

Diocese of New Ulm A Look Back!

EDITOR'S NOTE: In recognition of the upcoming 50th Anniversary of the Diocese of New Ulm (November 18, 2007), *The Prairie Catholic* will be taking "a look back" at some of the important history since the conception of the diocese. If there is a piece of history that you would like us to consider publishing in our "A Look Back" column, please contact *The Prairie Catholic*, 1400 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073; (507) 359-2966; email: dnu@dnu.org.

The Diocese of New Ulm (See) was established November 18, 1957. Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler was the first Bishop of New Ulm, installed on January 30, 1958 at Holy Trinity Cathedral, New Ulm.

The formation of the diocese was basically "from scratch" All the clergy within its boundaries were, at that time, in parish work. It had no religious orders for men or women based within its boundaries, nor did it have any Catholic colleges. It did have two Catholic hospitals: Holy Trinity in Graceville and Loretto Hospital in New Ulm.

The first order of business was a Chancery. A residence at 19 North Broadway, New Ulm (also known as the Johnson house), was rented and became the first Chancery of the diocese.

The next step was to appoint diocesan officials to head the new offices that were to be formed. Msgr. Rudolph Neudecker was appointed Vicar General while remaining pastor at Marshall. Fr. Arnold Berg was appointed Chancellor while remaining pastor at Searles. Fr. Ray Neudecker was appointed Vice Chancellor and

Director of Catholic services while remaining as pastor at Swan Lake. Fr. Francis Hayden, Rural Life Director for the Archdiocese, remained in that position in the new Diocese of New Ulm. Fr. Peter Berger, pastor at Comfrey, was appointed the first director of the diocesan Marriage Tribunal. It took a few years to get the Tribunal organized and functioning so the workload was handled by the Archdiocese of St. Paul. Fr. John Ward was appointed Superintendent of Schools while serving as pastor at Litchfield. He had formerly served as Director of the Archdiocese's Office of Education. Fr. Harry Majerus was appointed Director of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. He was in charge of developing and organizing religious education programs for the entire diocese. A house in Franklin was an office, resource library, and residence for staff personnel.

