

Did you guess...Medina?

St. Mary's Catholic Church built their first small church in 1905 and it had to be enlarged in 1927. The first building was destroyed in 1945 when a tornado swept through town and the church was hit by lightning. Mass was celebrated at a three-room house for a while with the priest in one room, the choir in a second room and the parishioners in the third, but this soon grew tiresome. In 1946 a basement was dug and in 1949 the church that is now standing was constructed. This new church was built of brick with a concrete roof and cupola so that it would theoretically withstand adverse weather.

Longtime parishioner Duane Klostreich said that although they are in a small town, St. Mary's has a nice religion class filled with young people that current pastor Father Jerome Hunkler does a great job with; and the Ladies Aid has done, and still does, a tremendous job raising money to help pay the bills for the church. For 25 years they have had an annual fall turkey dinner that raises enough money to keep the doors open. Klostreich told of how long-time pastor, Father Andrew Roehrich, now retired and living in Hankinson at St. Gerard's Nursing Home, would "always provide fresh garden potatoes for the annual fall turkey dinner. The parishioners would dig them and one hill would provide a five-gallon pail full of potatoes. Father Roehrich was a master gardener and he was proud of his garden. He was a wonderful pastor for 25 years here."

St. Mary's is a mission parish of St. Francis de Sales church in Steele. Father Hunkler also serves another mission parish, St. Paul's Church in Tappen.

Information compiled by Cherylynn Fausel, communications assistant.