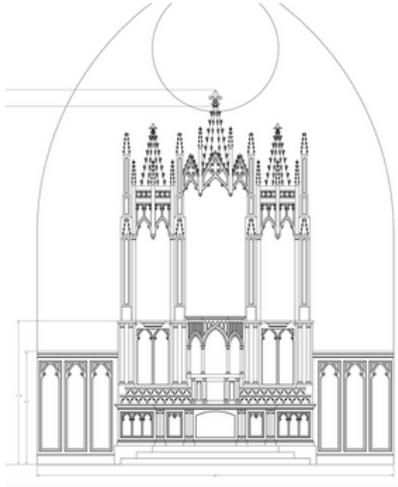


Before



After

The Altar



29 feet, 8 inches tall



Altar blueprints



Work done by
CNC lathe



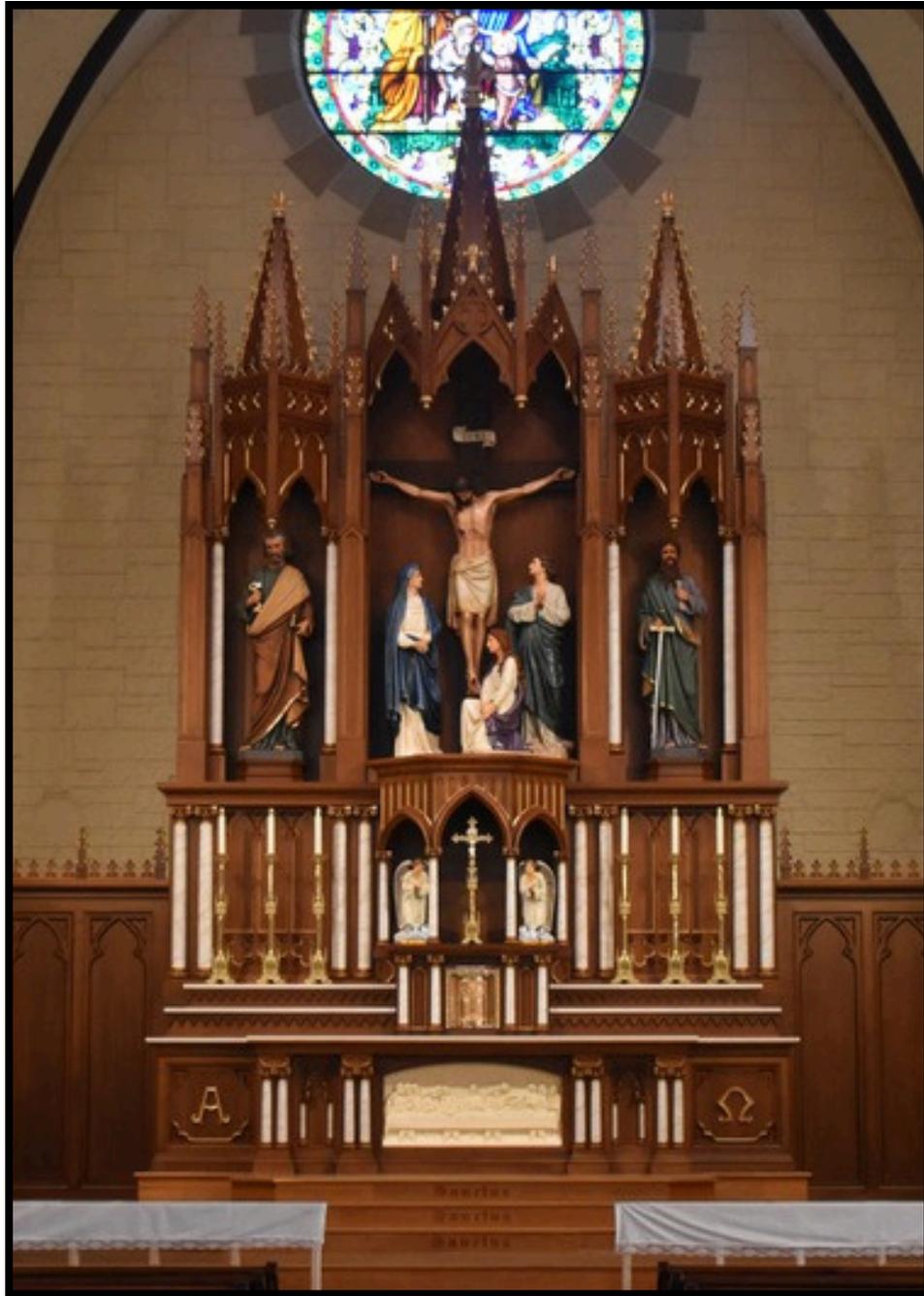
Installing the crucifix canopy



Pre-staining

The new high altar in St. Irenaeus is the most cherished item in the church. The team of restorers is particularly proud of it. The original high altar was torn down and sold prior to the church's closing. Ever since acquiring the church there have been dreams of a big magnificent high altar - a fitting home for Our Lord. These dreams were quickly fulfilled and within months enough donations were raised to cover the cost of the \$250,000 high altar. The altar was built in Kentucky, installed in two different sections and completed in August 2023. A new hardwood floor preceded it in May 2023.

August 28, 2023



Scan this code to see more
or search for the St. Irenaeus
Chapel channel on YouTube.

Painting



A team of volunteer painters spent many hours sanding, priming, plastering, and painting walls, ceilings, windows, Stations of the Cross, the altar statues, and even the Last Supper image for the altar.

While trying to decide what color to paint the church interior, a couple of the same windows and station's frames were repainted again and again to figure out what color combination looked best. At one point the painters even went for a mottled brick look. The look would have require each individual brick in the entire church to be hand painted. Thankfully, we didn't do that; it would have taken a lifetime to finish.

Looking back, one member of the team stated: "The hardest single decision for the team to make by far was what color to paint the nave. The decision went on for over two weeks until our general contractor put his foot down and made the final call which turned out to look great."

December 2023 - January 24, 2024



Though the painting team used a spray gun to make the job go speedily, it still seemed to take forever!

There were many steps to painting and it was completed entirely by volunteers.

The old pews were still in the church, so they were shuffled around when the painters moved to another part of the church.

The scaffolding also had to be assembled and taken down and reassembled many times since there were the sanctuary steps to work around.

Painting



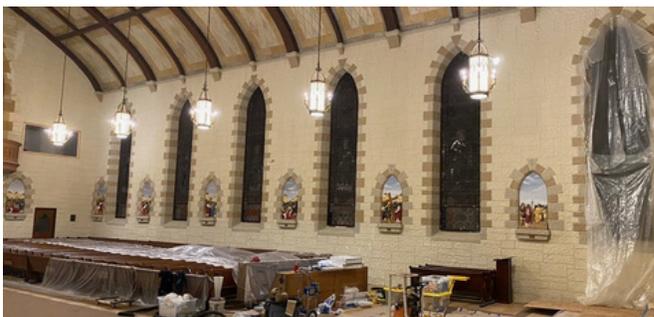
Half-finished ceiling



Protecting the stations and painting the window trim



Painting around windows



North wall nearly finished



Buckets used for the job

First, the walls and ceiling had to be vacuumed to remove the built-up dust and grime. Next everything had to be covered and taped off since the spray paint would get in the air and speckle everything. Then the primer coat was applied and the paint was sprayed on.

Finally, all the window and station frames were hand-painted.

Outside



Cutting down overgrown trees



Remove overgrown hedge



Preparing for retaining wall



Building retaining wall



New plants by main entry

Many hours have been put into making the outside landscape not only look presentable but also functional. Retaining walls have been put up, concrete pads poured, trees cut down, grass seeded, bushes removed and hedges cut. Perennials were planted near the main entry and shade trees established around the property.

In the summer, several families take turns maintaining the lawn.

Floor

June - July 2024



Spreading floor leveler



Laying the luxury vinyl tile (LVT)

The goal of the team has been to build things to code or better. This has been headed by our general contractor who has been the center and foundation for the excellent craftsmanship done for the project. No corners are cut. Quality is always the goal even if it costs more.

A perfect example was the general contractor's decision to spend \$25k on floor leveler to level the nave floor so the pews would sit perfectly without planing or shimming. An expensive decision which paid us back in quality and labor.



Center aisle with a herringbone weave pattern

Pews

July 2024



A new altar rail was installed in February 2024



Pre-assembly



July 27, 2024

The new pews were another big accomplishment in the restoration. The old pews were falling apart. One little boy sat down on an old pew during the Stations of the Cross and the pew immediately collapsed under his feet. The boy quickly jumped back up to attend more attentively at the Stations of the Cross - he was embarrassed to have been caught sitting down!

This incident showed us the great need of new pews. The pew design was chosen to match the altar design. There was a tight deadline as the floor needed to be leveled and laid before the pews installed. Several intense days of work were put in to make it all happen.

Plumbing

January – March 15, 2025



Breaking concrete



To new bathrooms



For added toilets

To prepare for expanded restrooms, the existing plumbing was evaluated by camera. The concrete was then cut, broken and carried out to expose the known-broken pipes. The pipes were repaired and then more pipes were laid. Each toilet stall was vented to the attic through exhaust pipes that were recently installed within the walls. The new sewer pipes will accommodate twelve toilets to meet city codes.



Hauling in lime



Packing lime



Fresh concrete

Dirt and concrete was hauled out by wheelbarrow. Then lime was hauled in and packed to prepare for new concrete.

Upstairs, the bathroom doors were previously switched from inside the church to the vestibule. A lot of thought has been put into efficient and convenient bathrooms.

In all, the chapel plans to finish six restrooms with twelve total stalls - including three handicap accessible restrooms, three urinal stalls, and four diaper changing tables.

Basement

March 2025



Extended wall



Sistered floor joists



New custodian closet

From the lower level, the nave floor was strengthened by extending the basement walls to the floor joists. This helps to carry the weight of the newly leveled floor above, and the sturdy pews. The floor joists were sistered – an additional joist now runs alongside the original.

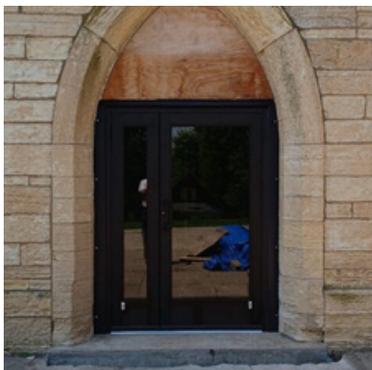
In the kitchen, a custodian closet was built. Thinking ahead, walls were framed for a new ladies' room and to create two family restrooms.

Throughout the basement, 3,000 feet of wire was pulled through conduit for new outlets and light switches at every doorway.

Someday, these spaces will be key for the formation, fellowship and the needs of the church community.

New Doors

Spring 2025



Exterior doors have been replaced as time and resources allow. To date, five doors have been manufactured and installed.

For the main door into the basement, the concrete at the threshold of the door heaved and had to be cut, jack-hammered and re-poured so that the new door could open and close properly.

Sound System

April 2025



The control panel



Wall-mounted speakers match the wall color

The chapel had no existing sound system to use for previous Masses. While temporary solutions were attempted, they weren't impressive. A new speaker system was sought out locally and professionals were consulted. Acoustics were evaluated and measured so the proper system could be ordered.

The selected speakers were painted to match the interior walls, then installed and its electronics were wired.

The new sound system was calibrated and the speakers were adjusted to deliver sound at pew height. The system includes a podium microphone, hand-held microphone and a microphone headset. In addition, there are four portable earpieces available for Mass attendees. In the future, the system can be expanded to the vestibule, cry room and basement.

With the wi-fi system, sound can also be heard through the Wavecast app on cell phones or hearing aids while in the building. Sermons and conferences can also be recorded and shared online.



Stationary mic at ambo



Hand and headset mics



One of four hearing devices



System being calibrated by a professional

Steeple Restoration

The tackling of the steeples - to reinforce and refinish them - was NO small task in skills, resources or size. The work required much time and attention to the many layers of details. To begin:

- Materials were designed and manufactured to facilitate the restoration.
- Scaffolding was constructed.
- Materials were hauled up manually, with an elevator, and by a crane.
- Men had to add a plank between the roof and the scaffolding.

Once at the top and digging into the project, several things had to be examined, such as the limestone, mortar and wood beams. Plus, the overall integrity of the structure.

Upon evaluation, the following work was deemed necessary immediately:

- Metal C-channel was used to sandwich the old beams and strengthen the structure.
- LVL beams, blocks, and jacks were used to the level and re-set the steeple and cupola to the limestone tower.
- The new and old anchors were threaded through the new beams and secured into the tower wall.



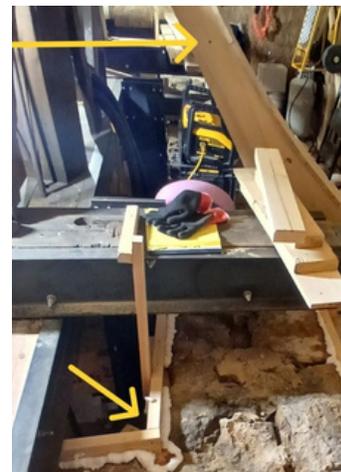
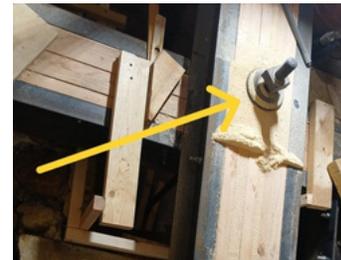
Steeple Restoration

To establish a good environment for workers and materials during the winter months, a temporary room was built around the steeple tower. The temperature could then be controlled, which will be necessary for the mortar materials that were used to level the limestone.

In the cupola, the long, original bolts were threaded through the beams and anchored twenty feet into the tower walls.

The limestone wall was then framed up and new mortar was poured into and on top of the surface. Once cured, the beams were set down on top the now-level surface. This new mortar improved the overall integrity of the structure. To ensure proper curing, the workroom was heated with warm air sent up from the basement, and concrete blankets are used for insulation.

Off-site, additional work was done to prepare materials for the roof's curved shape - to be pieced together later.



At right, you can see:

1. Original beams that were reinforced by C – channel,
2. Long bolts that anchored the cupola 20 feet into the tower,
3. Limestone walls framed up for mortar to be poured, and a template for the curved roofline,
4. New mortar poured on top of the limestone wall to create a sturdy, level surface, compared to original.
5. The workroom warmed by smiles.

It takes a lot of brain power to make a roof transition from an eight-sided cupola into a four-sided tower!



Finishing framing



Nailing plywood



Removing siding



With new trim

The curved roofline was created, then layered with sheathing and tar paper. It was shingled to match the main roof.

On the exposed cupola, the original wooden siding was stripped off and more scaffolding was constructed to reach the top of the cupola.

As the old wood was very weathered, some reframing was done on the cupola. The windows that were constructed off-site were installed.

The surface of the cupola and its eight louvered windows were finished with AZEK materials that will not require maintenance into the future.



The next steeple



View from east

Steeple Restoration

The nine months of examining, engineering, manufacturing, strengthening, securing, leveling, detailing, weatherproofing and much more was complete on September 3rd, the feast of St. Pius X, and

all for the greater glory of God.



Watch the work in action!
Scan this QR code or
search YouTube for
@StIrenaeusChapel



Roof Valley

The valley and junction between the roof and steeple is being reworked, having found weathered materials and vulnerability. The surface will be switched out from rubber to copper – a material that will last much longer and require little to no maintenance.

While opened up, the remaining chimney was removed from above the sanctuary and the debris was hauled away. Four trusses were reattached to the limestone wall where water had seeped in over the years and rotted them away.

Pictured here is the work of one day - removing old materials, demolishing the old chimney, and sealing the surface before the next chance of rain. Seven volunteers worked along with the general contractor to make it happen quickly.

Can you spot the local seminarian?

Can you find the three young men on break from La Salette Academy?



For the Soul



Boys returned home from Camp De Smet

During 2025, benefactors remained active tending to their spiritual well-being and growth. The faithful prayed through retreats, visited religious communities, enjoyed youth camps, walked on pilgrimage, traveled to Rome, studied at Catholic schools, joined the Eucharistic Crusade (EC), offered Holy Hours, practiced for schola, trained servers, and more.



Girls arrived to St. Maria Goretti Girls' Camp



Local youth enrolled in E.C. at St. Therese Chapel



St. Irenaeus benefactors on the Holy Hill Pilgrimage



SSPX Jubilee Procession into St. Peter's Basilica



School photo from La Salette Academy



Class photo from St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary

Behind the Scenes

Thousands of hours of work have been completed in the restoration project and this booklet only scrapes the surface of what all has been done.

Here is a sample of other efforts that have not yet been mentioned:



Electrical panel moved and reorganized



Basement wall required much reinforcement



Hardwood floor boards picked up and hauled



New crosses were custom designed and painted



Confessionals in progress



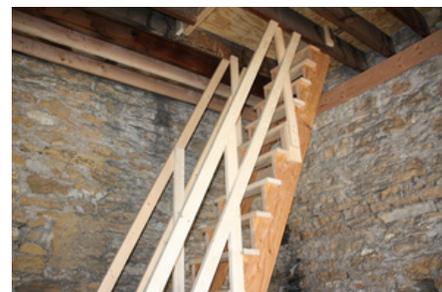
Hidden work up in the attic



Cryroom created by choir loft



Linens made to fit the new altar



Stairs were built in both steeple towers

Masses



In 2022, all the items needed for offering Holy Mass were donated by many, many benefactors - chalices, vestments, candles, thurifer and more.

The items were blessed by an SSPX priest on a visit in January 2023.



Over a dozen Masses have been said in St. Irenaeus by visiting priests. Due to the shortage of priests, the parish is still waiting for a pastor. Please pray for this intention.

While waiting, the parish has held altar server and choir practices preparing to become a fully-operational parish one day.



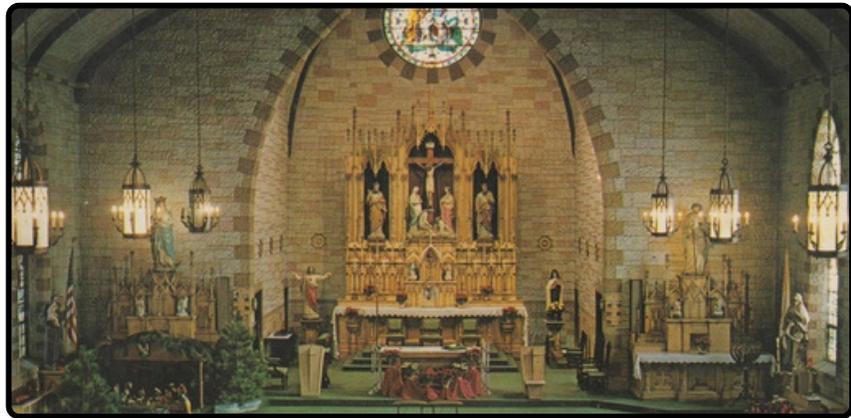
Pentecost
June 8, 2025

Timeline

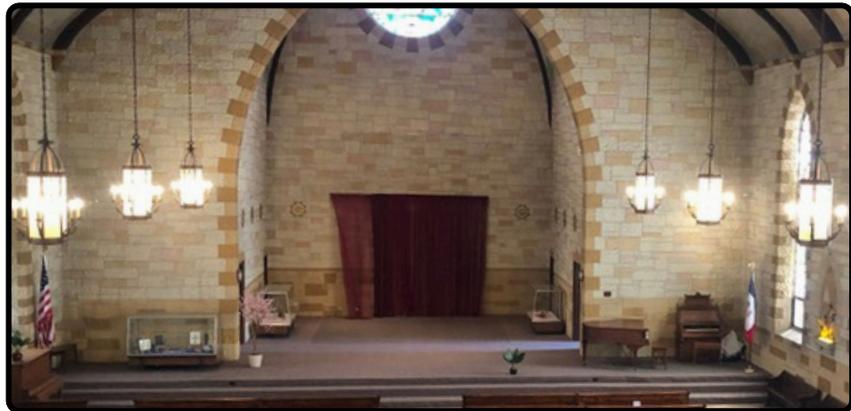
1900s



1970s



2021



2025



Statistics

Timeline

- Cornerstone laid May 1, 1864
- Dedicated June 27, 1869
- Steeples completed 1889
- First renovation 1906
- Second renovation 1940's
- Last Mass before closing June 28, 2008
- Acquired by Clinton Historical Society 2009
- Restorers acquired deed December 9, 2021
- First Mass in over 10 years December 18, 2021

Restoration Stats

- Organ installed Dec. 13, 2021
- New Roof March 2022
- HVAC system April 2022
- Steeples shingled November 2022
- New altar installed August 28, 2023
- New interior painted December 2023
- Floor and pews installed July 2024

Top Statistics

- Donations over \$1.8 million
- 27 local families
- 8,000+ volunteer hours
- 100 different volunteers

Building Facts

- Church Dimensions: 160' x 60'. Ceiling 48'
- Stain glass windows 12 Apostles: 22' tall x 4.5' wide
- Steeples: South Steeple 166' North steeple 136'
- Altar: 29' 8" tall
- Main nave dimensions: 55' x 75'
- Handicap accessible Basement
- Full city block, except for two lots



Benefactors on December 11, 2021

**“If you continue with
prayer and penance,
God will reward you.”**

-Father John Fullerton, SSPX US District Superior



Father Fullerton signing a sacristy cabinet during his visit to St. Irenaeus Chapel on June 9, 2022.

Donate

Coming up next will be rebuilding the south steeple, finishing the six restrooms and making the sacristies functional.

You can help restore St. Irenaeus Church.



To donate online:



To mail a donation:

St. Irenaeus Chapel
2811 N 2nd Street
Clinton, IA 52732

To learn more, visit:
StIrenaeusChapel.org



"St. Irenaeus Church is the finest edifice in the place. It is the largest Catholic Church in Iowa ... It is constructed so solidly that years and ages shall pass away and it will remain as permanently as the day it was built — an enduring monument to the faith of its projects."

Lyons Mirror
June 25, 1870

Why are we doing this?

Because in Her quiet way, Our Lady asked for this to be done. There are so many little things that have fallen into place so perfectly with this project, that there is no doubting, She is clearly overseeing it. She wants this done.

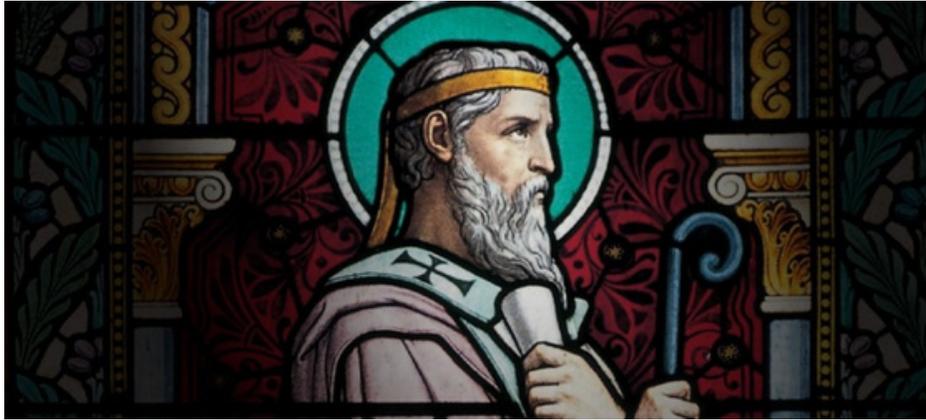
We are all required, by God, to live our life according to our state and duty. He asks many of us to do more. I have been blessed with many talents and abilities. To whom much is given, much is expected. Why not me, if not me, who? These are the things I asked of myself. I didn't want to do this project at all. I understand the cost of these things. The physical and mental strength, and the financial. But time, when that is spent it is gone! Most of us are selfish with our time. I believe that the hardest sacrifice to make is our time. All of this is overridden by the drive to save souls. As Catholics this is our goal.

Like many, I spent years laying low. Nothing getting done. I am tired of watching things get destroyed and taken. Our churches and tradition being lost along with our liturgy. This project was presented to me, to help restore and rebuild what has been lost. If I can help build a proper sanctuary for the Mass, promote the proper liturgy, and provide a spiritual home for souls to find peace in Our Lord, and ultimately save souls, then the price is worth it. As our family motto goes, "*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*"!

-Matthew Gabbard, General Contractor



About St. Irenaeus of Lyons



Saint Irenaeus (ear-ra-NAY-us) was born about the year 120 A.D., of Christian parents. As a young man, he listened to the preaching of St. Polycarp, and went on to learn much from him. After studying in Rome, he was ordained a priest by Bishop Pothinus of Lyons, France, and was sent right back to Rome, with two letters for Pope St. Eleutherius.

As a result of this journey, Irenaeus escaped the persecution of the Church in Lyons, in which the bishop and many others became martyrs. When he returned, he was chosen to become the next bishop of Lyons. By his preaching, he converted most of that country to the Faith.

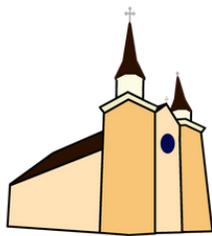
A great theologian, this Saint wrote several brilliant works, which were translated into many different languages. These are the most well-known: *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching* - a work of apologetics, and *Against Heresies* - refuting the Gnostic heresy.

Irenaeus suffered a glorious martyrdom around the year 200 A.D, and was recognized as a Father of the Church.

St. Irenaeus, *ora pro nobis!*



Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam



St. Irenaeus Chapel
2811 N 2nd Street
Clinton, IA 52732
563-503-6320



To learn more, visit
www.StIrenaeusChapel.org
or scan the QR code
with your phone.