

Parish Beginnings: The Social Hall is Constructed

Part 3 in a 12 part series about the history of our parish which we are reprinting in celebration of our 50th Anniversary. These articles are also being posted to our website at stjoseph-wj@hotmail.com.

While still a mission of Immaculate Conception Parish in Copperton, St. Joseph the Worker Church in West Jordan was completed and in full use for Masses and worship services by 1965. The next focus was on a social structure, both organizationally and physically.

One of the earliest and best organized parish groups was the women's group called the Altar Society. Their first meeting was held September 1964. They met monthly and held rummage and bake sales. They invited guest speakers. For their April 14, 1965 meeting, for example, a member of the Jordan School District spoke to them about "The Exceptional Child". And, they hosted lots of events such as Valentine's parties and Halloween dances.

Another early group was the Confraternity. Its purpose was to promote the Spiritual, Material, Social and Educational welfare of the members of St. Joseph the Worker Church. There were 8 divisions to this organization: Teachers, Helpers, Fishers, Ways and Means, Parent Educators, Youth-CYO, Publicity and Choir. There was also a Men's Club and Youth Group of the parish. Among their many activities, they enjoyed getting together for parties and dances. Until a parish hall was built, these activities were held at other locations such as Pioneer Hall or area schools.

A parish hall was part of a Master Plan that was developed by Fr. Sullivan and the architect. This plan also provided for a school, a convent, and a recreation area all of which would be built around a courtyard that was to have been located directly east and south of the old church entrance doors. A rectory was designed and was to be located at the west side of the old church to face Redwood Road. This Master Plan was abandoned in the late 1960's with the realization that it was unlikely that the school would ever be built.

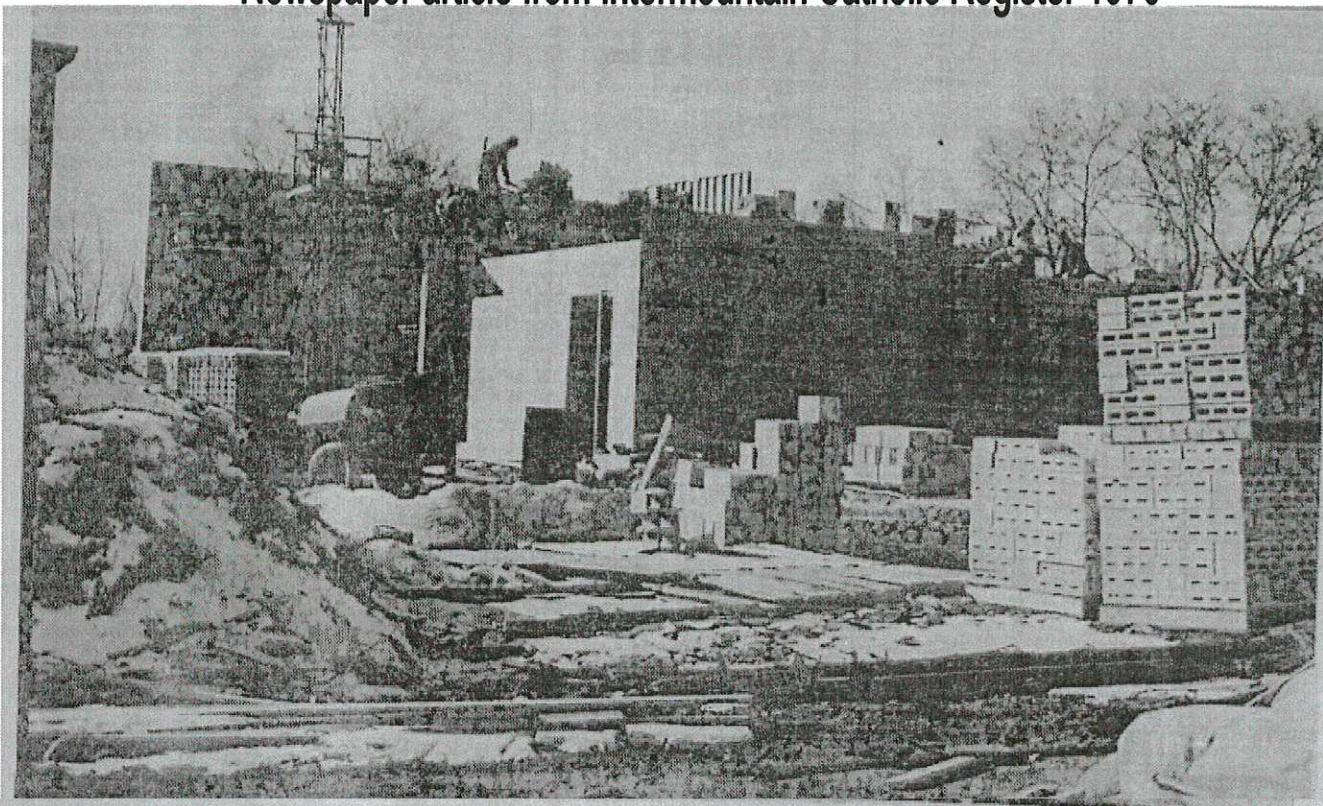
In 1969 the mission was raised to the status of a parish, and Father James Fogarty was named the first official pastor. He was the priest here from 1969 to 1972 when he moved to Mexico where he served in the Latin American Missions Program. He died last year in Mexico on September 6, 2013 at the age of 84. It was under his administration that the parish hall was constructed in 1970 and he lived in a small apartment that was built into that structure.

The hall was designed primarily for use as a gymnasium, so that the youth of the parish would have a place for their athletic activities. The original hall only included a half-gym, (see diagram on page 7). The plan was for the extension to full gym to be completed when additional funds were available. The ceiling of the half-gym was high to accommodate a basketball court. The half-gym was also used for dances, dinners, receptions and meetings. Also on the east side was a small kitchen which ended at the wall directly behind the stove. Some parishioners still remember how crowded that kitchen would get where there were several of them in the room preparing a big parish dinner. This proximity, however, brought about many close and lasting friendships.

On the west side of the original hall were the downstairs classrooms for CCD and adult education as well as living quarters for the pastor. There was no second level in the early hall.

Father David Goddard was the next parish priest from 1972 until 1974. In a lengthy letter to the parish dated in the early 1970's, Fr. Goddard discussed several problems with the hall. He felt it was not well designed for multi-purposes such as meetings, classrooms, storage, dinners, etc. The priest's apartment, he said, was not suitable, and he had it converted to a CCD office. It was under his administration that the rectory was built in 1972 and this is where he lived.

Newspaper article from Intermountain Catholic Register 1970



DDD Builds Parish Center

West Jordan - Construction of the new parish center for St. Joseph the Worker was made possible through the DDD of 1969 stated Father James Fogarty, pastor.

The \$15,000 given the DDD coupled

with funds obtained from the Extension Society of America and a fund-raising campaign among the parishioners will make it possible for the newest parish in the diocese to have a parish center which will include a

hall, classrooms for CCD and adult education as well as living quarters for the pastor.

The building, started recently, as the above picture indicates, will be completed by the end of the summer.

How original Hall was funded:

Original fund: \$1,648.44

Parish pledges: \$ 9,358.33

Confraternity: \$5,114.00

Mascaro Donation: \$ 3,000.00

D.D.D.: \$27,500.00

Extension Society of America: \$15,000.00

Misc.: \$2,736.66

Total: \$64,357.43

It wasn't until Fr. Rudolph Daz (now Monsignor Daz) became the priest, 1978 to 1987, that the next major changes were made to the hall. Msgr. Daz's dream was to finally expand the gym to full size and to make other major improvements to the hall. In spite of his hard efforts, his fundraising fell short of his goal. With the \$80,000 that he did raise, he added stairs and a 2nd story level on which more classrooms were built. Adding this 2nd level caused the half-gym ceiling to be lowered, and the large room was never used as a gym again. It did, however, continue to function as a great open space for dinners, dances and parties.

Yet another hall restructuring began under Father John Hart in 1994. Parishioners were asked to make 3 year financial pledges. With these funds, the east side of the hall was expanded. The primary goals were to increase the size of the kitchen and to add more open space. Many parishioners can still recall the plastic sheets that hung up on the walls during this reconstruction period and how cold it felt to walk into the hall during the winter months. When the construction was finally completed, it was discovered that noise reverberated off the wall in a very irritating way. The green-hued panels were placed on the walls to help control this. Parishioners were urged to keep the hall looking nice and were asked to follow special rules. For example, anything that was to be hung was to go on specially designated hooks only. Over the years, many of these rules which were once followed religiously have been forgotten.

From joyous wedding receptions to sad funeral dinners and everything in between, the hall has been witness to some of the very best and worst of our parish community. The hall especially proved its mettle while we constructing the new church. It was used for daily and weekly Masses, the parish office, CCD, classrooms, construction meetings and for every indoor parish event. The next time you are in the hall, think about the decades of meetings, classes, parties and dinners that have taken place within these walls. Many critical decisions have been made here that continue to affect us today. Let us pray that our decisions today will have a positive impact on the future!



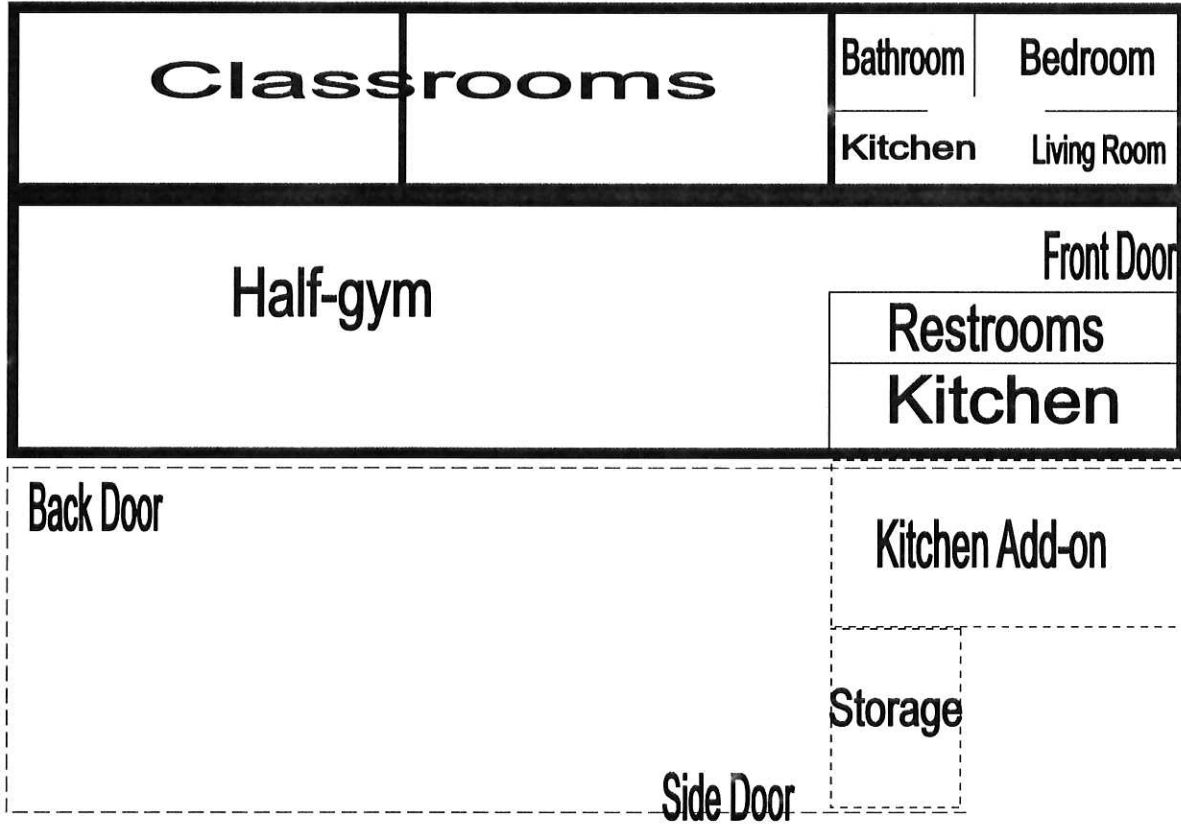
The hall was named in honor of Sister Fabian at the Founders Day Picnic of 2008.

Diagram of Parish Hall

The original hall is shown in bold black lines. It was constructed in 1970.

In the 1980's, a second story was added and this is where most of our classrooms are still located.

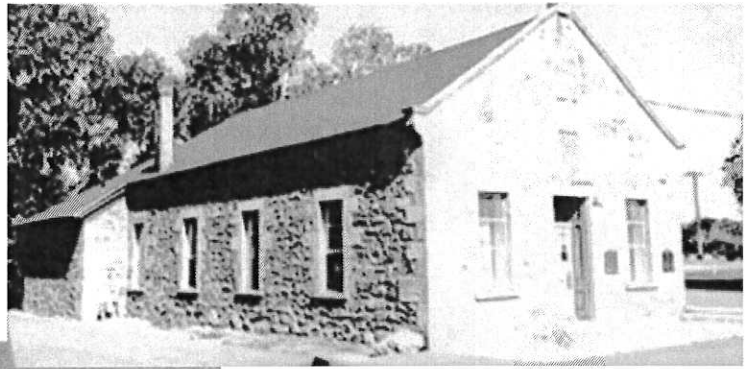
In 1994, an extension (dotted lines) was added to the lower level. It expanded the kitchen and the large multi-purpose area which we still use today for all types of purposes.



AT HOME IN THE HALL

It's hard to believe, but Nickie Gressmen's office in the Parish Hall used to be Father Fogarty's living quarters. His kitchen was located where Nickie's desk presently sits. If you look carefully, you can still see the large electric socket behind the desk where the oven used to be plugged. Nickie's storage room and closet used to be Fr. Fogarty's bedroom and bathroom. The accommodations were quite small but very cozy.

Below- This flier below was printed in 1965 for a parish Halloween Dance. St. Joseph the Worker did not yet have a Social Hall, so the party took place at Pioneer Hall (pictured on the right).



WITCHES AND GOBLINS ARE OUT TONIGHT
AT A
HALLOWEEN DANCE
(COSTUME OR COME AS YOU LIKE)
WHEN- OCTOBER 30 - 8:30 P.M.
WHERE- PIONEER HALL
WEST JORDAN, UTAH
WHY- TO DANCE TO LIVE MUSIC-
TRY AND WIN A PRIZE FOR BEST COSTUME-
ENJOY REFRESHMENTS-
JUST HAVE FUN!
WHO- ADULTS, SENIOR AND JUNIOR
HIGH AGES
HOW MUCH- \$1.00 PER PERSON
Sponsored by
St. Joseph the Worker Men's Club and Altar Society

Above: Pioneer Hall, located on 7800 South, not far from Gardner Village. The sandstone building was completed in 1867 by Utah pioneers. Today the structure remains basically unchanged from the way the pioneers built it.