GOLDEN UBILEE



OF THE DEDICATION OF

ST. ANTHONY'S CHURCH

Lowell, Massachusetts

MAY 30 1908 1958

Friday, May 30, 1958

Lowell Memorial Auditorium, Lowell, Mass.



Blessings and Congratulations on the 50th birthday of the dedication of Saint Anthony's Church in Lowell.

God Love you all.

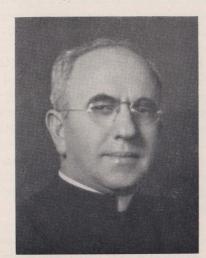
Archbishop of Roston



REV. JOAQUIM V. ROSA



His Excellency
BISHOP HENRY JOSEPH R. DA SILVA



Rev. Joseph T. Grillo



REV. JOHN F. SILVA

HISTORY

... of ...

SAINT ANTHONY'S PARISH

Although in a study edited by Armando Cortesao of the first cartographical representation of the new world entitled, "The Nautical Chart of 1424", recently discovered in the huge bibliographical collection of the late English statesman, Sir Thomas Phillips, conclusive proof has been established that Portuguese reached and inhabited these shores as early as 1424, it was only during the great migration era of 1880, when the flow of immigration from Europe increased greatly, that Portuguese settlements of any extent were established in Massachusetts and later in the city of Lowell.

Peoples, races and groups have been in movement as far back as history records. Opening up of new lands, changing of climatic and economic conditions, together with the opportunity for making a better way of life for themselves and their loved ones, have led people throughout the ages to leave the warmth and security of their homelands and venture forward into the unknown. Among these were the early Portuguese immigrants who came principally from the Azores and Madeira to settle here. In spite of the fertility and the delightful climates of their islands, overpopulation, lack of means with which to earn their livelihood, and compulsory military service drove many of them to the frigid but alluring land of opportunity in the west. The fame of Lowell as the principal industrial center of that time attracted many to our mills for employment. A census of the city of Lowell taken in 1912 reveals a Portuguese population of 2200 with a total real estate valuation of \$200,000.00.

Descendants of a race predestined by God to unveil the secrets of mysterious seas. Sons of a country whose paramount purpose throughout its brilliant era of discoveries and colonization was to implant the word of God in the hearts of the peoples in the new islands and new continents they had discovered, it was only fitting that the first concerted movement of the colony should be to establish a church in their beloved Catholic tradition. Here, far removed as they were from the homeland, once more they could receive the consolation of the Sacraments and hear again the word of God preached in their own familiar and beloved language. Here too, united in prayer and in the faith and traditions so dear to their hearts, they might seek to-

gether the courage and fortitude to persevere in this strange, disturbing land, so different from the quiet beauty and solitude of their native villages.

In January 1901, a group of Portuguese men journeyed to East Cambridge to speak with Rev. Anthony J. Pimentel, a Portuguese priest who had been sent here by the Bishop of Angra in the Azores to labor among the Portuguese settlements in East Boston and Cambridge. Their request was that Father Pimentel intercede with the proper Church authorities so that a parish might be established in Lowell.

The first meetings were held in Fair Hall of Saint Peter's parish during February and March of 1901. Odd Fellows Temple was used until April of that year and on the 19th of May the first church, a small white wooden structure located at Congress and Gorham Streets, purchased from the Primitive Methodists, was dedicated and a parish numbering approximately 950 people was established. Father Pimentel, who throughout these months had journeyed weekly to Lowell to administer to the spiritual needs of the faithful, turned the administration of the new church over to Reverend Joaquim V. Rosa, recently arrived from the Island of Pico in the Azores, who became the first pastor of Saint Anthony's in Lowell. In 1905 Father Paul Despouy, still remembered by many of our older parishioners, came to Lowell as assistant to Father Rosa. Despite his French origin, Father Despouy spoke Portuguese fluently having spent the greater part of his life in Portugal. Along with his work as assistant in Lowell he interested himself zealously in the seven hundred Portuguese of Lawrence for whom he built the church of SS Peter and Paul, later becoming its first pastor.

The little church on Gorham Street continued to serve as a house of prayer until 1907, when continued migration of Portuguese into the city necessitated the acquisition of a larger church. Under the direction of Rev. Father Rosa funds were raised throughout the Portuguese colony for this purpose. Land on Central street to erect a new church and rectory was purchased and construction commenced with the blessing of the cornerstone by Archbishop William O'Connell

on November 28, 1907. The following year, on May 30, 1908, although only the basement of the original structure had been completed, the church was officially dedicated and opened for religious services when according to a front page account in "The Lowell Sun" of May 31, 1908, statues and sacred vessels were carried in solemn procession, through streets lined with hundreds of parishioners, and deposited in the new church.

Throughout these years Father Rosa was a devoted and arduous worker for his people and he remained at Saint Anthony's until 1911 when he returned to his beloved island of Pico in the Azores, leaving the Church in the hands of His Excellency Bishop Henry Joseph Reed da Silva, Titular Bishop of Trajanopolis in Phrygia and a first cousin of Dom Carlos, the then reigning King of Portugal.

Bishop da Silva had come to this country to dedicate a Portuguese church in the Fall River diocese. During this time a crucial period developed in Portugal and plans were completed for the overthrow of the monarchy. The assassination of his cousin, the King of Portugal, resulted in his decision to remain in this country until it was felt that it was safe for him to return.

The church was administered by Bishop da Silva from 1911 until 1924. With his departure for Portugal on July 2nd of that year, it was left in the care of Reverend Joseph T. Grillo, a native of Sao Miguel in the Azores who had come to this country as a young boy and who after long years of working and studying had realized his dream of becoming a priest and had been ordained in the Archdiocese of Boston in 1924.

Under Father Grillo's kind and loving guidance the church continued to function. His payment of the original debt involved years of patient effort and careful planning. Due to the Immigration Bill of 1921, limiting entrance into this country on a quota basis only, the Portuguese colony never reached the proportions anticipated by founders when they planned such a huge, cathedral-like church, and the original plans were never completed. Lack of employment, due to the removal of many of our textile mills to the south, led to further depletion of the colony when many decided to depart for California where opportunities in the fishing industry and dairy farming attracted them.

When during the year 1946 Father Grillo became critically ill, the fear in his heart that the Portuguese language would cease to be spoken in this church which had been built with so many sacrifices and dreams,

and an awareness of the lack of Portuguese-speaking priests in the archdiocese, prompted him to write to the Bishop of Guarda in Portugal imploring him to send one or more Portuguese priests to this country. In answer to this appeal Reverend John F. Silva, our present pastor, arrived in Lowell on March 22, 1947. Later in October of the same year he was joined by Reverend Manuel J. Cascais, present pastor of Saint Anthony's church in Cambridge. Upon the death of Father Grillo on November 6, 1948, Archbishop Richard J. Cushing appointed Father Silva as administrator of Saint Anthony's in Lowell, the position which he occupies at the present time.

During the years of Father Silva's very capable administration, the church has been completely transformed. The interior has been redecorated and a new marble altar and altar railing, together with modern comfortable pews, stations and stained glass windows have been installed. A beautiful shrine in honor of Our Lady of Fatima attracts many visitors daily and is a great devotional source for the hundreds of parishioners who have a special devotion to Our Lady as she appeared in Portugal to the three little children.

Now fifty years later, having recently completed a very successful building fund campaign, the parishioners of Saint Anthony's are anticipating the realization of their dream of seeing their church completed. Construction is already under way on a new modern contemporary design that will raise the roof of the church, transforming it into a functionally beautiful edifice comparable with the new trend of church architecture being constructed throughout the archdiocese.

Although many of the original settlers are still in our midst the majority of parishioners now are American born children and grandchildren of those early immigrants who arrived here. Pride in their descendancy from a race that contributed more than any other to the spread of Christianity throughout the entire world; ties with the language, the first they heard spoken from the lips of their mothers and a loyalty to carry on in the spirit of those first early Portuguese who settled here, have led them to continue with the work of completing this church dedicated to their great Saint Anthony of Lisbon.

Thus we find ourselves in 1958 keeping faith with those who have gone before us by preserving in a cosmopolitan city such as ours, composed of people from so many different countries, a trace of our own religious culture and traditions.

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Representative Archie E. Kenefick

15th Middlesex District

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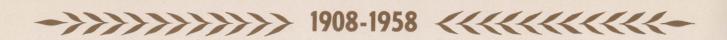
THEIR FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

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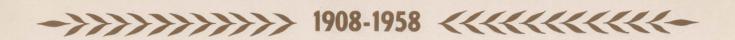
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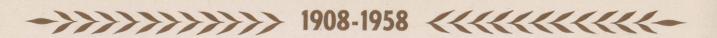
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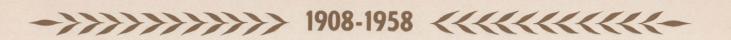
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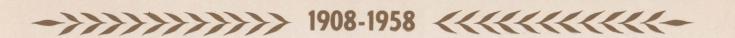
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THOMAS A. SHEEHAN, INC., PACKAGE STORE 3 Gallagher Square

DAVIS DRUG STORE 624 Gorham Street

KONOMICH GARAGE 31-33 West Third Street

MAURICE KARP BEEF COMPANY, 124 Gorham Street

BEVERLY BEAUTY SALON 36 Central Street

LINCOLN SQUARE BARBER Chelmsford Street

AUSTIN PROVISIONS 56 Austin Street

R. E. COX COAL COMPANY 292 Plain Street

BEE'S BEAUTY SHOP 256 East Merrimack Street

THE BELVIDERE SHOP 248 High Street

PEASE MOTOR COMPANY 614 Middlesex Street

LARSON'S DAIRY, MILK & CREAM 1960 Middlesex Street

SAVOY BEVERAGES 915 Pawtucket Street

LINEHAN OIL COMPANY 80 Moore Street

C. H. SLOWEY INSURANCE AGENCY 210 Fairburn Building

JOSEPH McINERNEY, LAWYER & REAL ESTATE 253 Appleton Street

HECTOR J. ST. JEAN
Building & Remodeling
36 Boswell Avenue

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Card of Thanks

The Committee in charge of the 50th anniversary observance of the dedication of Saint Anthony's Church expresses its sincerest appreciation to all who have contributed to the success of our Golden Jubilee Commemoration.

To our loyal parishioners for their wholehearted response to our Building Fund Campaign, to our many business friends who have favored us with their advertisements, to The Lowell Sun for its excellent publicity and to the many, many friends of Saint Anthony's parish, we say — thank you all most sincerely.