



The Assumption Portrait Manuscript (S0592)

Collection Number: S0592

Collection Title: The Assumption Portrait Manuscript

Dates: 1990

Creator: Assumption Parish (Mattese, Mo.)

Abstract: The *Assumption Portrait* is a 121-page book commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Assumption-Mattese Parish in St. Louis, Missouri.

Collection Size: 0.25 cubic foot
(1 folder)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at stlouis@shsmo.org.

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Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *The Assumption Portrait Manuscript* (S0592); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-St. Louis].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the Western Historical Manuscript Collection by Geroge J. Brueggemann on January 16, 1998 (Accession No. SA3286).

Processed by: Processed by Rachael Heriford, AJ Medlock, and Isaac Alexander, October 2023

Historical Note:

In the 1830s, Reverend Edmond Saulnier and Reverend Joseph Fischer acted as missionaries to the St. Louis South County area, gathering on a ridge overlooking Mattese Creek and creating the Assumption Parish. The two priests served the seven Catholic families in the area until Austrian Reverend Joseph Melcher was assigned pastor in 1844. Melcher constructed a small log

cabin, which served as a church, school, and residence until 1848 when Father Simon Sigrist opened the Assumption School and laid the cornerstone for a brick and stone church. A wooden farm residence replaced the original log cabin in 1871. German Franciscan Sisters took over the school in 1881. The first American-born pastor for the parish, Reverend John Feltman, served from 1884 to 1910. Around this time, Cora LeCompte taught the school's average of 27 students until they graduated at age 10 or 11. Lessons included religion, arithmetic, history, and reading, with half of the materials taught in German, the majority of the student's first language. From 1920 to 1947, Reverend Frederick Schlattmann (1889-1947) served as pastor and published the *Assumption Messenger* newsletter. A new brick residence replaced the old wooden one in 1927.

Reverend F. C. Weiberg, Reverend Joseph Little, and Reverend Henry Kohlen followed Schlattmann as pastors. In 1950, the parish built a new combined church and school building. Assumption Parish constructed the present rectory in 1970 to replace the brick residence. In 1976, the present Assumption Church began construction, and the previous one became the school gym. By the start of the 1980s, 18 parishes had formed in whole or in part from the original Assumption Parish boundaries, all serving about 15,000 Catholic families. Reverend Albert Kovarik served as pastor from 1983 until Reverend Thomas Dempsey took over in 1986. Assumption built a parish center in 1997 and repurposed the old church-turned-gym into additional classrooms and offices.

Reverend Peter Blake served as pastor from 2001-2004, Reverend John Seper from 2004-2014, and Reverend Thomas Keller from 2014-2023. The parish cemetery is the only aspect of Assumption Parish that remains unaltered since the church's founding. It serves as the resting place for three former pastors, many parish members, and some persons enslaved by parish members.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged chronologically.

Scope and Content Note:

The Assumption Portrait collection contains a copy of the 1990 book *The Assumption Portrait*, edited by Judith A. Baranovic and commissioned by the Assumption Parish's Heritage Committee. The book celebrates the 150th anniversary of the parish and chronicles its history from 1839 to 1989. It includes a map of the parish's original boundaries and historical photographs of the church and its members. There are lists of former pastors, associates, deacons, Assumption School principals, religious vocations from Assumption, and patrons. Also featured is a 1989-member directory, proclamations recognizing the anniversary from the Pope, the Archbishop of St. Louis, and the Missouri House and Senate. The materials in this collection are arranged chronologically from 1839-1989.

Container List:

f. 1 *The Assumption Portrait, 1839-1989*

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