

**OUR ASSEMBLY PATRON  
FR. LOUIS BOUÉ HIS ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE CHURCH IN AMHERSTBURG**

In July, 1843 the Jesuits, headed by Rev Pierre Point, returned to Assumption after an absence of over sixty years. For about four months, the good Fathers also tended to the mission at Amherstburg until the arrival in January, 1844 of Fr. Louis Boué, a secular priest, and native of France.

On the 12TH of January, just prior to the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, Monsieur Boué, a French missionary arrived from Montreal to administer this Amherstburg parish. He was very bruised from a fall he had suffered coming from London in a stagecoach, which was in very poor condition. The welcome he received did not nonetheless, make him forget this suffering. On the 9TH of January, 1844 Rev Louis Boué was placed temporarily in charge of the Amherstburg parish. The appointment was made permanent January 29TH.

Fr Boué's arrival at Sandwich in a battered condition apparently did little to deter him from immediately getting on with the business at hand. On the 16TH of January, 1844, less than a week after his arrival here the new pastor signed the church register for the first time. Newcomers were arriving in the district on a regular basis. The cornerstone of the new church was blessed on June 24TH, 1844. Even though the contractor, William Burnell, had agreed to build the church for \$9,200 the final price after some additional work was \$9,728.

Fr. Boué spent many days travelling about the district, meeting parishioners from the whole section. Some of whom hadn't seen a priest since they left their homeland. On some occasions the new pastor baptized several children in a family at one time. On his visits he kept the populace informed as to the progress of their new church. Fr Boué maintained a ledger of promises and payments as parishioners donated to the building fund as they were each able - some fifty cents, some fifty dollars. A number of Protestant citizens and merchants also donated to the building of the new Catholic Church on Brock Street. The Wyandotte Indians had donated stone for the new edifice from their quarry in Anderdon Township. Men of the vicinity gave day work, loaned horses, wagons, tools, and assisting in whatever manner they were able to build the new St. John The Baptist Church.

### **The Death of Fr. Louis Boué**

Fr. Loue Boué passed away the 11Th of October, 1845. According to Bishop Dignan's history of the London Diocese. Fr. Boué's death occurred as a result of injuries sustained whilst inspecting his new church. "It seems that the walls of the building had just been completed, and in his eagerness to catch a view of the walls from a far distance, the Reverend Fr. stood up in his buggy whilst returning from a visit to the countryside. His horse, frightened by something, lurched forward, precipitating Fr. Boué to the ground. His injuries were so serious that death followed in a few days".

Fr. Louis Boué was buried on the 14TH of October, 1845 beneath the Sanctuary, his being the first funeral held in the new Amherstburg church. Officiating at the requiem Mass were Jesuit Fathers Pierre Point and James Jaffre from Assumption and Fr. Kilroy from the Irish parish in Detroit. Burial took place "in the presence of all the parishioners and others from a distance" and was witnessed by "marguilliers" (church wardens) of the church. In 1918 Fr. Boué's remains were removed and interred in the present St, John the Baptist cemetery. In 1991, the Historical committee of St. John the Baptist parish, seeing that the tombstone over Fr. Boué's burial site was badly deteriorated, they arranged for a new stone to be placed there. In October 1991, one hundred and forty-six years after Fr Louis Boué's death, the new Monument was installed and dedicated. On a chilly Sunday afternoon Fr. Ed Kline blessed the gravesite and shared appropriate prayers with a goodly number of parishioners in attendance. The Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree Dean Wagner Assembly added pomp and colour to the ceremony. The Amherstburg Knights of Columbus Fr Bernard O'Donnell Council graciously financed the \$1045 project in 2004. The Bell Tower was repaired along with the Nave Roof framing at a cost of 2.3 million dollars.

Fr. Louis Boué Assembly #2355 On July 30th, 1994, a Charter was granted to the Fr Louis Boué Assembly #2355 Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus. The membership of the Assembly is primarily made up from members of Councils from Amherstburg, River Canard, McGregor, Harrow and Kingsville.

*(Short summary from the Historical Committee St. John The Baptist Church)*