

History of Holy Apostles Catholic Church and Parish Community

WHY a New Parish: Problem – Solution

Holy Apostles Catholic Church came to be from the need to address a growing population throughout the Diocese of Boise, which encompasses the entire State of Idaho. A shortage of priests throughout the western United States in general, and an inability to develop sufficient vocations within Idaho, or to attract them from outside, was placing undue strain on the Diocese requiring optimal assignments of the available clergy. The largely rural nature of the area required many priests to commute between multiple small mission churches, the closure of which would have left many of the Catholic faithful abandoned.

In the mid-1990's the Diocese of Boise authorized the Vitality Project to address the worsening shortage of priests. In particular a need was recognized for a new parish to support growth in western Ada County. With all priests in the diocese already committed to other duties there were none available to support a new parish. One answer to that challenge was to consolidate a few parishes in more densely populated regions to reduce the number of priests needed to serve the area. The western edge of Ada County was growing rapidly due to available open space as farm land was developed for residential and non-farm commercial use. It seemed natural to consolidate two medium-sized parishes in the area. Bishop Todd Brown accepted the recommendation to merge Holy Spirit parish in Meridian with St. Matthew's parish from Eagle, Idaho. Father Timothy Ritchey was appointed as pastor of both parishes with the mandate to combine them. This would result in a single larger Holy Apostles Parish, the name being chosen as a clever contraction when considering that the guidance of the *Holy Spirit* led to the selection of *St. Matthew* as one of the *Holy Apostles*.

BACKGROUND – St. Matthew's in Eagle, Idaho

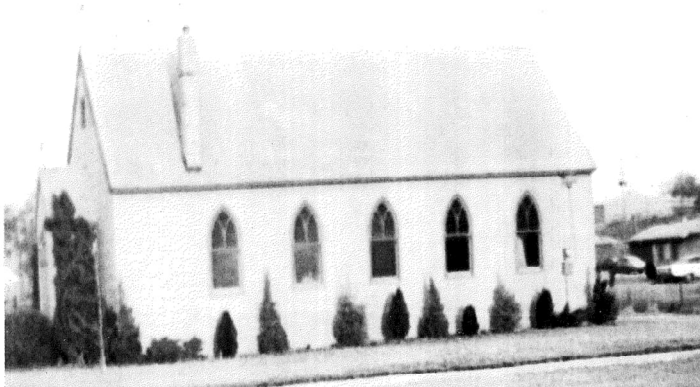
The genealogy of Holy Apostles dates back to 1920 in Eagle, Idaho. It was originally recognized as St. Mary's Catholic Mission subsidiary to the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Boise in 1922.¹

Between 1906 and 1919 the towns of Pearl and Willow Creek, Idaho were attended as Stations from St. John's Cathedral in Boise under the direction of the Right Reverend Alphonse Joseph Glorieux, D.D., the first Bishop of Boise. Since the town of Eagle, Idaho was within ten miles of downtown Boise, Catholic families living there had a choice of attending mass at the Cathedral or at one of the Stations. Following the death of Bishop Glorieux on August 25, 1917, the Right Reverend Daniel Mary Gorman was consecrated as the second Bishop of the Diocese of Boise

¹ Parish History, Holy Apostles, Sept. 26, 2023, available from <https://web.archive.org/web/20230926014924/https://holyapostlesmeridian.net/about/about-our-parish/>

on May 1, 1918. In 1920, Bishop Gorman kindly made attendance at religious services more convenient for the people of Eagle with the purchase of a residence on East Second Street in the town of Eagle, aided by a donation of \$650 from the Catholic Church Extension Society. The dwelling was outfitted with an auxiliary chapel and administered by Father Hubert Heitman from Caldwell, until 1925.² His successor, Father Caise, served from Caldwell until 1927 at which time the Caldwell parish had grown large enough that two Sunday Masses were necessary, so the Eagle facility was transferred to become St. Mary's *Mission* under St. John's Cathedral. Bishop Edward Joseph Kelly was appointed on December 19, 1927 and consecrated on March 6, 1928 as the third Bishop of Boise. In December 1930, Bishop Kelly transferred the Eagle property to be a dependent of the parish of Emmett served by Father J. J. Cregan. On September 1, 1935 Father William A. Gallahue took charge and was succeeded by Father M. L. Mroz and Father Jentzes who served the Mission while it was attached to Emmett.

On September 1, 1937 Father Kenneth F. Rowe became pastor. He arranged to purchase a new location in exchange for the old dwelling and then oversaw construction of a new church on the west side of Eagle Road. Described as a *charming little church*, it was dedicated on October 11, 1938.³ It was of frame construction, 50 feet by 24 feet, with asbestos shingle roof and siding, and walls and ceiling of Celotex. It seated 120 persons in 18 pews and was constructed at a cost of \$2675. Bishop Kelly appointed the Chaplain of St. Alphonsus Hospital to tend to the care of St. Mary's Mission of Eagle.



The Catholic community of about sixty members in Eagle settled in to its little church and supported an organization referred to as the Altar Society.



² St. Mary's Church, Eagle, 1920-1955; pp 8ff from Diocese of Boise Archives.

³ Letter from Mrs. Louis Ihli to Mrs. Conway, March 5, 1941 from Diocese of Boise Archives.

Meanwhile, as the Catholic population of the City of Boise grew to become too large to be served solely by the Cathedral, its North End Boise location was criticized for being *too far from the city center*. To accommodate the population growth of the downtown area, in 1937 Bishop Kelly had opened Boise's second Catholic parish with construction of St. Mary's Catholic Church of Boise, located at State and 26th Streets, formally titled *Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception*.⁴

In 1971, under Father Richard Wemhoff, the Catholic Community of Eagle purchased 10 acres of land on East First Street in Eagle. The land was subdivided into ten home lots plus 3 acres where the St. Mary's Mission building was relocated to a culdesac at the north end of the property. At the time of the move Father Wemhoff requested a name change to avoid confusion with St. Mary's of Boise. The request was granted and the name changed to St. Matthew's Catholic Church of Eagle, Idaho. A house next to the church to the southeast became the rectory for Father Wemhoff who served the 35 families of St. Matthew's as its first pastor in residence.



In 1974, Father Roger LaChance was assigned to St. Matthew's and moved into the Rectory. A year later Father Ed Cope exchanged positions with Father LaChance who moved to Lewiston to become Pastor at the larger parish of Our Lady of Lourdes. During Father Cope's time, a mobile home unit was placed on an adjacent lot to the southwest of the church and served as a parish hall dubbed 'Mary House'.

By 1979 when Father Dohman took over St. Matthew's, the parish had grown to 130 families. Father Dohman was succeeded by Father James Gelson, SJ, who served as pastor until Father Dennis Day was assigned to St. Matthew's in July, 1987.

To accommodate the rapid growth in and around Eagle, a new facility was constructed in 1993 under Father Day, and the original St. Matthew's building was sold to New Heights Baptist Church. In 2007 the building was renovated as part of The Landing Community Center, and relocated to be adjacent to Eagle City Hall to house the Eagle Museum of History and Preservation.

⁴ History of Saint Mary's Parish, Boise; <https://www.stmarysboise.org/st-marys-history>

The new St. Matthew's facility was constructed in 1993. It was located just up the hill to the north, across the street from Eagle Elementary School. The new property, at 544 N. Eagle Road, improved the Catholic presence in the area, moving from a side street in an older section of town to offer instant access from a major thoroughfare, North Eagle Road. The church building was designed as an interim multi-purpose facility pending



justification for funding of a standalone church. An existing home on the property served as a rectory for Father Dennis Day who oversaw construction managed by Bob Wright of Wright Brothers, The Building Company. The first Mass was celebrated in the new church in 1994. With the reassignment of Father Day to St. Joseph's Parish in northern Idaho in July of 1996, Father Mark Finley became pastor of St. Matthew's and moved into the rectory. In June of 1997 Father Finley departed and Father Timothy Ritchey took on responsibility for St. Matthew's in addition to Holy Spirit in Meridian; this was a first step in the merger that would create Holy Apostles. Since Father Ritchey was living in the rectory of Holy Spirit, the house that had served as a rectory for St. Matthew's became available as a home for Youth Ministers Mike and Deb Lee with their children.

BACKGROUND – Holy Spirit in Meridian, Idaho

The other side of the new Holy Apostles parish had its beginning in Meridian, Idaho where in 1941 two women, Mrs. Nourse and Mrs. Chamberlain, approached Bishop Edward Kelly with a petition from 42 families for creation of a local parish. They were told that if they could get thirty Catholic families to give to their campaign they could build a church; a building fund was started immediately with the two women going door-to-door. Meanwhile, the Bishop directed St. Mary's of Eagle to provide Mass for the people of Meridian, extending the duties of Father J. J. Creegan who had taken on St. Mary's in December, 1930.

On December 27, 1944, the Meridian community, with 32 registered families, was transferred to be under the direction of St. John's Cathedral. Mass was celebrated in the American Legion Hall until sufficient funds were raised to build a church.

On July 7, 1946, the day Mother Frances X. Cabrini was canonized, the new church building opened on First Street in Meridian with Father Schmidt presiding over the first Mass. On December 8, 1946 Bishop Kelly and Father Nicholas Hughes dedicated St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Catholic Mission Church with a seating capacity of 240.



With a more local presence in the Meridian area, the Catholic community grew until on July 19, 1963, there was support to purchase 20 acres on the north side of Cherry Lane, between Linder and Meridian Roads.



Construction of a rectory began in May of 1966 and was completed in September. On November 13, 1966, the parish of Meridian was formally established; no longer a mission.

Father Francis McGlinchey became the first resident pastor serving from 1963 to 1970 when he was replaced with the appointment of Father Thomas Halpin as pastor. It was under Father Halpin that the church buildings were constructed as designed by Boise architects, Dropping, Kelley, Hosford and LaMarche. Construction of the church and classrooms was completed in December of 1973.⁵

⁵ Holy Spirit Catholic Church, Directory 1996, "From Our Roots"

The parishioners voted to rename the parish. Those whose sentiment remained faithful to the past were persuaded by Bishop Trienen who remarked, “There is no dissension in heaven and I am sure St. Frances X. Cabrini would not mind seeing the Holy Spirit honored in this manner.”⁶ The name change to Holy Spirit Catholic Church became official with the dedication on January 29, 1974. Continued growth in the Meridian area made apparent the need for more room, and in 1976 construction of a hall/gym with kitchen and additional classrooms began to meet that need.

Upon Father Halpin’s retirement in January of 1982, Father Douglas Riffle was appointed as pastor. Father William Dodgson, who had also assisted Father Halpin, stayed on to assist Father Riffle until his retirement in June, 1994 when Father Timothy Ritchey was appointed pastor. Father Ritchey was pastor of Holy Spirit parish when in 1998 it became Holy Apostles South in anticipation of the parish merger with Holy Apostles North, the former St. Matthew's of Eagle.

SITE LOCATED

Since neither of the Eagle or Meridian sites had sufficient space for a facility that would accommodate the new larger parish, a new site was required. The search for a suitable property settled on the southeast corner at the intersection of Meridian Road and Chinden Blvd, Highway 20/26, where a parcel of twenty-four acres was available. Of historical interest is that this particular property had been occupied by the Blue Valley School, a classic one-room schoolhouse which served the community as a Polling Place for a Special Election on June 29, 1915 for “Bonds for Good Roads”.



Blue Valley School photograph.



1996 Painting by former student Janis Rambo.

In 1956 the property had been purchased by George and Betty Boyack who took down the school and built their home at 6210 N. Meridian Road. The Diocese of Boise purchased the property from the Boyacks, with provision to them for a typical one acre set aside, allowing them to remain in their home until such time as Holy Apostles needed the space. Mr. Boyack remained in his home until his death. Predeceased by his wife, he continued to cultivate a row of tall red Canna Lillies that provided an inviting entrance to Holy Apostles Catholic Church along the south side of the entrance from Meridian Road.

⁶ Ibid.

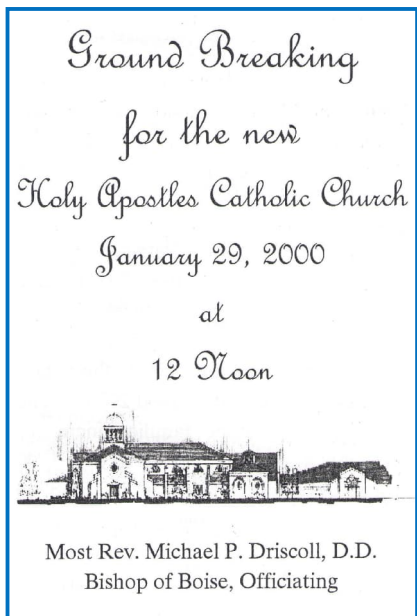
MERGER BEGINS

In 1998 under the direction of Father Timothy Ritchey, the merger of Holy Spirit (Meridian) and St. Matthew's (Eagle) parishes began when the former was renamed temporarily to Holy Apostles South and the latter to Holy Apostles North. The merger was completed in 2001.

The period from 1998 to 2001 encompassed the turn of the Millennium, with all of the apocalyptic visions associated with "Y2K". To borrow from Charles Dickens' it might have been seen as 'the best of times, and the worst of times'; best because of the demand of a growing Catholic community, and worst because of the lack of new vocations to the priesthood to support that growth. The union of Holy Apostles South to Holy Apostles North might have been viewed as a "Tale of Two Cities", namely Meridian and Eagle, Idaho. Mergers of any sort are not often easy, and like any pair of newly-weds there was an expected transition period, but in the fullness of time "the two of them became one body" (Genesis 2:24) in the larger Body of Christ. Unlike the Dickens report of the French Revolution, when challenges arose throughout the transition period they were met in a timely manner with amicable solutions. Holy Apostles Catholic Church in Meridian was officially dedicated by Bishop Michael P. Driscoll, Bishop of Boise on June 6, 2001.

One of the first challenges was the need to serve two sites, most importantly for priests to be available at both, at least for Sunday Masses. Father Tim Ritchey, as pastor of Holy Spirit Parish remained as pastor of Holy Apostles but was, at the time, unable to bi-locate. Therefore, he alternated between the two sites on a weekly basis with other priests, some of whom stepped out of retirement, assisting to serve Mass and hear Confessions. The Catholic community was well served by, and deeply appreciated the service of Father Don Riffle, Father William (Bill) Dogson, Father John O'Sullivan, and Monsignor Dennis Falk.

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS



The ceremonial Ground Breaking occurred on January 29, 2000 with the Most Reverend Michael Driscoll, Bishop of Boise, officiating, assisted by Father Tim Ritchey as Master of Ceremonies, with remarks by Rick Yzaguirre, Mayor of Eagle, and Keith Bird, President of Meridian City Council.



Construction on the twenty-four acre site began and by June, 2000 the foundation and first level of walls were in place to define the church, offices, dining hall, gym and classrooms. By October the dining hall with adjoining gym and classrooms had been covered, as seen in the aerial photo with north at the top.



Meanwhile, there remained the challenge of

putting together the required funds toward payments on a loan from the Diocese. In keeping with recognized Catholic traditions, Bingo parties and raffles seemed to be logical fits for fundraising activities. Hence, the transition period included the usual Bingo nights and annual Thanksgiving Turkey raffles.

A somewhat unconventional twist on the conventional game of Bingo, as exotic it gets in Idaho, occurred on September 30, 2000 when an open field on the Meridian Middle School property was prepared for a special event. A suitably large area was set up for an afternoon country fair with food and beverage stands, and games, including a dunk tank occupied by parish celebrities. Knights of Columbus from the Eagle council volunteered for Setup and Clean-up, while the Meridian council was responsible for food and games. For the main event, Cow Chip Bingo, the acreage was marked out in a grid of roughly one-yard squares which were identified by alphanumeric Bingo-like labels. Players purchased tickets for one or more of the blocks.



At the appropriate start time a well-fed cow was turned onto the playing field and the players waited anxiously (for hours) from the sidelines to see where the Chip would Fall.



It was in October 2000 that the signature feature of Holy Apostles was prepared and put into place. The steel structure for the cupola to be located above the altar was built as what nearly all observers viewed as an oversized bird cage. The first occupants of the cage were Deacon Jack Pelowitz (left) and Father Ritchey (right).

Upon raising of the frame to its final resting place, new residents took up occupancy. Passers-by on Chinden Blvd who had been curious about what was being constructed on the site seemed to be satisfied, if somewhat amused, with the appearance of “Tweety Bird” and companion.



By April of 2001 the Sanctuary had been carpeted and the Church was sufficiently complete for an informal open house.



The church was approved for occupancy but when it came time for the first Mass the pews had not yet arrived, so more than one thousand folding chairs were rented to accommodate those who attended the first several masses.

Undeterred for the lack of pews, the first Mass was celebrated at the Easter Vigil on April 14, 2001. Father Timothy Ritchey (Center) presided, accompanied by Deacons (left to right) Ralph Flager, Jack Pelowitz, Charlie Rasmussen and Jerry Pera.



The pews arrived weeks later and were installed in time for the church to be dedicated to the service of the community of Holy Apostles with a seating capacity of 1350.



Bishop Michael P. Driscoll presided over the Mass of Dedication on June 6, 2001. First, he prepared the Altar for the Sacrifice of the Mass by applying blessed oil.



Then Fr. Ritchey assisted to install a first class relic to the underside of the Altar. The particular relic of St. (Mother) Francis Xavier Cabrini had been transferred from the altar at Holy Spirit Catholic Church.

STRUCTURAL FORM and FINISHINGS

The physical structure of Holy Apostles Catholic Church is generally of a classic Cruciform layout. The Nave extends from the Narthex, the entrance, to the transepts. The term Nave, Latin *navis* meaning “ship”, is commonly believed to be derived from a connection to the “Ship of St. Peter” or the Ark of Noah. The transverse aisle crossing north and south between the transepts separates the Nave from the Sanctuary proper. Marble steps approach the Sanctuary and the Altar which is elevated above the transepts. The Cruciform is completed with the Apse extending the line of the Nave behind the Altar. In true classic form, the entry to the Narthex would have been from the west to approach the Altar at the east end of the Nave, but that was incompatible with allowance for other structures on the site, so next best was to conform to the east-west layout with north and south transepts. The Narthex is commonly referred to as a foyer, vestibule or lobby.

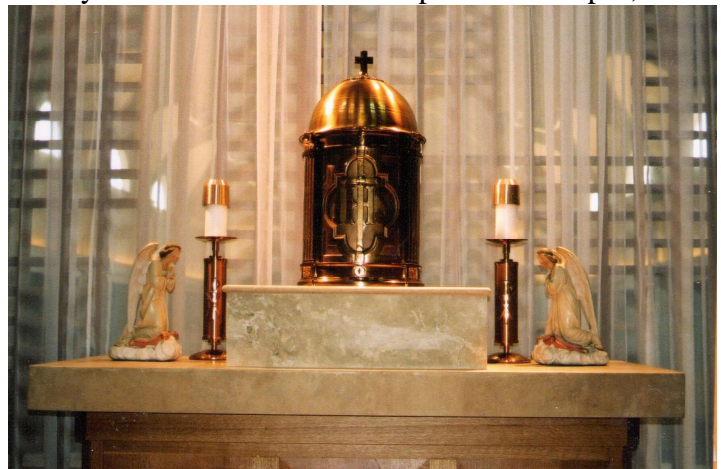
The Nave is lighted by a row of windows near the ceiling, called the clerestory. In recognition of the twelve men chosen as Apostles, the roof of the church is supported by twelve columns, five pair of which define the Nave inside the outer aisles, with the remaining two columns flanking the Sanctuary. The Tabernacle resides in the Apse to the west behind the Altar, in its own space.



At the time of construction interpretation of Canon Law suggested that for the Tabernacle to be ‘in its own space’ required that there be a visual barrier between the Altar and the Tabernacle. As the Eucharistic sacrifice is “the source and summit of the Christian life”, the Tabernacle was to be in an elevated area behind the altar so as not to

diminish the attention to the Eucharistic sacrifice during Mass. For these reasons a wood lattice was included in the design of the church to act as a screen behind the Altar. The Tabernacle was placed behind the lattice on a dedicated altar built by Nick Guho. In its own space in the Apse, the Tabernacle was visible to those genuflecting upon arriving for Mass but was sufficiently veiled so as to not be a distraction during the consecration of the Eucharist.

A second worship space was constructed as a Day Chapel at the rear of the main church to the left of the Narthex. This chapel was used for communion services on weekdays until attendance grew to exceed its capacity. By Canon Law there can only be



one tabernacle within a single building, so the presiding Deacon would fetch consecrated hosts from the Tabernacle in the main Sanctuary prior to each communion service. The Day Chapel accommodates a variety of needs from gatherings for healing services and other prayer groups, small weddings and baptisms. With a closed circuit monitor mounted behind the Altar, the chapel also provides for overflow seating during heavily attended Masses on Holy Days. The altar and monitor cabinet are the handiwork of parishioner Mike Siron,

There are a few items that distinguish a Roman Catholic church from other buildings. Foremost is a crucifix. The Crucifix suspended over the Altar in the Sanctuary at Holy Apostles Catholic Church is quite unique, having literal roots in the history of Boise, Idaho. The cross was milled from an eleven foot long section of wood taken from the top of a Sequoia tree. That tree, standing at what is now the northwest corner of St Luke's Regional Medical Center in Boise, had served for many years, through the 1980's and 1990's, as the Christmas tree for the City of Boise. The tree had come to Idaho as a sapling, gifted by John Muir to Emile Grandjean.

John Muir (1838-1914) was a prolific author of his adventure in nature in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California and founder of the Sierra Club. Emile Grandjean (1867-1942) had immigrated to the United States in 1883 from his birthplace in Denmark. He settled in Idaho before its statehood and entered the forest service in 1905. In Idaho all things Grandjean, peak, creek, and hamlet, are named after him. The two men met and became friends. John Muir brought the Sequoia sapling from California as a gift to Emile Grandjean who planted it in 1912. Though out of its native element, the tree flourished, growing to be one of the tallest trees in Idaho. However, in the 1990's it became diseased, possibly aggravated by heat from years of Christmas lighting which burned the branch tips, known as *candles*. The top was cut off in an effort to save it. The tree did survive and was moved to Fort Boise Park in 2017 due to road work and development.

A log from the top part of the tree was obtained by Sawtooth Ministries and upon request it was milled into the sanctuary cross at Holy Apostles. The Corpus (Body of Christ) was sculpted in Italy. The completed Crucifix was hung in the sanctuary in August of 2002 with the aid of two telescoping lifts to elevate it to its position above and behind the Altar.



A second artifact found in Roman Catholic churches to inspire reverence is a statue of the Blessed Virgin, St. Mary, typically holding the Infant Jesus. The artist who sculpted the Blessed Mother and Child for Holy Apostles was Michael Demetz from the Pante Studio in Italy, shown here releasing his work to Fr. Ritchey.



The statue of the Blessed Virgin, St. Mary, was originally placed in an alcove at the left rear of the nave. It was later moved to its much more prominent position at the left of the Sanctuary and Altar.

Another common fixture of many Christian churches, not just Catholic, is a Baptismal Font. As originally constructed Holy Apostles had a Baptismal Pool at the rear left of the nave, just inside from the narthex. During the design of the church, the option for running water was rejected due to a multitude of potential plumbing and maintenance problems, so the pool was plumbed to be filled through a manual shutoff valve without recirculation.



Regardless of initial considerations, the pool was removed after several years due to plumbing mishaps and general maintenance issues. The alcove became a part-time resting place for a



portable Baptismal Font, another example of the handiwork of parishioner Mike Siron who also handcarved the Lenten Crosses used for Good Friday services.

STAINED GLASS

Stained glass was an important accessory to the construction of Holy Apostles. Although stained glass existed for about as long as clear glass, dating back to pre-Christian times in Egypt, about 2700 BC, its first recorded use in a church was at St. Paul's Monastery in England in 686 AD. The primary use of stained glass in any setting is to allow natural light to illuminate an interior space. A secondary purpose in general, but more important in a church, is to transmit a message. In this regard stained glass windows obscure the outside world while illuminating the interior space not only with light but also by directing an observer's mind to more sacred images.

Most of the stained glass windows at Holy Apostles were repurposed from the Holy Spirit church. With the original St. Matthew's having been a small mission church, and its 1994 replacement being a temporary worship space constructed as a general purpose meeting hall and gymnasium, there was no justification for the expense of special windows. Only two additional windows were created specifically for Holy Apostles. Each of the stained glass windows mounted above the two transepts was a gift from a parish family to celebrate the new church.

The southern transept displays the Seal of the Diocese of Boise, in Latin, "Insignia Dioecesis Xylopolitanae".

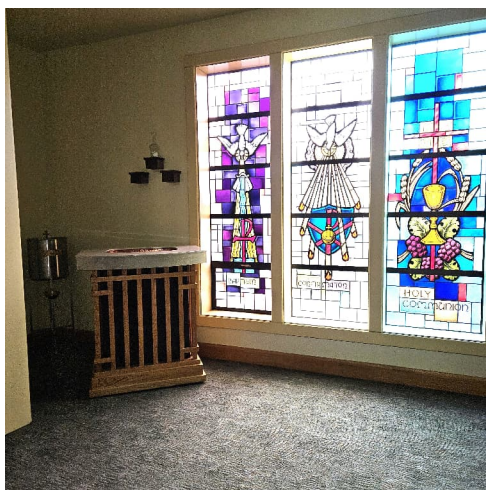
The northern transept holds the emblem of the Great Jubilee in 2000, the year in which ground was broken for Holy Apostles; the window proclaims "Christ Yesterday, Today, Forever", in Latin, "Christus Heri, Hodie, Semper", from Hebrews 13:8.



The windows in the cupola above and behind the Altar and Tabernacle depict the Four Evangelists in an iconographic animal form known as tetramorphs. Appearing from left to right in the order of their Gospels in the Bible, the windows represent Matthew (a winged man) and Mark (a lion) to the left of the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus with Luke (a bull) and John (an eagle) to the right.



The Sacraments are depicted in windows throughout the church. The Baptismal Alcove is home to the portable Baptismal Font as well as to depictions of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion.



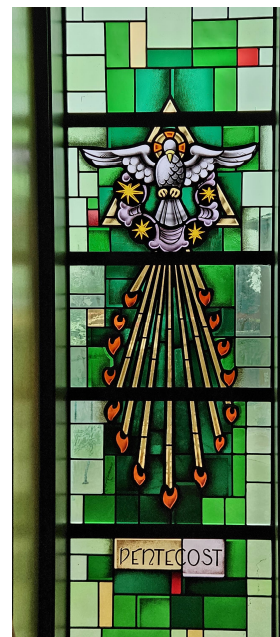


The Sacrament of Penance is visible in the Cry Room.



And Holy Orders brighten an office for the Priests

Other stained glass windows are distributed throughout the church. In the Day Chapel one finds the Annunciation, The Father, The Son and Him Crucified, and the Holy Spirit in Pentecost.



At the Library door is St. Matthew receiving inspiration from the Holy Spirit.



Upon entering the Library one finds a depiction of the Sacrament of Matrimony adjacent to the Triumph of the Gospel.



REMODEL

With the passage of time, every house becomes prone to a remodel, even the house of God. As the Liturgical practices remain intact, the environment is subject to change. During the years of 2006-2008 a few modifications were made to improve comfort and efficiency of the church building.

After removal of the Baptismal Pool, wood-framed glass doors were installed to separate the Narthex from the Nave. The work of parishioner Nick Guho, the doors improved control of the environment with regard to noise and temperature as well as reducing the amount of debris that might enter through the main outer doors.

As mentioned previously, the sculpture of St. Mary holding the Child Jesus was originally placed in an alcove at the rear of the nave. Set in the wall to the left of that sculpture was a stained glass reference to the Coronation of Mary. When the sculpture was moved to be near the Altar, the space was retained as a Marian Alcove.



The walls of the alcove that were exposed upon removal of the statue made a convenient place to install a representation of Mary presenting a Rosary, painted by artist Cindi Duft. A nearby tray of votive candles provides for prayers offered to Our Blessed Mother.

On the opposite side of the church, at the right side rear of the nave, an alcove was prepared for reverence to St. Joseph. This alcove had originally been used to display a tree with the names of Sponsors who had made significant contributions to the building of Holy Apostles.



ADORATION of the EUCHARIST

Each of the two parishes supported a multitude of ministries. One that was unique to Holy Spirit was regular Thursday evening Eucharistic Adoration. This was arranged as early as 1998 by Sacristan Elizabeth Scott who would host video presentations from influential Catholics, such as Father John Corapi and Scott Hahn, accompanied by popcorn and cookies, following Adoration. Miss Scott remained as Sacristan at Holy Apostles as long as she was able, after which time her sister Dorothy (Dottie) Scott took over, until her passing. Though the video nights ceased with the move to Holy Apostles due to the impracticality of maintaining the intimacy of a small classroom-sized audience in the expanded parish, an awareness of, and demand for, Eucharistic Adoration had been established.

This desire for Eucharistic Adoration carried over to the new Holy Apostles Church. Regular hours of Adoration were set up in the Day Chapel for multiple adorers. A more intimate private space for individuals or couples to pray near the Tabernacle whenever the church was open and the sanctuary was not otherwise in use was provided by the lattice screen that separated the Tabernacle from the Altar at Holy Apostles. An upholstered lounge chair was brought in for a comfortable intimate visit with Jesus in the flesh.

By June of 2006 there was enough interest expressed by parishioners for a dedicated space for Adoration that Father Ritchey formed a committee to investigate construction of a dedicated stand-alone Adoration Chapel with an adjacent Columbarium. Committee members included Cookie Sorge, Nick Wood, Patty Schumacher and Randy Arnzen. Robert Courval led the team. Guidance on matters related to construction was offered by Nick Guho who would become the project Contract Manager under Guho Corp. Final Drawings from Architect Russ Phillips of Insight Architects were available by December, 2006 and fundraising began. The primary fundraising activity was a very well-attended dinner auction held in the gym. A 'gift registry' was set up for donors to purchase stained glass and interior finish items; Barbra Baker Boyer designed and produced the stained glass.

Construction of the chapel began in April, 2007. At the end of June, 2007 Father Tim Ritchey was reassigned to a parish in Post Falls. He was replaced at Holy Apostles by Father Len MacMillan starting in July, 2007. The Chapel at Holy Apostles was dedicated on May 19, 2008 and at the time was thought to be the only stand-alone Eucharistic Adoration Chapel West of the Mississippi. At a final cost of \$1.6 Million, the chapel exceeded the original contract by a mere \$6800. The building footprint is 1756 square feet, yielding 766 sq. ft. of interior space for the Blessed Sacrament and its Adorers. The 45-foot high interior vaulted ceiling opens to the 65-foot high hexagonal Bell Tower; that height attracted Verizon Wireless to request to install a cellular antenna array within the tower. That offer was rejected, but as an alternative Verizon was granted a lease to construct their tower on the southeast corner of Holy Apostles property to be obscured by panels displaying a cross.

Since the Adoration Chapel was physically separated from the church and under its own roof, it was allowed to contain its own tabernacle, a second on the site.

With a dedicated Adoration Chapel providing round-the-clock security for both Eucharist and Adorers, Cookie Sorge was able to establish a 24/7 Adoration Program. A review of the previous accommodations for adoration found a new interpretation of the rules requiring visual separation of the Tabernacle from the Altar in the main Sanctuary. This led to removal of the lattice screen that had been between the Tabernacle and the Altar in the main church sanctuary. The Tabernacle was then relocated to the extreme west wall of the Apse and turned to face the Altar rather than being hidden from view.



Other Site Features

The original construction of Holy Apostles Catholic Church encompassed but a single building. In addition to the Sanctuary, Day Chapel and Library, a wing extended to the east under the same roof to wrap around the open courtyard. That wing contained office space, a gymnasium, a dining hall with a seating capacity of 165, and ten classrooms. In the hallway connecting the Office to the Dining Hall were a large closet and restrooms. For many years the closet was home to a St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP) food pantry operated by parishioners of Holy Apostles.

As the parish grew, so did the need for additional office staff, and demand for more service to the larger community. A remodel of the office extended it into the space where the closet had provided community service through SVdP. Since the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a national entity providing service to the community beyond any individual parish, physical separation from the Holy Apostles Church building helped to clarify that distinction and the Society assumed operational responsibility. Furthermore, separation relieved the church office staff from monitoring security, and reduced the hesitancy of some of the needy in the community to seek assistance from what appeared to be an arm of the Catholic Church.

However, the circumstances required some urgency to find suitable quarters for the foodbank. That need was met when Holy Apostles parishioner Beth Walz, an officer with the Holy Apostles conference of St. Vincent de Paul, negotiated with the developer at a nearby construction site to purchase a mobile home unit for the grand sum of \$1. The unit was initially parked near the Verizon cell tower at the southeast corner of the Holy Apostles property until Nick Guho was able to arrange for a foundation to be set for it. The new quarters were dedicated on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 27, 2014. Whether a serendipity or just one of many Blessings from God, expansion of the Holy Apostles office squeezed the St. Vincent de Paul volunteers out of the confines of an oversized closet into more comfortable quarters that would much better serve the community for several years.

MINISTRIES – The Ties that Bind

Of the multitude of ministries supported between the two parishes there were many duplicates. Of those ministries that overlapped, the larger were the Council of Catholic Women (CCW) and the Knights of Columbus (K of C). Combining the two councils of the CCW required following the guidelines of the National Council of Catholic Women, while continuing to report through the Idaho State Council. With spiritual guidance from Fr. Ritchey, differences were worked out and like interests were consolidated; the CCW councils from St. Matthew's and Holy Spirit then came to an agreement as to which projects the council would support and a new Holy Apostles Council was formed.

On the other hand the Knights of Columbus, as an international organization, has more strict requirements for local and state councils. The St. Matthew's Council #11318 was incorporated on April 6, 1994. With barely a full year to get organized and up to speed, Council #11318 proceeded to assist with the formation of Holy Spirit Council #11548 which was officially recognized on April 24, 1995. Given the restriction of only one council per parish, St. Matthew's Council #11318 relinquished its earlier registration merging into Holy Spirit Council #11548. The name of the latter was retained to signify that although the Knights serve at the discretion of the local pastor, the councils are independent of any parish and owe their allegiance to the worldwide Roman Catholic Church and the Pope.

Two other programs were identified by Father Ritchey as significant factors in the early years as the two parishes united. One was "Life Teen", a program for evangelization of Catholic youth. Mike and Deb Lee had been hired by Father Ritchey to serve as youth ministers at St. Matthew's. The Lee's formed a Core Team and developed the program as H.A.L.T., *Holy Apostles Life Teen*. The socially malleable teens came together, even though from competing schools, overcoming their rivalries on the athletic fields.

With private support from parishioners of Holy Apostles, Mr. Mike Lee took his family to Austria where he studied at the John Paul II International Theological Institute. Upon receiving his Doctorate of Theology, he was ordained and returned to the United States to serve as Father Michael Lee, a married priest in the Byzantine Rite.

A second program that became a significant unifying factor in the merger of the two parishes was the Evangelization Retreat program. This program had been introduced into the Treasure Valley by Father John Donaghue, pastor of St. Mark's parish, who learned of it from parishioners Ralph and Linda Konkol while assisting with gleaning of fields in Visalia, California. In March, 1995, Pastor Father Dennis Day prompted eleven of his parishioners from St. Matthew's to attend a weekend retreat at St. Mark's. That group formed a Small Faith Community which became a core team to organize and facilitate ongoing retreat weekends. Two such weekends were hosted at the Eagle facility in April and November of 1996. By April 1997 the Retreat Program had become sufficiently popular to outgrow the Eagle venue and was moved to St. Paul's Catholic Student Center in Boise with Father Mark Finley presiding prior to his departure in June.

During the merger process Father Ritchey had held townhall-like meetings to share ideas about how to make bring the two parishes together. Kathy Frohwerk, a member of the Parish Council for Holy Apostles North (St. Matthew's), asked about support for Evangelization Retreats. Father Ritchey was familiar enough with the retreat program to recognize that it made use of two treasures of the Catholic faith, the proclamation of God's Word and personal testimony. He suggested contacting Monta Shuyler from Holy Spirit (Holy Apostles South) who had expressed interest in the program. The two ladies worked together and Holy Spirit became the venue for the first expanded retreat in November 1997, and continued for two such events per year until the move to Holy Apostles in October 2000. Allowing for natural life cycles, such as deaths and other relocations, many of the original Small Faith Communities formed as the desirable outcome of the retreats have continued to meet weekly from the time of their formation, as far back as 1995.



HOLY APOSTLES – One Member in the Body of Christ

A Church is much more than a building. A Catholic Church is much more than the sum of the individuals who enter that building to worship. To paraphrase St. Paul in his first Letter to the Corinthians (chapter 12), "though we are many parts, we are all One Body." Hundreds of individuals have stepped forward, offering their Time, Talents and Treasure, to build what has become Holy Apostles Catholic Church in Meridian, Idaho. From the time of its humble beginnings in a small house in Eagle more than a hundred years ago, through the door-to-door campaign in Meridian, it has been individuals, supported by their Bishops and Priests, who have put their Faith into Action to develop this Parish of Holy Apostles. The dozens of Ministries that have been organized over the years, and continue to grow both in size and in number, are Witness to the durability of the Catholic Faith in this Community of Holy Apostles.