

Barquilla de la Santa Maria

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“How Many Souls?” Leonard Goffine and his Book

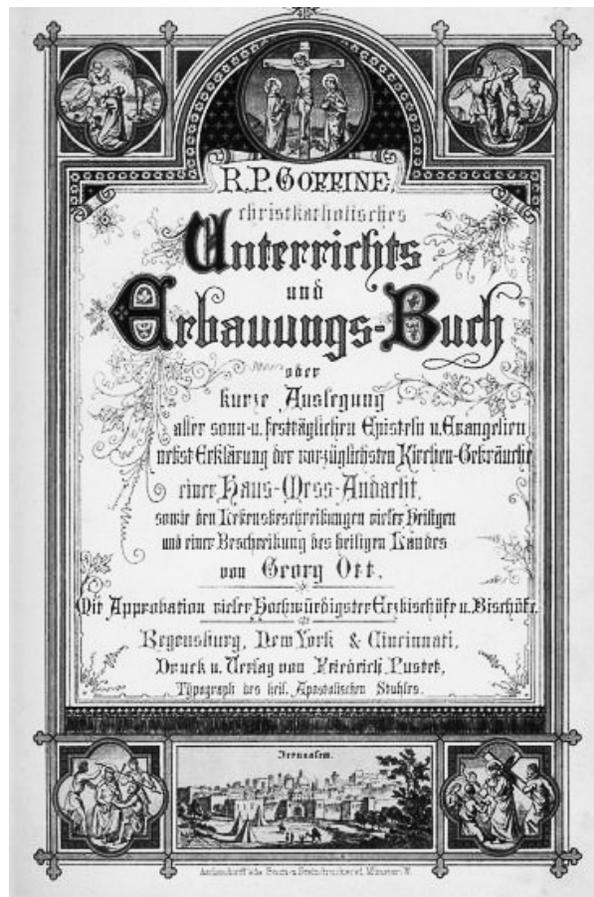
by Alan Borer

Looking through an old copy (1895) of the *Ohio Waisenfreund*, I saw an advertisement headlined *Gute Bucher* (Good Books). It listed several titles that Monsignor John Joseph Jessing had for sale through the *Waisenfreund* office. The advertisement listed seven titles, including *Der Apostel von Ohio* (The Apostle of Ohio), a biography of Bishop Edward Fenwick, *Heiligen-Legende* (Stories of the Saints) by P. W. Auer, O. Cap., and one with the slightly intimidating title of *Handpostille oder christ-katholisches Unterrichts und Erbauungsbuch* (Brief, or Devout in some translations, Commentaries, or Christian Catholic Teaching and Edification Book). The writer was simply listed as “Goffine,” and Monsignor Jessing was offering copies at \$1.15 each.

At a later date, looking through an old (1894) newspaper for a totally different topic, I spied an article about a wedding party in my father’s hometown of New Riegel, Ohio. The article fulminated about the many presents the couple had received.

Among the presents were— pictures, towels, tablecloths, **goffine**, rug, stand cover, clock, rocking chair, fruit basket, water set, album, napkins, pepper and salt vases, bed spreads, set of knives and forks, silver teaspoons, butter dish, sugar shell, tea set, set of dishes, fruit stand, cup and saucer, 50 cents, center table, fancy lamp, glass pitcher, quilt.

Goffine? I remembered the *Ohio Waisenfreund* advertisement. Apparently, Goffine’s book was so



standard and useful to German-American Catholics that it did not need to be explained – or even capitalized. The giver of the Goffine had, at least, bested the wedding guest who gave 50 cents!

But this started a train of thoughts that led to my attic. My grandfather, who died in 1978, occasionally purchased old books in German at auctions and farm sales. He had been raised in a

German Catholic family, and had compiled a stack of about twenty old German books. When I checked these books, which had come down to me, sure enough one of them was labeled “Goffine” on its spine. I opened the cover, and found myself looking at a very elaborately illustrated edition of Goffine’s *Unterrichts und Erbauungs-Buch*. The book was yellowed with age and printed by the (then) popular German-American printing firm Friedrich Pustet, of Regensburg, New York, and Cincinnati.

Apparently, this book was once a must-have book for the families of the devout, not only in North America, but in Europe as well. The Jesuit Father Franz Hattler, S.J., wrote that “the child reads from it, for father and mother; the bride is presented with it on the day of her wedding; it is given to the emigrant when he leaves his country for the New World.” Another writer exclaimed, “How many souls has this book not saved and preserved from error, during the last two centuries that it has been known in Germany?” So it begs the question – if Goffine’s book was popular enough to be on sale in Columbus toward the end of the nineteenth century, just who was Goffine and what was his bestseller all about?

The 1917 *Catholic Encyclopedia* is a good starting point. Under the heading “Leonard Goffine,” we find the story of a Premonstratensian priest, born in or near Cologne, Germany, in 1648. The Premonstratensian Order, often called “Norbertine” in the English-speaking world, after the order’s founder, St. Norbert, was founded in A.D. 1119. Goffine entered the Norbertine Abbey of Steinfeld in 1667 (or 1669). After a two-year novitiate and ordination, he served many positions in the German church. He was a parish priest in Clarholz, and also served as a novice-master for several Norbertine abbeys. “The purity of his life, the integrity of his morals, the fervour of his sermons, the pleasing style of his writings, commanded the respect of even the enemies of his religion.” Later, he was a pastor serving in the Archdiocese of Trier, finally landing in the city of Oberstein, where he died in 1719.

Father Goffine worked much of his life right on the boundary between the Lutheran North and the Catholic South of Germany. The two cultures

clashed often and bitterly in the seventeenth century, and Goffine, as a champion of Catholicism, wanted to give ordinary persons the learning to intelligently understand the arguments in favor of the Church. The pressures of dissonance made him take up the pen in defense of the Catholic faith. No fewer than ten titles were authored by Goffine, all of them providing instruction in the faith for people living in a time and place where that faith was likely to be challenged.

His best known book, the *Handpostille*, was first published in 1688. “In this work his aim was to instruct thoroughly...to convince them of the superstition and errors of the world; to fill them with a lively faith, with sweet hope of the goods of eternity, and with a holy love of God and heavenly things,” declared an English language edition. In the book, Goffine provided the readings for each Sunday of the liturgical year. On any given Sunday, the *Handpostille* provided an Introduction and Prayer, the Epistle and an accompanying meditation, the Gospel, and questions and answers in the catechism style. Part 2 did the same for the important Feast Days and Saints’ Days. Part 3 went over the Sacraments and Ceremonies of the Church. Part 4 explained step-by-step the various stages of the Tridentine Mass, ending with various prayers in times of need.

The first edition of the book appeared in Münster, Germany. A total of 154 German language editions appeared over the next 250 years. Forty-five English editions were published, in addition to Dutch, French, Czech, Polish, Latin, Italian, Portuguese, Hungarian, Romansh, and Swahili translations. The first American edition was published in German in 1856 in New York by Benziger Brothers, an old family of German publishers that had expanded to the United States.

The usefulness of Goffine’s *Handpostille* can be imagined. From its first publication, Goffine’s book aided German-speaking Catholics in a deeper understanding of the mysteries of the faith. And at a time when the New World was becoming the new homeland for many Germans, immigrants gladly retained their “Goffines” in a place where priests were

fewer, and where even good neighbors practiced other religions, or no religion at all.

Goffine's *Handpostille* remains in print under the title, *The Church's Year*. There is a slightly peculiar story behind the latest edition. Published in 1999, Goffine's book was brought into print by Angelus Press, the publishing arm of the Society of St. Pius X. The Society, or SSPX for short, is a Catholic "traditionalist" movement formed under the late renegade Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre (1905-1991). The SSPX, while proclaiming its loyalty to the Holy See, in reality has ties to French Monarchists and right wing politicians and clerics in Europe and the Far East. As the SSPX claims to be preserving the tradition of the Church, it is not surprising that one of the old textbooks, Goffine's *Handpostille*, should be kept in print by them.

If Goffine's book was a "bestseller" in years gone by, but is now reduced to a fringe publication, does it still have anything to tell us? Of course, its message is as timeless as that of all Catholic beliefs. But as anyone who takes an interest in history knows, its greatest usefulness may come later on, when

newer generations may express curiosity about the everyday Catholicism of the time between the Counterreformation and Vatican II.

In the meantime, my ancestor's copy of Goffine will stay in the attic. Like Monsignor Jessing's offer to sell Goffine through the *Ohio Waisenfreund* offices, Goffine's book is a part of our Catholic heritage. As we say when we renew our baptismal vows, the Church's faith is "ever ancient, ever new." Goffine's book presents that faith in ways that, although still valid, probably do not appeal to most of today's readers.

SOURCES

In addition to the 1917 *Catholic Encyclopedia*, I consulted the 1896 edition (in English) of *Goffine's Devout Instructions of the Epistles and Gospels* (New York: Benziger, 1896). The German edition in my attic is dated 1889. Other information regarding the Society of St. Pius X and Archbishop Lefebvre came from the internet, especially the website of the Lefebvre-associated Angelus Press (www.angeluspress.org).

The Catholic Churches of Northern Tuscarawas County

A series of articles to be presented over the coming months will provide the history and some records of the churches of northern Tuscarawas County, those of Bolivar, Mineral City, and Strasburg, which in 1995 were combined to become the present Holy Trinity Parish at Zoar. The early pastors of the area came north from St. Joseph Parish in Dover or from Morges, Malvern, or Carrollton. Catholics had settled in Dover by 1835 and its church was completed in 1850.

Prior to Holy Trinity, there were five parishes or missions in that part of the county:

- St. Peter's, Hessian Hills, Lawrence Township, was begun in 1840. A brief outline of its history is given below.
- The Church of the Assumption was formed in 1850 for the French people of St. Peter's, who met in Pierre Lab's blockhouse, located 2 1/4

miles west-southwest of Bolivar. It was attended by Father Augustine Rollinet of Ste. Genevieve at Calmoutier in Holmes County and after he left that post this church was abandoned, not long after 1852. For its story see the *Bulletin* of October, 1999. Some of its records appear among those of Ste. Genevieve, Calmoutier, in our issues of March through May, 1982.

- St. Martin, Bolivar was organized in 1853 by Father Deiters, pastor at Dover. A church was purchased in 1856 and was blessed in 1857. A new church of St. Stephen opened in 1882.
- St. Patrick, Mineral City was organized for the Irish in that area in 1881. It was always a mission.
- St. Aloysius, Strasburg was organized by the Capuchin Fathers of Dover in 1910, who attended it until 1956 when diocesan priests took over.

St. Peter the Apostle, Hessian Hills, Lawrence Township

Even though it was an early congregation, the story of St. Peter Church has never been given in our *Bulletin* because a full history exists in book form, namely *The History of Old St. Peter's* by V. Rev. John N. Lenhart, O.F.M.Cap, published in 1952. We will give a brief summary of its story here, as an introduction and background for its records and for the histories of the churches of Bolivar, Mineral City, and Strasburg.

The first known Catholics of Tuscarawas County were immigrant farmers who settled in Lawrence Township. A few were French but most were German and the area became known as the Hessian Hills.

St. Peter's Church was incorporated by act of the Ohio Legislature on March 9, 1839. Trustees at that time, who had requested the incorporation, were John A. Beeler, Henry Kraemer, John Hunt, and Conrad Franz.¹ Property for the church was donated by George Streb, who had come from



Old St. Peter's, Hessian Hills

Hesse with his family in 1836 and bought his farm on November 12, 1840. (No deed from Mr. Streb to the corporation has been located.) The site is about two miles east of Strasburg, on the east side of what now is the St. Peter's Church Road.

The property had 85 feet frontage, was 341 feet deep from the centerline of the road, measured 106 feet in the rear, and contained 1/2 acre. The cemetery is in the easternmost portion of this property.

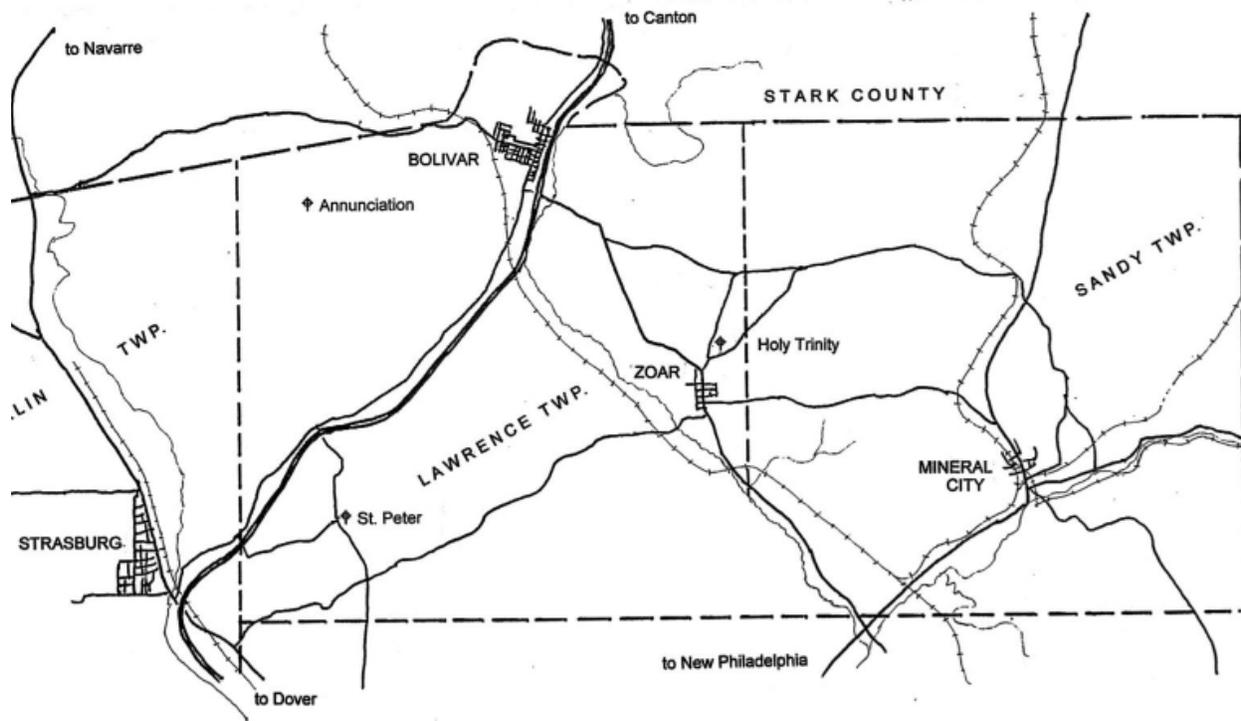
Construction of a log church, half way back on the property, began in 1840. Local traditions tell of the work of the members of the congregation in providing labor, even hauling lumber on their shoulders, there being no animals or machinery available. The church, measuring 25x35 feet, was completed in 1841.

"Once the church was completed, it was placed under the care of the new pastor of Canton, Father Mathias Wuertz, who visited only occasionally to care for the spiritual needs of the people. This rare visitation may have been a blessing, as the priest is described by contemporaries as 'mean and petty.' On his first visitation, his first instruction to the congregation was to 'have his money ready, or saddle his horse.'"²

Bishop Purcell came from Cincinnati to visit the congregation near the end of 1841. The people formed a procession that wound up the hill in good order as hymns were sung. Young girls were sent to meet him, who presented him with the deed of the property and the key to the church. He reported the name of the church as St. John of the Cross, since the people did not have the right to name the church. The deed for the half acre, for the express purpose for a church and burying ground for the Roman Catholic Congregation, from George Streb and Mary Ann his wife to Rt. Rev. John Baptiste Purcell, was dated Jan. 5, 1842.³

Soon a school also was built and the children were taught by Conrad Antoni beginning in 1844.

Eventually the church reverted to its original name, "St. Peter the Apostle." The church remained in use, as a mission of Dover and for a time of Morges, until about 1867. Due to "the influence



of certain evil disposed persons who refuse to submit to ecclesiastical authority” Mass was no longer being offered there when Bishop Rosecrans visited the area in October, 1868. Most of the people attended to their duties at Dover and this spelled the end of activity at the mission, except for the school, which continued until 1882, and the cemetery. The site was cared for by the Catholics of Bolivar and was used for outings. A tornado tore the roof off of the church in 1902 but it was repaired.

In 1946 an adjacent acre of land on the north of the property was purchased by Bishop Ready from Roy C. Stoner for \$10.00.⁴ It is not known why this site was expanded, when St. Aloysius Church at Strasburg, with its fine cemetery, was so close by. The next May the Bishop suggested that the local people repair the church as a shrine and they installed aluminum siding.

On October 24, 1978 the original hewn wood structure was burned down, presumably by vandals. Five years later Bishop Herrmann sold the entire site to James Natoli for \$5,000, reserving the use of the cemetery and an access right-of-way for the Church. The cemetery remains under the care of Holy Trinity Parish at Zoar.

After the old church was burned down, the late Msgr. Herman Mattingly published the tombstone inscriptions of St. Peter’s in our *Bulletin* of January, 1979. A record book, “*Catalogus Baptisatorum, Copulatorum, necnon et Mortuorum Ecclesiae at Stum Petrum Apostolum prope Bolivar*” is kept at Dover. It covers the period from 1844 through 1867. These records have been translated and will accompany this series of historical sketches. It should be noted that for some periods the records in the old St. Peter’s record book are rather sparse. At those times the pastor recorded his sacramental acts in the books of St. Joseph Parish at Dover.

NOTES

- 1) *Acts of a local nature passed by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio*, Vol. 37, page 145
- 2) *Tuscarawas County Churches* by Msgr. George Schlegel, published serially in the *Sacred Heart Beat* of Sacred Heart Parish, New Philadelphia
- 3) Deed record 17/591, courtesy of Msgr. Geo. Schlegel
- 4) Deed Record 279/567

Baptisms in the Church of St. Peter the Apostle near Strasburg 1844-1867

The priests whose names appear in register were:

Rev. William Schonat, pastor of St. Remigius in Columbus, who visited with Bishop Purcell in 1844

Rev. John Henry Luhr, pastor of Canton

Rev. Louis DeGoesbriand, pastor of Louisville in Stark Co.

Rev. Sebastian Sanner of Calmoutier

Rev. John Bapt. Jacomet, assistant at Canton

Rev. Peter Peudeprat, pastor of Louisville in Stark Co.

Rev. Aug. Rollinet, pastor of Calmoutier

Rev. Joseph Brünemann, O.S.F., pastor of Newark

Rev. Peter Herman Joseph Muckerheide, first resident pastor of Dover

Rev. Deiter Martin Winands, pastor of Dover

Rev. Francis Joseph Goetz, pastor of Marges

Rev. Luers of Cincinnati, whose name was not signed but was written by Father Goetz, was perhaps the same Father John Henry Luhr who had been pastor many years before.

Rev. Constantine Hergenroether, pastor of Dover

Rev. Henry Fehlings, pastor of Dover

Rev. Jos. Antony Heimo, pastor of Dover

Rev. M. Andres, pastor of Dover

Rev. B. Wismann, pastor of Dover

page 1

1844

Aug. 28 Mary, born July 28, daughter of Michael Gimpel and Theresa Gimpel; spon. Bernard Huber and Mary Huber

Aug. 28 Margaret, born Aug. 12, daughter of Nicholas Erb and Theresa Siebert; spon. Wendeline Hampach and A. Margaret Hampach

Aug. 28 John, born March 3, son of John Eichenlaub and Caroline Mayer; spon. Jacob Knedler and Nothburga Meier.

The above were baptized by Rev. Mr. Schonat during the episcopal visitation of Most Rev. John

Baptist Purcell on August 28, 1844 and entered into the register by J. H. Luhr.

Dec. 6 Catherine, born Sept. 22, daughter of John Nolte and Elizabeth Zeigern; spon. John Weigand and Cath. Franz. Luhr

Dec. 9 Philip James, born Nov. 22, son of Joseph Henry and Josephine Piqueres; spon. Philip Kern and Cath. Kern. Luhr

1845

Jan. 28, Joseph Henry, born Jan. 10, so of Francis Margot and Mary Draime; spon. Henry Joseph Draime and Margaret Trodow.

Baptized by Rev. Mr. De Goesbriand and entered in the register by Luhr.

Apr. 24 Barbara, born Apr. 19, daughter of Michael Oestrich and Christina Esser; spon. Joseph Kranz and Barbara Kranz. Luhr

Apr. 24 Henry, born Apr. 2, son of Henry Kraemer and Christina Herold; spon. Henry Weckman and Annamary Weckman. Luhr

Apr. 24 Susan, born Apr. 10, daughter of Sebastian Günther and Barbara Folz; spon. James Dornkecker and Sus. Graes. Luhr

June 19 John William, born May 28, son of Joseph Kranz and Barbara Kesner; spon. John Baptist Trodow and Margaret his wife. L. DeGoesbriand, entered in register by J. H. Luhr.

June 24 John, born June 2, son of Conrad Huth and Elizabeth Kreis; spon. John Lindner and Cath. Franz. Luhr

June 6 Sebastian Henry, son of Joseph; spon. Sebast. Choller [or Moller?]

page 2

Aug. 5 George, born June? 10, son of John Jacob and Mary Ann Torscher [or Forscher?]; spon. Nicol. Wurms and Mary Wurms. Luhr [a record very difficult to interpret; it appears that the parents' names were written in the column for the name of the baptized, and George was written beneath these names. The parents' names appear again in their proper

column.]

- Aug. 5 Conrad Joseph, born July 19, son of George Schilling and Dorothy Huth; spon. Conr. Schilling and Magd. Schilling. Luhr
- Sept. 10 Gertrude, daughter of Adam Huth and Mary Ann Weigend; spon. Conrad Trageser and Gert. Weigand. Luhr
- Nov. 25 John George, born Sept. 22, son of John Streb and Mary Ann Schilling; spon. John George Streb and his wife Mary. Luhr
- Nov. 25 John, born Nov. 14, son of Andrew Weigend and Eve Franz; spon. John Weigand and Catherine Franz. Luhr
- Nov. 25 Regina, born Oct. 8, daughter of Valentine Gilbert and Barbara Goldbach; spon. Henry Wackmann and Regina Link. Luhr
- Nov. 25 Theresa, born Oct. 19, daughter of Wendeline Hambach and Margaret Dürr; spon. Nicholas Erb and Theresa Erb. Luhr
- Nov. 25 Josepha, born Oct. 21, daughter of Conrad Antony and Catherine Kunzmsann; spon. Balthasar Niedenthal and his wife Sophia.
- Dec. 30 Mary Josepha, born Dec. 29, daughter of John Peter Láb and Catherine Marble; spon. Joseph Savarin and Josephine Henry. Luhr

1846

- Feb. 2 Mary Ann Catherine, born Nov. 24, 1845, daughter of John Metzger and Cath. Schirer; spon. Philip Kern and wife. Luhr
- Feb. 2 John George, born Jan 19, son of Conrad Schilling and Magdalene Bilz; spon. John George Schilling and Dorothea Huth. Luhr
- Feb. 18 Frederick, born Jan. 18, son of John Bambeck and Ann Mary Streb; spon. Frederick Dornhecker and Mary Ann Streb. Luhr
- Apr. 26 James, born Dec. 14, 1845, son of John Nolte and Elizabeth Zeiger; spon. James Seikel and Mary Ann Seikel. Luhr
- May 6 Susan, daughter of John Bapt. Cuvot; spon. Thomas Cuvot. Peudeprat
- May 16, Magdalena, born the 15th, daughter of

Conrad Trageser and Gertrude Weigand; spon. John George Weigand and Josepha Niedenthal. Luhr

- Aug. 2 James, born the 4th, son of John Traim and Eva Streb; spon. James Traim and Mary Ann Streb. Luhr
- Sept. 16 Sebastian Mary, born the 8th, son of John Haid and Margaret Richter; spon. Rev. Mr. Sebastian Sanner and Mary Ann Streb.
- Nov. 1 Lucas, born the 18th, son of John Raedersdorff and Mary Stoklin; spon. John Streb and Mary Streb.

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- Dec. 13 Theresa, born Dec. 10, daughter of James Herbe and Caroline May; spon. Nicholas Herbe and Theresa Herbe. Sanner

1847

- Jan. 1 John Baptist, born Dec. 20, son of Francis Margot and Gabriel Draime; spon. John Bapt. Draime and Mary Draime. Sanner
- Feb. 14 Martin Valentine, born Feb. 11, son of Peter Francis Hain and Elizabeth May; spon. Martin Hein and Mary Elizabeth May. Sanner.
- Apr. 13 Conrad Streb, born Mar. 5, son of John Streb and A. M. Schilling; spon. Conrad Schilling and his wife Magdalena. J. H. Luhr
- Apr. 13 Conrad Weber, born Feb. 11, son of Adam Weber and Frances Schilling; spon. Conr. Schilling and his wife Magd. Bilz. J. H. Luhr
- Apr. 13 Adam Weigand, born the 6th, son of Andrew Weigand and Eve Franz; spon. Adam Huth and M. A. Huth. Luhr
- Apr. 12 John Stephen Albrecht, born March 8, son of John Michael Albrecht and Elis. Zoph; spon. Peter Zoph. Luhr
- May 4 Margaret, born Sept. 5, daughter of Jacob Eichenlaub and Mary Rosina Etheimer; spon. John Peter Jacob and Ann Mary Jacob. Luhr
- May 4 Mary Ann Gertrude Kranz, born March 8, daughter of Joseph Kranz and Barbara Kesner; spon. Conrad Trageser and Gertrude Weigand. Luhr
- May 5 Catherine Magdalene, born April 30, daughter of George Herbert and Mary Huber;



The parish center and temporary church of Holy Trinity Parish, Zoar

spons. Cath. Franz and Nicholad Franz. Luhr
 June 22 John George, born June 20, son of
 Sebastian Gunter and Barbara Volz; spons.
 George Schilling and Dorothy Huth his wife.
 Luhr.
 Aug. 2 John, born July 20, son of Adam Huth
 and Mary Ann Weigand; spons. John Weigand
 and Catherine Franz. Luhr
 Aug. 2 Leonard, born July 30, son of John
 Lindner and Mary Bernard; spons. Leonard
 Kübel and Emeline Leingrabe[?] Luhr
 June 23 Mary Magdalene, born June 11,
 daughter of Bernard Kaiser and Sabina

Amann; spons. Henry Möller and his wife.
 Luhr
 Aug. 3 Margaret Magdalen, born July 30,
 daughter of Henry Martin and Thresa Sack;
 spons. Henry Möller and his wife. Luhr
 Sept. 8 John, born Apr. 12, son of John Nolte
 and Elizabeth Zeiger; spons. Peter Braun and
 Ann Mary. Luhr
 Oct. 13 Adam, born Oct 6, son of Henry Kremer
 and Christina Herold; spons. Adam Frantz and
 wife??

(To be continued)

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