

Diocese of Gaylord marks 10th anniversary

GAYLORD — When the Diocese of Gaylord was created and the old St. Mary Church on North Otsego Avenue was consecrated as a cathedral in 1971, Gaylord became the smallest cathedral city for Roman Catholicism on the United States mainland.

In 1981, as the diocese celebrates its 10th anniversary, it is still among the smallest in the nation.

Twenty-one counties comprise the Gaylord Diocese which was established from portions of the Saginaw Diocese and the Grand Rapids Diocese.

The Gaylord Diocese takes in 11,171 square miles, and includes the counties of Emmet, Cheboygan, Presque Isle, Charlevoix, Antrim, Otsego, Montmorency, Alpena, Iosco, Oscoda, Ogemaw, Crawford, Rosconunon, Kalkaska, Missaukee, Wexford, Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Benzie, Manistee and Alcona.

Total population of the area in 1980 exceeded 420,000 persons, of whom 84,425 are Catholics.

On June 5, 1971, Pope Paul VI named Msgr. Edmund Szoka of Marquette as first bishop of the Gaylord Diocese. Bishop Szoka served in that capacity until the spring of 1981, when he was designated by Pope John Paul II as Archbishop of Detroit.

A bishop to succeed Archbishop Szoka at Gaylord has not yet been named. The Rev.

David W. Gemuend has served as diocesan administrator since being elected to the post in May.

In July of 1976, a new St. Mary Cathedral on North Ohio Street was dedicated in a ceremony attended by church leaders from around the world.

AT THE TIME the cathedral was established, social services provided by the church were available through two small offices located in Alpena and Traverse City. Otsego County residents were served through Traverse City.

Bishop Szoka established a human service department known as Community Family and Children Services, and a direct service office was set up in Gaylord in 1973.

Today, the central district office has a staff of counseling and supportive service personnel. In addition, administrators and an accounting department function for the 21 counties.

Services include parent-child, unmarried parent, marriage and individual counseling; adoption program; correction employment service program; and premarriage preparation.

The services are supported through the annual Diocesan Catholic Services Appeal and the Otsego County United Way Drive, with counseling fees and contractual funds supplementing the programs.

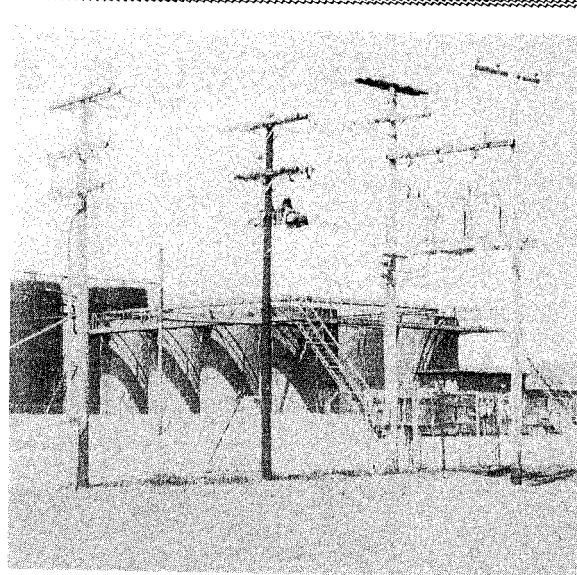
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