

# St. Anne observes centennial celebration

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- Mar 28, 2018



Bev Hawkins, left, long-time member of St. Anne Church in East Moline, and the Rev. Antonio Dittmer, current priest, show the logo for the 100th anniversary celebration of the church at 555 18th Ave., East Moline.

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EAST MOLINE — Parishioners at St. Anne Church in East Moline will begin a “Year of Celebrations” April 13 in observance of the church’s 100th anniversary.

“Remember, Rejoice, Renew” is the centennial theme. The observance begins with a special mass at 3 p.m. April 15, with former priests, sisters and vocations from the parish as special guests. Current and former members also are invited.

A reception and dinner will be held in Cleary Hall, hosted by the church women’s group, after the mass. Cost is \$15 for adults and \$10 for children age 12 and younger. Advance reservations are needed by Thursday, April 5, by contacting the church at 309-755-5071.

“Remember-Rejoice-Renew” was created by the anniversary committee in planning a year of celebrations. Team members also created a mission statement:

- To remember parish history;
- To rejoice in people and achievements; and
- To renew plans for the future.

A May 12 Centennial Fiesta is planned 4-9:30 p.m. in Cleary Hall with food, entertainment, contests and raffle drawings. Admission is free. Other events, yet to be finalized, include:

- Summer 2018: Parish picnic.
- Fall 2018: Spaghetti supper.
- January 2019: Trivia Night.

- March 2019: St. Patrick's Day event.
- April-July 2019: "100 Days" of special spirituality.

The church also plans to have an entry in the July 4, 2019, East Moline parade.

A "renew" observance is planned July 28, 2019, with a Centennial Finale Mass and parish festival. The Rev. Antonio Dittmer, current pastor at St. Anne, shared his theological vision for church maintenance and updates based on "VIP":

- Verticality: Upon entry into the church, your vision is lifted upward.
- Iconography: The use of visuals within the church, including stained glass, sculptures and paintings.
- Permanence: Reflection of the eternity of God and the church, the first and best fruits to the Lord.

The "renew" includes sanctuary changes, painting, carpeting, dome lighting and vestibule update. All will depend on money received during a fundraising effort scheduled to begin in the near future.

In remembering their past, the anniversary committee members shared the church's history of how a growing population and diverse languages played a large part in creating the St. Anne parish.

Records shared by anniversary committee member Sandra Thomas state St. Mary's Church on 13th Street in East Moline initially was considered a Belgian parish with Flemish sermons not understood by many parishioners.

The Rev. P.J. Barry, pastor at St. John Church in Rapids City, took a survey of the area population and an ethnically-diverse parish was proposed. The Rev. William Cleary was sent to begin the new parish, which was built and named Holy Name Parish on 6th Street and 17th Avenue in East Moline.

It is unsure when the name was changed to St. Ann. Newspaper clippings show both names used in 1919, Mrs. Thomas said.

Before the church building was complete, the first mass was held on May 18, 1919, in the Lyric Theater on 7th Street between 15th and 16th avenues.

Arrangements were made with Gumber Brothers to build a church and school combination with progress on a week-to-week basis — depending on the Sunday collection. In the fall of 1920, services were first held on the first floor of the half-completed building.

In 1919, Rev. Cleary asked the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary to teach at the school. By 1925, five sisters were teaching 122 students. Eight classrooms were needed and the basement was used as a church.