

St. Anthony's Church

The Basement Blessed With Impressive Ceremonies Today

(Picture of the Plan)

The New ST. Anthony's Church on Central Street.

The First Mass Celebrated There Today - Many Visiting Clergymen Present

The basement of St. Anthony's new church in upper Central street was blessed this morning with appropriate exercises and the first mass was celebrated there.

The basement was blessed by Rev. A. G. S. Neves, of St. John the Baptist Church in New Bedford. Rev. Fr. Neves is the longest established Portuguese priest in this country and he was delegated by the Archbishop to come to Lowell today to bless the basement of St. Anthony's new church.

There was a procession, an inspiring one, from the old church in Gorham street to the new church in upper Central street. The procession formed in Gorham street, near Congress, at 10 o'clock and was escorted by St. Anthony's society, including the boys and girls of the parish, they carried the statue of St. Anthony. Then came the Holy Rosary society bearing the statue of the Blessed Virgin, the Holy Name society following and carrying the Sacred Heart banner. Then came the clergy and the sanctuary choir.

The solemn high mass was celebrated by the pastor, Rev. Joaquim V. Rosa; deacon, Rev. A. J. Pimentel, of East Cambridge; sub-deacon, Rev. Paul Despouy of Lawrence; master of ceremonies, M. C. Terra of Provincetown.

The sermon was by Rev. A. P. Vieira, of Mt. Carmel church, New Bedford. There was a large representation of local Catholic clergy and a majority of the Portuguese clergymen from the parishes of New England were present.

The day was all that could be desired and long before it was time for the procession to start the streets in the vicinity of the old church were crowded and as the procession moved on there prevailed the hush of respect and veneration, and the appearance of the children carrying the statues was particularly impressive.

Rev. Fr. Rosa and his flock are to be congratulated on the splendid progress that they have made. Fr. Rosa is a tireless, persistent, and consistent worker. His ambitions are high and he is very resourceful.

It was in February, 1901, that the movement toward the establishment of a Portuguese church in Lowell was begun. Rev. A. J. Pimentel was the prime mover. He came here from Boston and organized a mission. The first meeting was in the Fair Hall of St. Peter's

church and later the little band secured Odd Fellows' Temple in Middlesex street and there they worshipped until April, 1901, when they acquired the building near the corner of Gorham and Congress streets. The church was dedicated May 19, 1901. Up to January 19, 1902, Rev. Fr. Pimentel continued to say mass at the church, coming from Boston every Sunday.

Then came the present pastor, Rev. J. V. Rosa. He received his appointment from the late Most Rev. Archbishop John J. Williams and the result of his work is being manifested today. When Fr. Rosa took charge the church had an attendance of 950 and today the number is 2500. In 1905 the mortgage on the church and rectory was burned.

Work on the new church was begun July 1, 1907, and on Thanksgiving day the corner stone was blessed by Most Rev. Archbishop O'Connell.

Picture of  
Rev. J. V. Rosa  
Pastor of St.  
Anthony's  
Church