

St. Joachim Parish Fonds
1858-1961

ARCAE - 121

Prepared by Lea M. de la Paz, February 2019

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37 cm of textual records.

Administrative History:

The beginnings of St. Joachim Parish can be traced back to Fort Edmonton, the Hudson's Bay Company's main trading post in western Canada.

It was on September 6, 1838 that Catholic priests first set foot at the fort. Rev. Norbert Blanchet and Rev. Modeste Demers made a stop there on their way to Oregon. On September 10th, the day of their departure, they blessed a large cross and planted it on the current site of the Alberta Legislature to symbolize possession of Edmonton for Christ and His Church.

The first missionary to be sent to Western Canada was Rev. Jean-Baptiste Thibault who arrived at Fort Edmonton from Red River on June 19, 1842 and stayed until July 25th. He then went to visit the Indigenous people to the south and west of the fort where he returned on August 29th. He went back to Red River on September 18th. In 1844, he returned to settle permanently at Lac Ste. Anne. His companion, Rev. Joseph Bourassa, stopped at Fort Edmonton on August 5th where days later Rev. Thibault will arrive from Lac Ste. Anne en route to Fort Pitt. For the next eight years they would regularly serve Fort Edmonton and Lac Ste. Anne.

In September 17, 1852, Father Albert Lacombe arrived at Fort Edmonton. In May of the following year, Rev. Bourassa went back to Red River leaving Rev. Lacombe alone until the arrival of Rev. René Remas, omi on September 1853. The two priests continued to service the fort along with Rev. Célestin-Marie Frain, omi who joined in 1858 and Rev. Jean-Marie Caër in 1860, omi. From 1865 until October 1883, service was provided by the Oblates from the mission of St. Albert.

In 1854, Fort Edmonton received its first episcopal visit from Bishop Alexandre Taché, omi of St. Boniface and it was during this time that the name St. Joachim was given to the mission. Several days later, Bishop Taché proceeded to Lac Ste. Anne. He would visit the mission of St. Joachim again in 1860 and 1864.

Despite being an active mission, St. Joachim did not have a chapel nor a church. A small hut served as a chapel-residence. Sunday and holiday services took place in the great hall of the residence of the chief factor so that in 1859, Chief J.W. Christie of Fort Edmonton authorized the construction of a small church building with residence within the fort. It was completed on December 24, 1859 and the first Mass was said that evening. This first church would remain in use until 1876 when the governor of the Hudson's Bay Company requested Bishop Vital Grandin to remove the chapel and the residence from the fort. In October, the buildings were taken down and rebuilt on a 9-acre property given to Bishop Grandin by Malcolm Groat. This was the second church.

The arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway at Calgary on August 11, 1883, heralded an era of prosperity for Edmonton. Also, the Hudson's Bay Company surveyed its huge estate to put the lots on the market and Bishop Grandin acquired a whole block of land. The population was growing daily so much so that it

became necessary for the Oblates at St. Albert to make more and more frequent and prolonged stays there.

Bishop Grandin named his nephew, Reverend Henri Grandin, omi, the first resident priest of Saint-Joachim. On October 1, 1883, he settled permanently in the house-chapel on the Groat property, along with the scholastic brother Zéphyrin Lizée, omi, who was to finish his studies and learn the Cree.

A larger church was begun on June 1, 1886 under the direction of Rev. Henri Grandin. On August 22, 1886, the feast of St. Joachim, the third church was solemnly blessed by Rev. Jean-Marie Lestanc, omi. It was located on the site of the present church of St. Joachim.

The fourth church and the current one was built in 1899 and blessed on December 8th, on the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

In 1901, Fr. H. Leduc, omi, oversaw the completion of the belfry. In 1903, the stained glass windows were installed.

Scope and Content:

Fonds consists of combined Baptism, Marriage and Burial registers, 1858-1910; Baptism registers, 1905-1943; Marriage registers, 1891-1950 and; Burial registers, 1911-1961.

Archival/Custodial History:

The records formed part of the holdings of Archives of the Oblates of Missionary Immaculate (OMI) that were housed at the Provincial Archives of Alberta.

When the Provincial Archives of Alberta was negotiating the donation/acquisition of all OMI Lacombe Canada records, it became very clear to the Oblates that they did not consider the sacramental registers to be Oblate records. Hence the decision by both OMI Lacombe Canada and the Provincial Archives to facilitate their return to the appropriate dioceses.

The registers of parishes within the present jurisdiction of the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton were obtained from OMI Lacombe Canada on June 28, 2017.

Legend:

RR – indicates that a register contains records that are restricted from public access due to privacy legislation. Restrictions will be lifted on an annual basis to make records available.

Accession No.	Box-file	File description	Dates
2019/481	1-1	St. Joachim (Fort Auguste, Forts des Prairies) Baptisms, Marriages, Burials	1858-1899
2019/488	1 of 1	St. Joachim (Fort Auguste, Forts des Prairies) Baptisms, Marriages, Burials Note: See also transcribed copy of this register in the Lac Ste-Anne fonds 2019/489 1 of 1, Part 2 St. Joachim Parish Copy of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials	1858-1884
2019/481	2-1	St. Joachim Vol. II Baptisms, Marriages, Burials	1900-1910
	2-2	St. Joachim Parish Vol. III Baptisms	1905-1910
	2-3	St. Joachim Parish Vol. IV Baptisms	1911-1916
	2-4	St. Joachim Parish Vol. V Baptisms	1916-1923
	2-5RR	St. Joachim Parish Vol. VI Baptisms	1922-1923
	3-1	St. Joachim Parish Vol. IX Marriages	1891-1895
	3-2	St. Joachim Parish Vol. X Marriages	1905-1910
	3-3	St. Joachim Parish Vol. XI Marriages	1910-1916
	3-4	St. Joachim Parish Vol. XII Marriages	1916-1933
	3-5RR	St. Joachim Parish Vol. XIII Marriages	1934-1948
	4-1	St. Joachim Parish Vol. VIII Burials	1911-1961