

St. Mary Catholic Church

157 High Street

Williamston, MI 48895

www.stmarywilliamston.com

Financial Report for the Parish Website
Draft 1 – More Information Will Be Forthcoming

St. Mary Church: Property, Structures, and Debt.

In **1866**, the Waldo brothers offered to sell land at High and Cedar Streets to the Church for \$.25- if the Diocese built a church there within three years. There, during the winter of 1868-1869, the first **Church of St. Mary** parish was built. It was a plain, wooden frame structure: only 50 feet by 35 feet in size. Total cost: \$ 1,100.

Mount Calvary Cemetery- Began as a small family cemetery located on the Grimes family farm. Mt. Calvary was approximately 16 rods by 20 rods (roughly 2 acres). That land was purchased from John and Mary Grimes by the Bishop of Detroit, Casper H. Borgess on September 8, **1884** for \$100.00. On November 20, 1967, Robert and Audrey Ann Vorce donated approximately 2 acres to the parish, adjacent to Mt. Calvary Cemetery.

In **1895**, a fire destroyed **St. Mary Church**. Insurance coverage: \$ 2,000.

A new brick and stone church was built on the same site in 1895. A rectory was built in **1902**. To liquidate the debt on these new buildings, the ladies of the Church served chicken pie dinners at William's Grove on the north bank of the Red Cedar River. At other times, they used the Williamston Opera House to serve banquets, which were attended and enjoyed by the townspeople. Father John Connolly made sure that all church debts were liquidated by 1905.

During the 1930's, Father McCormick purchased the swamp and town dump to the north and west of St. Mary and led the clean up effort to create what is now beautiful McCormick Park. Following Father McCormick's death in 1945, his family gave this land to the City of Williamston.

In **1948**, **St. Joseph's Hall** (just north of the Church) was built by members of St. Mary Parish. Originally intended to become a two-story schoolhouse, the Hall has an extensive foundation. Earl Salisbury recalled that materials and labor were either donated or paid from the parish collection.

In **1956**, the Thompson Residence, east of the rectory, was purchased. It was remodeled and used as a convent.

St. Mary School was built in **1959** at a cost of \$ 122,778. After paying for the school, St. Mary Parish operated mortgage debt free for several decades. As of 1985, St. Mary Parish maintained savings of over \$ 230,000.

In **1985**, the old brick church building was replaced by the modern structure we have today. In addition, offices, the choir room, meeting space, storage facilities, and mechanical equipment/facilities were added. At the same time, the Church was connected with **St. Joseph's Hall** so that we are all under one roof. Parishioner Bill Methot served as construction superintendent. Total cost: \$ 1,337,746.

The Diocese of Lansing loaned St. Mary Church \$ 806,000 to supplement parish savings and cover construction costs. The **1985** Pledge Drive raised \$ 614,382, which was paid to the Diocese.

The **1988** Pledge Drive raised \$ 617,101, which was paid to the Diocese to cover the outstanding loan balance plus interest.

In **1995** both the rectory and convent were removed to make way for the **St. Mary Activity Center**. Concurrently, St. Joseph's Hall received new windows, carpet, and more. A condominium was purchased and is now used as a rectory. Asbestos was removed from the school. Three new classrooms and a library were built.

Total cost: \$ 1,419,460. This amount was added to the \$ 155,235 remaining and outstanding on the original Diocese loan. St. Mary Parish's debt to the Diocese increased to \$ 1,574,695 in 1997.

The pledge drive of **1995** collected \$ 794,047 and that money was paid to the Diocese to cover loan principal plus interest.

The pledge drive of **2001** collected \$ 627,401 (for loan principal and interest).

In **2004**, parishioners raised \$ 67,000 cash within less than one month to replace worn out asphalt shingles on the **St. Mary Church** with a new metallic roof guaranteed for 50 years.

As of October 1, 2005, **St. Mary Church** owes the Diocese of Lansing an outstanding \$ 874,124 in total mortgage debt.

One major factor for having an ongoing mortgage debt payable to the Diocese is that St. Mary Parish has, at times, failed to pay the principal amount due as agreed. Our monthly payment to the Diocese is supposed to be \$ 18,494. We have not been able to pay that amount on a consistent basis since 1997. This has caused the Diocese to charge St. Mary Parish additional interest costs because our outstanding mortgage balance increases in proportion to the amount that our mortgage payments are less than \$ 18,494 each month (as agreed).

Here is a summary of the Parish interest payments to the Diocese during these fiscal years:

FISCAL YEAR END INTEREST

2005	\$45,867
2004	89,291
2003	58,491
2002	54,890
2001	46,997
2000	59,016
1999	90,197
1998	147,350 (includes \$92,036 construction interest)
1997	1,424
1996	5,079
1995	11,823
1994	16,910
1993	23,014
1992	34,215
1991	28,857
1990	28,120