

Declaration of our 150th Anniversary

*Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
as we begin the season when we celebrate Christ's birth,
we approach another celebration of birth...
the birth of our St. Mary Parish 150 years ago.*

*It has been written, in language of former times,
that our parish "was founded at a time
when a famine was driving the manhood out of Ireland to America.
These people were attracted to the Fox River Valley
by the prospects of work on the government canal
and opportunity to acquire land."*

*Their life was uprooted. Survival meant change.
Life was hard,
but it is evident that they sought comfort and strength
in the hope that God would sustain them through their hardships.
Faith, worship, and community were important to them.
During 10 years before the founding of St. Mary's
these people worshiped in local homes
whenever a missionary priest was known to be traveling to the area.*

*From this modest beginning, arose our St. Mary Parish.
From this humble beginning grew the 8 parishes of Appleton.*

*As we turn the calendar to the new year 2009,
let us continue our journey together.*

*Develop a curiosity in the rich history of our parish.
Let us reflect to our community that we are followers of Christ
as we **REMEMBER** our history and the sacrifices which were made,
CELEBRATE the faith community we have become,
and **ENVISION** the parish we hope to pass on to future generations.*

*We hope you will enjoy the celebration in the upcoming year.
May the light of Christ be our guide and our compass
as we continue on our journey of faith.*