WEEK ONE- 2/14/2021

Miles are calculated from St. Xavier to each location and return to St. Xavier.

Since this is the start there are no identified miles for this week this is the story of St. Francis

Hamilton County - 1819
St. Francis Xavier
611 Sycamore St.
Cincinnati, OH 45402
www.stxchurch.org

The oldest parish in the Archdiocese was established in 1821 on the outskirts of Cincinnati due to an unwritten prohibition against building Catholic churches in Cincinnati. The original, 30'x55', wooden building was built by seven Catholic families at Liberty and Vine Streets and later moved to the present location of the church. In 1840 the location became a Jesuit college and seminary. The location became a church again and was placed under the patronage of St. Francis Xavier, with the first Mass in 1861.

The structure was restored after a fire in 1882. The parish today serves 105 zip codes and is recognized as the oldest parish in the Archdiocese, and a Registered National Landmark.

The theme of this Year's Lenten Pilgrimage is the same as the bicentennial celebration "RADIATE CHRIST". Twelve of the reflections for this annual event are taken from the Archbishop's Pastoral Letter of 2020. The Archbishop expressed that "This is my hope: that each of us, within our unique and personal circumstances and situations, becomes a more joyful witness of the goodness of a life lived in relationship with Jesus Christ."

First week reflection:

"The light of faith is an incarnate light radiating from the luminous life of Jesus."

Pope Francis, Lumen Fidei, 34

WEEK TWO – February 21, 2021

Adams County - 1950
Holy Trinity
612 E. Mulberry St.
West Union, OH 45693
Miles - 170
www.holytrinity-ac.org

The first pastor was Fr. William H. Bishop. The Catholic community in Adams County dates to 1878. In 1928 the Glenmary missionaries celebrated Mass in Manchester, in 1949 moved to Mt. Union where Mass was celebrated in the rectory and on May 31, 1953 Holy Trinity Church was dedicated. An interesting fact is the Holy Trinity Church in Dayton contributed to the building of the church in West Union. In 2000 the Glenmary priests transferred the Adams county parishes to the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

Auglaize County - 1832
St. Augustine
48 North Hanover St.
Minster, OH 45865
Miles - 262
www.staugie.com

Fr. Johann F. Rese, Vicar General of Cincinnati celebrated the first Mass in the county in 1832. St. Augustine with 200 primarily German families became the mother parish in 1836. French missionary Fr. Louis Navarron, who had oversight of west central Ohio and encouraged Bishop Purcell that German speaking priests were needed. In 1845 the Missionaries of Precious Blood under the leadership of Fr. Franz S. Brunner and the Precious Blood priests and sisters led the parish. The present church building was dedicated in 1849.

Total miles for this week - 432

Reflection- Am I open to the encounter? Do I believe that Christ wants a relationship with me?

WEEK THREE- February 28, 2021

Brown County - 1837
St. Mary, Arnheim
6647 Van Buran St.
Georgetown, OH 45121-9563
Miles - 100
http://ohiocatholic.homesteadcloud.com

As early as 1837, Catholic families had settled in the Arnheim area and Missionary priests celebrated Masses in homes. The first church was built in 1838 and the present church in 1858. In 1882 the first resident pastor, from the Benedictine order, was installed. On a historical note, in 1863 during the Civil War, the church was spared when Morgan's Raiders swept through Arnheim; however, the town never fully recovered. On January 9, 1965, Bishop Sylvester Rosencrans blessed the church in the name of St. Mary.

Butler County - 1853
St. Mary Campus Ministry
Oxford, OH
Miles - 122
www.stmox.org

Rev. Jeremiah O'Connor was the first pastor from 1853 to 1864. He organized the parish by initially purchasing a schoolhouse that was converted to a church and dedicated in 1867 to the Blessed Virgin Mary. According to the archdiocese Archivist the primary ethnic group in the county were German Catholics. In 1917 fire destroyed the building and in 1920 the present structure was built to serve the urban families and students from Miami University.

Total miles this week - 222

REFLECTION- ***Do I give space and time in my life for this encounter to take place?***

WEEK FOUR – March 7, 2021

Champaign County - 1853
St. Mary
Urbana, OH
Miles - 200
www.ChampaignCatholics.org

The parish was established as a missionary stop in 1818 and the first Mass said by Rev. Benedict J. Flaget of Bardstown, KY. By 1850 the Irish were the principle ethnic group and were laborers for the railroads and canals. The church building was started in 1853 and completed in 1856. Rev. Augustus A. Grogan was the first pastor.

Reflection *- Are there periods of silence in my day so that I can draw closer to God?*

WEEK FIVE – March 14, 2021

Clark County - 1849
St. Raphael
Springfield, OH
Miles - 164
www.josephraphael.org

The first visiting priest to Clark County between 1844-1857 was Rev. Damien Junker of Emmanuel Church in Dayton which was designated as a "Mother Parish." St. Raphael in Springfield was built in 1849 and served the German and Irish populations in Clark County. Rev. James Kearney was the first pastor. By 1883 the Catholic population had grown too large for the initial structures and the present church and school were built.

Miles for this week - 164

REFLECTION- *Do I believe that God has a unique plan for my life and that He wants to help me accomplish that*?

WEEK SIX – March 21, 2021

Clermont County - 1837
St. Philomena
Owensville. OH
Miles - 64
www.stlparish.org

The parish of St. Philomena was established in 1837 and was sometimes referred to as the Little Church in the Valley. The wooden church was built from $50 worth of logs. The first priests were from France, and the first pastor was Rev. Claude Gacon. The initial Little Church in the Valley burned down in 1868. In 2015, as part of the celebration of their 175th anniversary, there was an archeology dig to locate the original log church. The four parishes of the region participated in the search and the remains of the original structure were located.

Miles this week -64

REFLECTION- *Is my life nourished and sustained by the sacraments?*

WEEK SEVEN – March 28, 2021

Clinton County - 1866
St. Columbkille
Wilmington, OH
Miles - 120
www.stcolumbkille.org

On June 6, 1866 ground was broken for the first Catholic Church in Wilmington. Completion of the first church building was delayed when a tornado destroyed the roof on March 16, 1868. Rev. Michael O'Donoghue was the first pastor. Parishioners were more shaken in 1882 when Fr. John O'Donoghue was murdered.

Miles this week- 120

REFLECTION- *Is the celebration and reception of the Eucharist the center of my spiritual life?*

WEEK EIGHT - April 4, 2021

Darke County - 1839
St. Denis
Versailles, OH
Miles from St. Francis Xavier – 234
Miles - 234
www.bfvcatholic.org

St. Denis traces its origin back to 1839 with the founding of St. Valbert by Fr. Louis Navarron, who was the first pastor. It was founded by the French speaking Catholics of the area which includes Frenchtown, Russia, Versailles, Newport, and North Star. In 1864 the Versailles residents bought the Baptist Church in town and moved their community there and renamed it St. Denis.

Miles this week – 234

REFLECTION- *Do I foster my relationship with Christ through prayer?*

WEEK NINE – April 11, 2021

Greene County - 1849
St. Bridgid
Xenia. OH
Miles - 132
www.stbrigidxenia.org

In 1844, the first Mass in Xenia was celebrated. The growing Catholic community was organized as a formal parish under the patronage of St. Michael in August of 1849. Rev. James Kearney was the first pastor. In 1851 Rev. Thomas Lake renamed the parish in honor of St. Brigid of Ireland. In 1974 after serving as a place of worship for 122 years, the original St. Brigid's church, rectory, Sisters of Charity convent, and the West Second Street school were destroyed by the Xenia Tornado. A new St. Brigid Church was constructed on Fairground Road and dedicated in 1977.

Total miles this week- 132

REFLECTION- *Does my relationship with Christ direct my decisions and actions?*

WEEK TEN – April 18, 2021

Highland County - 1859
St. Mary
Hillsboro, OH
Miles - 180
www.saintmaryhillsboro.org

The first mass was celebrated in a parishioner's home by Fr. Cornelius Daly in 1845. The existing church was built in 1852 on land donated by a parishioner. The church was blessed by future Bishop Fr. Baraga, a missionary from Slovakia. Fr. Michael O'Donoghue was the longest serving pastor from 1861 to 1880. He brought the 500 pound bell, by train and wagon, from the Verdin Bell Company in Cincinnati as a peace symbol after the Civil War. The church has been restored several times over the years, the last in 2006. A unique feature is the parish radio station WLRU 106.9 FM, the only parish in the Archdiocese to have a radio station.

Total miles this week – 180

REFLECTIONS- *In moments of difficulty, do I remember that God is suffering with me and wants to support me?*

WEEK ELEVEN - April 25, 2021

Logan - 1852
St. Patrick
Bellefontaine, OH
Miles - 240
www.catholicbellefontaine.org

St. Patrick's was originally a mission parish from Urbana. The Bellefontaine area is where many Irish immigrants had settled, owing to the construction of the railroads. The first Mass in 1851 was in a parishioner's home and celebrated by Rev. Maurice Howard, who was pastor of St. Raphael's in Springfield. After visiting Bellefontaine in 1852 Archbishop Purcell advised that a church be built for his fellow Irishman and women. Construction began in 1853 and on Christmas Day of 1953, Fr. Thomas Sheehan (the first pastor) said the first Mass and dedicated the church.

Fr. John Coveney, of Ireland, in 1862 established the first school by using the skills he gained as a Jesuit. In 1869 John Powers, a mentally unstable man, shot and killed Fr. Coveney and was found not guilty by reason of insanity and committed to the Southern Ohio Lunatic Asylum in Dayton.

Total miles this week – 240

REFLECTION- *Am I eager to experience the goodness that Christ has in store for me?*

WEEK TWELVE- May 2, 2012

Warren - 1876
St. Augustine
Waynesville, OH 45068
Miles 100
No website

The first account of a Catholic Mass in Waynesville was in the 1870's by Fr. Augustine Anderson from Cincinnati who celebrated Mass in Cadwallader's Hall every two weeks. In 1877 William and Sarah Rogers deeded a part of lot #5, Wabash Square in Waynesville to Archbishop Purcell which would be the site of the first St. Augustine Church. For the first 60 years St. Augustine was a mission parish and shared a priest with Xenia, Lebanon, Jamestown, and Cincinnati. FR. Robert Hungling became the first pastor in 1940. On August 3, 1970 ground was broken for a 300-seat church and the first Mass was on Holy Thursday in 1976. Archbishop Joseph Bernandine presided at the dedication on October 31, 1976.

Total miles this week -100

REFLECTION- *Is There something I am afraid of losing if I grow closer to Christ?*

WEEK THIRTEEN- May 9, 2012- this is the week the Downtown Dayton Churches are focusing on the contribution of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.

Several Mercer County churches were established in 1836. Mercer County, since 1845, has been the home of the Society of the Precious Blood order, established by Fr. Francis de Sales Brunner C.PP.S. (1795-1859) a missionary priest from Switzerland. He was invited by Archbishop Purcell and worked primarily with the German speaking Catholics of Ohio. Since the Downtown Dayton Parishes are led by Society of the Precious Blood priests this history of four early churches in the "Land of the Cross Tipped Churches" may be of interest.

First Parish-
St. John the Baptist -1836
8533 State Route 119
Maria Stine, OH 45860
Miles - 245
www.marioncatholiccommunity.org

St. John - In 1833 three German settlers each with the first name of John settled in Mercer County and named their settlement St. John. The first Mass, attended by 45 people, was offered in June 1836 by Fr. Henry Damian Junker, the resident pastor at Minster, in the home of John Leistenschneider. In 1836, the parishioners began building the first church building. In November of 1845, the Society of the Precious Blood assumed care of the parish. During the ensuing years, the parish community rebuilt St. Johns multiple times, the last being in 1891. This is the church where our Fr. Matt Keller was ordained.

Total miles this week – 1013 (All four churches)

Reflection- *Will I allow Christ to transform me? Will I radiate Christ so that others can know his goodness and love?*

WEEK FOURTEEN -May 16, 2021

Miami County - 1843
St. Mary
310 S. Downing St.
Piqua, OH 45356
Miles - 248
www.piquaparishes.org

Piqua has a long and rich American story going back to before the revolution but the first Europeans to settle there was an Irish family named Johnson. In the early 1840's it became clear to the Catholic community in Piqua that a church building was needed. Again, Bishop Purcell was instrumental in the effort, and a lot was purchased for $80. Rev. Hallinan, the first pastor, led the early building effort but in 1845 Rev. James Cahill oversaw the completion of the structure. The church was dedicated in 1846 by Bishop Purcell and Rev. Daniel Hallinan and Rev. P. O'Mealy. Over the years continual improvements have been made but the 1899 building still stands on the original lot.

Total miles this week- 248

Reflection- *"Where two or three have met together in my name, I am there among them."*
Matthew 18:20

Shelby County - 1838
St. Michael
33 Elm St.
Ft. Loramie OH, 45845
Miles - 252
www.nflregion.org

The Ft. Loramie area dates to 1749 when the French explorer Pierre- Joseph Celoron and his detachment made camp along the Loramie creek. It was here that the French Chaplin Fr. Joseph Peter Bonnecamps said, what is suggested to be, the first Mass in the Archdiocese. The ensuing years brought both Native Americans and settlers to the area. The growing Catholic community built the first log church in 1838 as mission church from Minster. The first pastor of St. Michael's was Rev. Wilhelm Bigot and in 1874 and was given the task of building a church for the growing German community. The new church was consecrated on October 2, 1881 by Bishop Elder. An interesting piece of history is that the statues for the church were ordered from Europe. However, the ship bringing them sank and all was lost.

Preble County - 1853
Visitation
4070 E. Main St.
Eaton, OH 45320
Miles - 168
https:www.preblecountycatholics.org

Starting in 1853, the first Catholic Masses in Eaton were held in a private home by Fr. Carey. In the History of Preble County Ohio, 1881, it notes that   "A building was fitted up as a church and for a time the society was in a prosperous condition; but the interest flagged, and the financial support became less strong". After that Masses were held at the home of Michael Ryan. Eventually Masses resumed on the upper floors of a building on Main St. The present church was built in 1879 and dedicated on August 24th. The Irish railroad workers and surrounding farmers were most likely parishioners during the founding of the parish.
The 1879 building is still being used and has undergone several remodels, the last in 1956.

Total miles this week - 420

Reflection- *Am I able to adapt to the rapid change in the modern society and still maintain my commitment to Jesus Christ?*

WEEK SIXTEEN – May 30, 2021

In the materials is a handout with all three Downtown Dayton Catholic Churches. Emmanuel is the first church. The total miles for the week are those from all three churches.

Montgomery County
Emmanuel - 1837
149 Franklin St.
Dayton, OH 45402
Miles - 230
www.emmanuelcatholic.com

Emmanuel was the first Catholic Church in Montgomery County and was established in 1837 as a German Territorial Parish. Bishop Purcell laid the cornerstone of the present building that was constructed in 1871. The church has the unique features of two balconies and an 85ft high ceiling that is not supported by pillars, thus giving an unobstructed view of the altar. Emmanuel has been called the "Mother Parish" not only of Dayton and Montgomery County but the Archdiocesan region. Cities with parishes that sprang from the 'Mother Parish' include Bellefontaine, Urbana, Springfield, Morrow, Xenia, Yellow Springs. South Charleston, Wilmington, Jamestown, Miamisburg, and Osborn. In 1913 Emmanuel as well as all downtown Dayton were victims of the flooding of the rivers that converged into the Miami River in Dayton. The water reached the height of the windowsills inside the church.

Total miles for this week – 692

Goal miles for the pilgrimage - 4461

Reflection- *Look to Him and be radiant. Psalm 34:5*