

# SACRAMENTO DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

Vol 4

Father John E Boll, Archivist

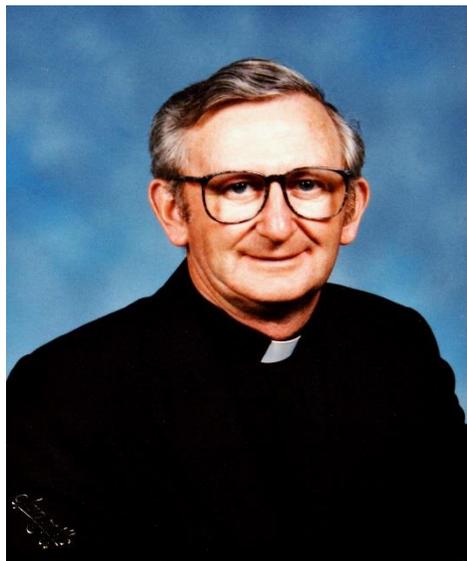
No 28

## YEARS OF CHANGE AND GROWTH IN THE WOODLAND PARISH 1982 – 2015 Part III

By Father John E Boll, Archivist

In 1982, Bishop Alden Bell appointed Father Anthony Maio to the pastorate of Saint Basil Parish in Vallejo. Succeeding him as pastor of Woodland was Father Cornelius O'Donnell who had been pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Sacramento. Father O'Donnell served Woodland for twelve years.

### Pastorate of Father Cornelius O'Donnell, 1982-1994



In his twelve years as pastor of Woodland, Father O'Donnell had to deal with three major issues. The first was keeping the parish school alive and growing after the Sisters left Woodland. Hiring the right principal was a key factor to the life of the school. He was able to hire competent principals, two of whom were also parish-ioners, Margaret Grissom and Marilyn Scholz, and Patricia Rowan from Notre Dame School in Chico who served as principal before Marilyn Scholz. These three helped stabilize the school and kept it growing and moving forward.

A second challenge was meeting the needs of the growing Hispanic community of Woodland. To meet that challenge, the bishop sent a number of Hispanic priests to Holy Rosary parish to assist and minister to the Spanish speaking community. Those sent were not always a successful fit since some Hispanic priests wanted to form a parallel Spanish speaking parish alongside Holy Rosary Parish. Over time, conflicts and battles were waged nationally and locally over how best to serve the Hispanic community. Woodland was caught in that battle as well.

The third issue was Yuba College's continuing use of parish property as its Woodland campus site. During the pastorate of Father Maio, Yuba College established a Woodland extension campus. He rented parish property next to Holy Rosary School to the college where the college constructed a "temporary building" for offices and classrooms. In time, the college wanted to make the site a permanent home for the campus and attempted to take the land from the parish by the right of eminent domain. Father O'Donnell had to take the college to court over the issue and the college lost the battle. Yuba College purchased land on the southeast side of Woodland and relocated there. The "temporary building" which the college constructed had to be removed from the parish site. Instead of tearing it down, Father O'Donnell made an offer of \$25,000 to

buy the building from the college and the college quickly accepted the deal. By doing so, Yuba College was spared the cost of demolishing the building and the parish gained another good facility for future use.



Photo by John E Boll

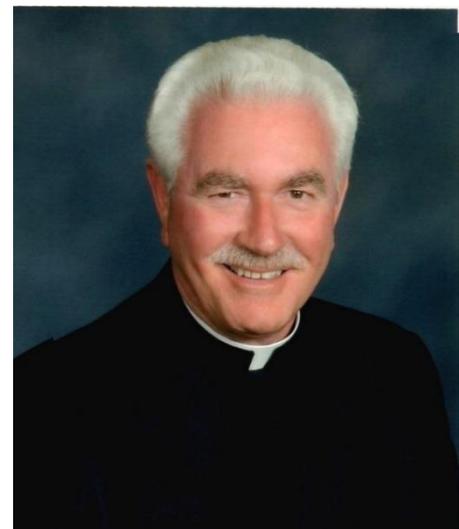
### **The Yuba College Building Purchased by Father O'Donnell**

Having served as pastor of Woodland for a dozen years, Father O'Donnell wanted to prepare for retirement by taking a smaller, less taxing parish during his final years of ministry. He was appointed to the small mountain parish of Saint John in Dunsmuir in 1994.

### **Pastorate of Father John Boll, 1994-2005**

At the request of Bishop William Weigand, Father John Boll, who was the temporary administrator of the fledgling Saint Clare Parish in Antelope and full-time Vicar for Priests, was appointed the next pastor of Woodland in 1994 and served in that role for the next eleven years.

In the early hours of a rainy December 12, 1994, he was awakened from sleep with a sensation of being cold. He soon discovered that his bed was soaking wet. As he turned on the bedroom light, he saw a steady stream of water coming from the light fixture above his bed. Yes, the rectory roof was leaking. In the days to come, all the roofs of parish buildings were inspected. The inspection found that not only the rectory roof but the roofs of the church, the parish hall, the parish school and the mausoleum



at the cemetery all needed to be replaced. Over the next few years, these roofs were replaced. A few parishioners complained that this new pastor was “spending all of Father O’Donnell’s money.” Little did they realize the cost of dealing with deferred maintenance.

### **Parish Planning for the Future**

Father John, as he was known to parishioners, held a series of house meetings to hear the concerns and hopes of parishioners. In November 1995, he created a new parish council with six men and six women. He encouraged the parish council and the parish staff to think outside the box about for the future needs of the parish.

The parish office, located at the front section of the priests’ residence next to the church, was inadequate. There was no space for each priest to have an office. Father John considered the possibility of converting the little used two-story convent (except for storage) next to the parish school on California Street as a new parish office. A plan was developed by the parish staff and in March 1996 Father John invited Bishop Weigand to come to Woodland to meet with the staff to see the parish and to discuss the proposal. After the meeting, Father John gave Bishop Weigand a tour of the parish.

The bishop took the parish staff proposal back to his advisors in Sacramento. The diocese directed that before any plan was finalized, the parish must do a use study to determine what facilities the parish will need by 2020. In May 1996, the parish hired Bill McCandless to do the needs assessment. He finished the assessment in August 1996.

The study clarified many issues for the parish. One conclusion was that when the parish was built out, it would need 14 acres of land. All possible sites in Woodland were explored, considered and evaluated. The only realistic site for future parish development was the 12 acre site where the parish school was built. Mr McCandless concluded that it was possible for the parish to consolidate all its facilities at that site. The diocese reviewed the study and accepted its findings, allowing the parish to move forward with the first phase, converting the convent into a parish pastoral center.

### **Woodland’s New Parish Pastoral Center**



Four architectural firms were interviewed to re-design the former convent into a parish pastoral center and the McCandless Architectural Firm was selected. Fr John believed that the convent’s living room - dining room needed to be enlarged to make one large space where meetings could be held. The use of the convent chapel was discussed whether it

should be kept as a chapel or turned into a meeting room. It was made into a meeting room.

Converting the convent into the Parish Pastoral Center was a wise decision. It has become a great asset to the parish, providing ample staff office space and meeting rooms.



Photo by John E Boll 2003

### **The Former Convent Living Room – Dining Room Enlarged as a Meeting Room**

#### **A New Pitched Roof Installed on the Parish School**

After the destruction of the Academy by fire in October 1952, a new flat roofed Holy Rosary School was built on parish land on California Street. Flat roofs are never a good design in areas that receive much rain. During winters, the school roof had constant leaks and teachers never knew when they arrived for class if their classrooms would be dry or flooded. Father John was adamant that if the parish was going to re-roof the school, it had to be a pitched roof. Nothing else would solve the leak problem.

Since the school had an endowment fund of over a million dollars, thanks to Father O'Donnell's decision to put the rent money from Yuba College into the parish school endowment, the school board voted to use endowment interest money to pay for the new school roof. A tiled pitched roof was designed and installed on the school during the summer of 1999. This also allowed the school to improve its infrastructure by updating the wiring for technology and for heating and air conditioning. In March 2000, the Yolo County Realty Association gave Holy Rosary Parish and Holy Rosary School the Community Enhancement Award for the renovation of the convent into the new Parish Pastoral Center and the installation of a new tiled roof on Holy Rosary School.

#### **Building of a new Parish Community Center**

The final challenge that Father Boll faced was the construction of a much needed parish community center. Holy Rosary parish never had an adequate parish hall nor did the parish school ever have a gymnasium for sports or school activities. The question facing the parish was twofold: Did the parish community have the will to build new parish facilities and if yes, should the parish build a new church first or a parish community center?



Photo by John E Boll

### **New Pitched Tile Roof Replaced the Flat Roof on the Parish School in 1999**

Meetings were held in the parish to discuss this issue and finally the parish community was asked to express its view by voting on the issue. A ballot vote was done during Sunday Masses and the majority voted to move forward by first building a parish community center followed by a new church.

#### **Raising the Money to Build**

After receiving diocesan approval to proceed, the parish interviewed four fundraising companies and hired CMG (Charitable Management Group). The fund drive raised \$2.5 million dollars in gifts and pledges. At the urging of longtime parishioner Rosalie Mezger, Fr John made contact with Charles Schwab who had had been a student at Holy Rosary School, to see if he would make a financial commitment to the building project. In memory of the Sisters who taught him at Holy Rosary grammar school, Charles Schwab donated a half million dollars to the project. Local Woodlanders Leo and Louise Wyrsh donated \$300,000 and Ray Shurtz, a non-Catholic member of the Woodland community, donated \$100,000. The rest of the money for the project was given by the generosity of Woodland parishioners. While not having sufficient money to complete the project, the parish committed itself to taking out a loan from the diocese to finish the building.

After interviewing four architectural firms, local architect Bill McCandless was selected for the project. Final approval was given by the diocese and the parish hired Sundt Corporation to build the community center in 2001. Preparation of the building pad began in the summer of 2001. The new Center was completed on August 15, 2002 and Bishop Weigand dedicated the facility on September 22, 2002 at 3 PM. A large crowd of 800 parishioners and guests filled the

Community Center and after the blessing a barbecue dinner was served to all. Tours of the new facility were given by docents all afternoon.



Photo by John E Boll 2001

### **Laying the Foundation of the New Parish Community Center**

The Community Center is a 21,000 square foot building with a high school size hardwood basketball court and a large stage, a commercial kitchen, a canteen, three meeting rooms, two sets of restrooms, storage, offices for the faith formation ministry, a youth office and activity room, and a radio studio for the parish low power radio station.



Photo by John E Boll 2001

### **Raising of the Walls of the New Community Center**



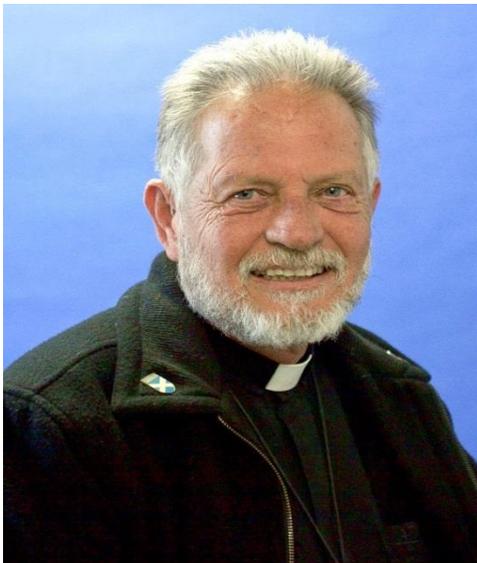
Photo by John E Boll 2003

### **The Completed Holy Rosary Parish Community Center 2003**

#### **The Last Building yet to be constructed -- a new Church**

After eleven years, Father John made the decision to make one final pastoral move before retirement. After the 30 year pastorate of Father Brendan O'Sullivan, Bishop Weigand appointed Father John Boll pastor of Saint Anthony Parish in the Pocket area of Sacramento in 2005. With this move, he would not be the one to build the new church in Woodland.

#### **Father Terry Fulton, Pastor of Holy Rosary Parish 2005-2010**



Bishop Weigand asked Father Terry Fulton, pastor of Saint John Parish in Chico, to become the next pastor of Woodland.

Father Terry was a convert to Catholicism and was first ordained a permanent deacon on June 11, 1988 for service at Immaculate Conception Parish in Sutter Creek. He never married as a layman. His brother-in-law died leaving Terry's sister to raise their four daughters on her own. She was stricken with cancer and after her death he took on the responsibility of raising his sister's four daughters. Terry adopted his nieces and raised them to adulthood.

After serving as a permanent deacon for a couple years, he petitioned the diocese to study for the priesthood. He attended Sacred Heart Seminary in Hales Corner, Wisconsin and was ordained a priest by Bishop William Weigand on June 11, 1994.

Father Terry brought to his assignment in Woodland his unique personality and talents. His vision and ministerial style was different from that of the former pastor. He had a large dog that accompanied him and he drove his Hummer. He spoke his mind and was not concerned about being “politically correct.” This approach endeared him to some and alienated him from others. Father Terry did not speak Spanish and this would prove difficult in working with over half of the parishioners who spoke only Spanish. This required him to rely on Spanish speaking priests to serve the Spanish speaking members of the parish.

Father Terry developed a strong Finance Council for the parish. The council’s main focus was to find ways to pay off the diocesan loan for the community center project. Father Terry cut programs to reduce costs and instituted a second collection for the Building Fund. The money from this collection plus revenues from the Hispanic community, largely through fundraisers including the County Fair Taco Booth, enabled the parish to repay the loan to the diocese. This second collection continues today to raise funds for the future construction of a new church.

Father Terry also reinstated the Parish Building Committee. He asked this committee to develop plans for the construction of a new 1200 seat church. The committee interviewed four architectural firms and selected the firm DLR Group with Gary Gery as the lead. Father Terry was transferred before the actual hiring of the architect. The parish did retain the service of Brother William Woeger, FSC to provide guidance for liturgical design of the new church.

After five years in Woodland, Bishop Weigand assigned Father Terry to the pastorate of the recently established parish of Saint Maria Goretti in East Elk Grove where he was able to build the first phase parish worship center over strong opposition from some local landowners near the parish site. The people of this new parish were supportive and fond of Father Terry. He died on November 6, 2013 from complications after cancerous lung surgery. At his Funeral Mass in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, well over a thousand people attended his Funeral Mass. It was an impressive testimony to Father Terry’s nineteen year ministry as a priest.

### **Father Frank Velásquez, Pastor 2010-2015**

Succeeding Father Fulton, Bishop Jaime Soto appointed Father Frank Velasquez to the pastorate of Woodland in 2010. Father Frank had received his seminary training in the Verbum Dei religious community in Spain and was ordained a priest for that community on July 22, 1990. The charism of the Verbum Dei Community is evangelization and preaching.

Father Rodolfo Llamas also trained as a member of Verbum Dei in Spain and had served as parochial vicar in Woodland with Father John Boll, pastor, and Father Colm O’Kelly, parochial vicar. When Father Rodolfo was assigned parochial vicar at Saint John Parish in Chico, Father Frank was seeking to enter parish ministry in Sacramento. Bishop Weigand appointed Father Frank as parochial vicar in Woodland where he served for two years.



Before coming to Woodland as pastor, Father Frank had served as parish administrator of Saint Mary Parish, Sacramento and then as pastor of Saint Joseph Parish, North Sacramento. Born to a Puerto Rican family in Chicago and raised in San Francisco, Father Frank is fully bi-lingual in English and Spanish. The Hispanic Community was especially excited to have Father Frank return to Woodland.

Father Frank viewed himself as an educator and sought to institute educational programs for the parish, especially for the Spanish-speaking community. Working with the building committee, he approved in 2011 the hiring of the architectural firm of WWCOT which later merged with the DLR Group and project manager Gary Gery, AIA. An update of the parish building needs study was completed in 2013. With the closure of the Holy Rosary Pre-school, the parish had the opportunity to review the use of the former Yuba Community College building. The architects prepared a reuse plan for that building including a structural and cost analysis for reopening the building to parish activities.

Father Frank served as pastor of Woodland for five years. In January 2015, he stepped down as pastor and took a temporary assignment as parochial vicar at Our Lady of the Assumption Parish in Carmichael. On July 1, 2015, he became administrator of Saint Elizabeth Church in Sacramento while also providing assistance at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe a few blocks away.

### **Father Jonathan Molina, Pastor of Woodland 2015**



Bishop Jaime Soto appointed Father Jonathan Molina as the new pastor of Woodland in February 2015. For the past five years, Father Jonathan has served as pastor of Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Redding.

Born in the Philippines, Father Jonathan brings talent, gentleness and a spirit of youthful enthusiasm to his new assignment as he begins this new chapter in the long history of Holy Rosary Parish. One of his challenges will be completing the last phase of development, building a new and much larger church on the parish site on California and West Streets to meet the needs of the growing Catholic community of Woodland.

Father Jonathan has a great challenge ahead of him and we wish him every success as he begins his ministry as the pastor of Woodland.

# **The Beat Goes ON!**



Photos by John E Boll 2003

**Parish Youth make good use of the new Parish Community Center**



Photo by John E boll 2003

**Entrance of the New Parish Community Center**



Photos by John E Boll 2003

**Easter Mass Celebrated in the Parish Community Center in 2003**



Photo by John E Boll 2003

**Auxiliary Bishop Richard Garcia Celebrates Confirmation with the Woodland Community**



Photo by John E Boll 2003

**Sunday Mass in Holy Rosary Church with Father Colm O'Kelly Presiding**



Photo by John E Boll 2005

**Holy Rosary School Eight Grade Graduation Banquet 2005**



Photo by John E Boll 2005

**Woodland Hispanic Community Enacts Christ's Passion on Good Friday**



Photo by John E Boll 2004

**Father Juan Pérez Presides at the 6 AM Guadalupe Mass on December 12, 2004**



**Looking Toward the Future**

**A Final Comment**

The Catholic community of Woodland began its journey in 1821, nearly forty years before there was an Archdiocese of San Francisco or a Vicariate of Marysville. In the nearly 200 years of Catholic life, the Woodland community has undergone many changes and experienced many priests, each with his own personality, strengths and weaknesses. Through it all, Catholic life has continued to move forward. The eternal fire of the Holy Spirit continues to touch the minds and hearts of people in every generation and in every place. The Spirit calls the People of God to overcome fear and to rise up to greatness in proclaiming the joy of the Gospel until Jesus returns to bring creation to completion. We commend the people of Woodland for their spirit of faith and tenacity as they build the Catholic community in the twenty-first century.

**PASTORS WHO HAVE SERVED HOLY ROSARY PARISH 1870 - 2015**

Reverend Patrick Scanlon	1870-1871
Reverend Dominic Spellman	1871-1872
Reverend Patrick J Gallagher	1872-1874
Reverend Peter Kaiser	1874-1877
Reverend John Largan	1877-1878
Reverend Patrick Ward	1878
Reverend John F Nugent	1878-1879
Reverend Cornelius O'Connor	1879-1883
Reverend John McGinty	1883-1886
Reverend Matthew Coleman	1886-1888
Reverend James J Hynes	1888-1899
Reverend James Hunt	1899
Reverend William Laffan	1899-1900
Reverend Patrick Grealy	1900-1911
Reverend Michael Wallrath	1911-1917
Reverend Thomas W Horgan	1917-1926
Reverend Michael Gaffney	1931-1938
Monsignor John E Tumulty	1938-1961
Monsignor Thomas H Markham	1961-1970
Reverend Anthony V Maio	1970-1982
Reverend Cornelius O'Donnell	1982-1994
Reverend John E Boll	1994-2005
Reverend Terry A Fulton	2006-2010
Reverend Frank Velasquez	2010-2015
Reverend Jonathan Molina	2015- Present

**OTHER PRIESTS WHO SERVED AS ASSISTANTS OR PAROCHIAL VICARS**

Reverend John Dowling	1947-1950
Reverend Vincent Lyons	1948-1955
Reverend John Kyne	1950-1952
Reverend Thomas V Burke	1052-1956
Reverend William Slakey	1955-1958
Reverend Robert Connelly	1956-1958
Reverend James F Church	1958
Reverend Joseph Bishop	1958-1964
Reverend Daniel Casey	1958-1965
Reverend James McGrath, CSC	1960
Reverend Arnold J Meagher	1965-1968*
Reverend Edward J Donaghy	1966-1969*
Reverend Brendan Lawlor	1969-1970*
Reverend Thomas Pavao	1969-1971*
Reverend Peter McEaney	1970-1973*
Reverend Edward Boyle, CSSR	1972-1974
Reverend Sean O'Leary	1973-1975
Reverend Januarius Rodriguez	1975-1976
Reverend Isidoro Vicente, OP	1976
Reverend William Hold	1977-1979*
Reverend Michael Turner	1979-1985
Reverend Cipriano G Ramos	1980-1985
Reverend Francisco Javier Garcia	1985-1991*
Reverend Michael McFadden	1985-1992
Reverend Rodolfo Delgado	1991-1992
Reverend Rodrigo Zuluaga	1992
Reverend Troy Powers	1992-1993
Reverend Frederico Abad, OP	1992-1994
Reverend Leon Juchniewicz	1993-1995
Reverend Jorge Moreno	1994-1995*
Reverend Malachy G. Conway	1995-1996*
Reverend Rodrigo Ojeda	1996
Reverend Colm O'Kelly	1996-2005
Reverend Francisco José Sáenz, OP	1996-1998
Reverend Charles Nguyen	1997-1998*
Reverend Rodolfo Llamas	1998-2001
Reverend Frank Velásquez	2001-2003
Reverend Juan Pérez	2003-2004
Reverend Mario Nuñez	2004*
Reverend Juan Pérez	2004-2005
Reverend Enrique Alvarez	2005-2006
Reverend J Fernando Meza	2005-2009
Reverend John Hannan (adm pro-t)	2005-2006
Reverend Sherwin Colaste	2006-2007
Reverend Uriel Ojeda	2007-2009*
Reverend Heriberto Serrano	2009

Reverend Ronan Rances	2010
Reverend Francisco V León	2010
Reverend Giovanni B Gamas	2010-2012
Reverend Jerónimo F Marcelo	2010-2011
Reverend Jacobo A Cáceres	2011-2013
Reverend Christopher Frazer	2012-2013
Reverend J Guadalupe Vázquez	2013-2014
Reverend Renerio G Sabuga, Jr	2014-

Symbol \* indicates person left the ministry

#### TRANSITIONAL DEACONS

Deacon Daniel Restaino  
Deacon Martin Brusato

#### PERMANENT DEACONS

Deacon Robert Link	Ordained 05-29-83
Deacon Edward Kull	Ordained 01-25-89
Deacon Gonzalo Chávez	Ordained 07-01-89
Deacon Antonio Fernández	Ordained 06-03-95*
Deacon José Collazo	Ordained 06-10-06



Photo by John E Boll 2004

**The Renovated Holy Rosary School**



Photo by John E Boll 2003

**Holy Rosary Church built in 1949**