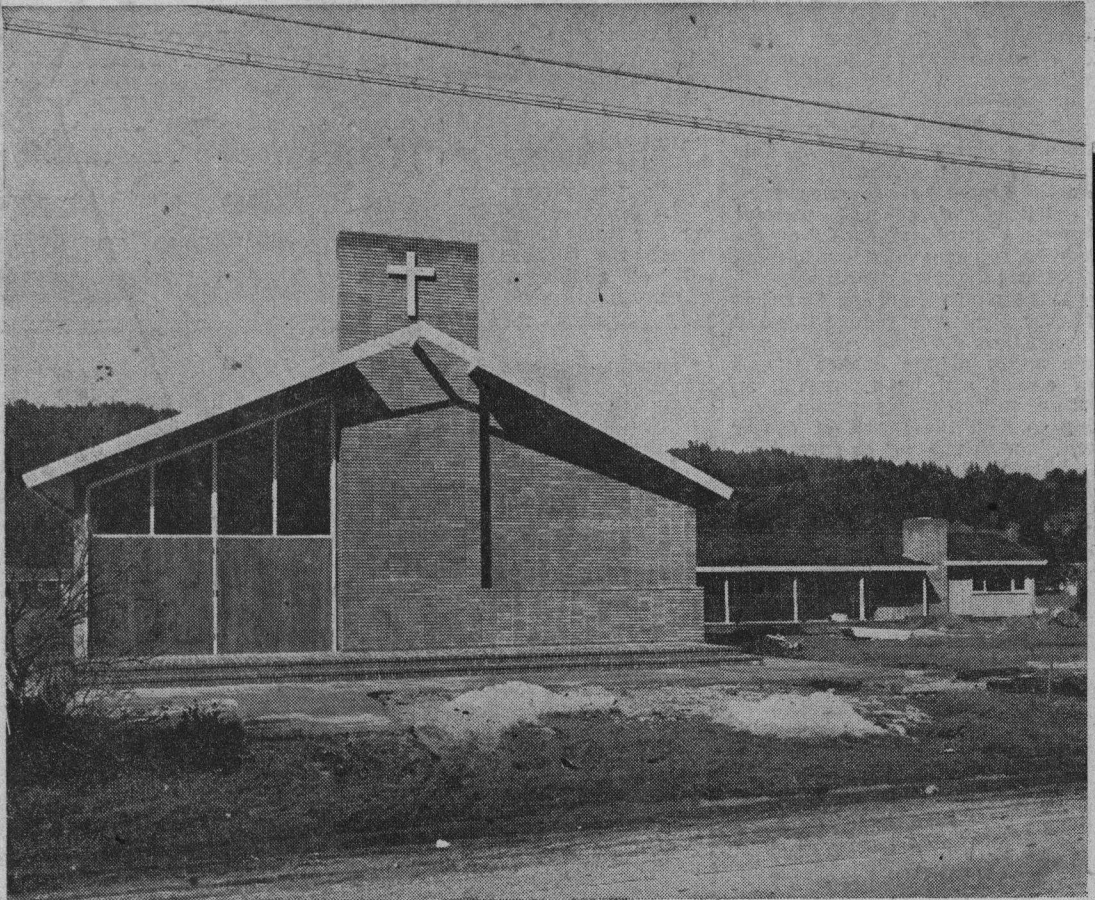


4-15-53

Church Completed In Time For Easter



Just in time for Easter, the St. John's Catholic church and rectory is completed. It took ten

years of work on the part of Felton and Davenport parishioners, and substantial help from the Extension society, to raise funds for

the building. This picture was taken when members were getting the grounds ready.

New Catholic Church Built In Felton Represents Ten Years Of Hard Work By Parishioners

By Betty Wixcey

Catholics in the Davenport-Felton parish today will hold Easter services in their own church building, realizing at last their efforts over the last ten years.

The move for a church in Felton started in 1943, when a few laymen tried to get Holy Cross church to establish a mission there, William F. (Red) Sinnott, building committee chairman, recalled yesterday.

Beginning with the idea that a

priest could come to Felton every Sunday to conduct outdoor masses, they became more ambitious when they gave it some thought. "We decided there was no reason why we shouldn't have a church," Sinnott said.

So began the fund drive, with barbecues, card parties, sales, and dinners to raise money to build a church.

"We found out right away that the incentive was here," Sinnott recounted. "It was just a case of getting people together. There were only a few of us at the start."

Father John Nelson, who died a year ago, was appointed the first pastor of the Davenport-Felton parish in 1945.

While the drive went on, parishioners started meeting for their Sunday services in the Felton community hall.

Last year Father William A. Lane, the parish's new priest, instituted daily mass in the old Crown restaurant in the middle of town, as well.

"We hung a few drapes and stuck the altar in there for the services," Sinnott recalled. "We had daily mass there until a few months ago, when the building was torn down."

Finally last September plans, drawn by Architect James B. Crocker, were ready for the modern, ranch-type church and rectory which stands on San Lorenzo avenue a half mile south of Felton's shopping center.

L. W. Roth, the contractor, started work in October with L. W. Rolff, one of the members who spearheaded the move for

a Catholic church serving the district, as construction superintendent.

They hoped at first to have the structure up in time for Christmas, Sinnott said. As it turned out, parishioners donating their time have had quite a rush getting the grounds in shape for Easter, he reported.

Members of the church did most of the excavating, grading and landscaping themselves. Some of the construction materials were donated, too.

The first mass in the new building, of redwood and veneer Roman brick, will be celebrated at 8 a.m. today.

Although the church building and rectory are completed, the fund drive isn't over. There still are furnishings to get for inside of the church.

The building committee last week set plans for the annual St. John's Catholic church benefit dinner, to be held May 13 at Costella's Chalet in Felton, and for the sixth annual benefit barbecue, to be held on August 2 at Capt. Ed Dougherty's Boyland at Felton.

Rightfully proud of their \$50,000 structure, Felton and Davenport parishioners will not be satisfied until they have it furnished with "the statues and things a Catholic church should have."