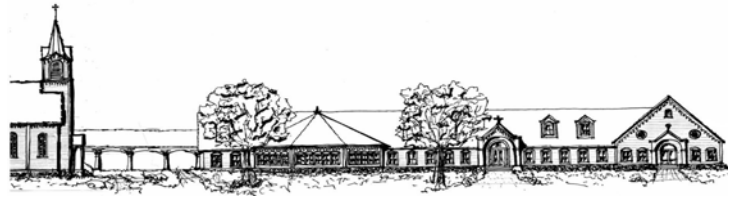


Holy Childhood of Jesus Parish Groundbreaking Ceremony Sunday April 13, 2008



Bishop Patrick Cooney, Father Joseph Graph, and Deacon Paul Fifer at the 11 o'clock Mass

It was standing room only as Bishop Patrick Cooney presided over Mass at Holy Childhood of Jesus Church in Harbor Springs, MI. After Mass, Bishop Cooney took time to greet the parishioners as they flowed from the church to the site of their long awaited groundbreaking. Holy Childhood of Jesus Church has spent the last 4 years preparing for the celebration which took place on Sunday April 13, 2008.

Spirits continued to be lifted as members of the Native American Community, Harbor Springs Community, and Holy Childhood Parish Community joined Bishop Patrick Cooney and Father Joseph Graff as they blessed the construction site and prayed for God's continued guidance as the parish moved forward in their building project. The groundbreaking ceremony marked the beginning of Holy Childhood's new parish hall, faith formation facilities, and church narthex (gathering space).



Bishop Patrick Cooney and Father Joseph Graff ask for God's continued guidance



Even the parish children were invited to break ground as representatives of the future.

Ryan Johnston helps his son, David, break ground for the facilities that their great, great grandchildren will someday use to carry out the parish mission



Bill Denemy and members of the Odawa community proudly break ground as representatives of all those who have passed through Holy Childhood Church and School

Vice-Chairman of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Bill Denemy, spoke on behalf of the tribe saying, "I'm proud to be here. I'm proud to represent our tribe. I feel like I really represent all the Indian people. All those who traveled through and spent time at Holy Childhood School and Holy Childhood Church. So, I think it is very fitting and very appropriate to have all the representatives of the Odawa Tribe. So again I want to say, from the Odawa people, it is an honor to be here today and to be a part of this ceremony."



Ray Kiogima surprises Father Joe with a miniature shovel signed by those who attended the ceremony

Fellowship followed with refreshments as those who gathered spent time getting better acquainted with each other. Creating a visual sign of the commitment to move forward together and live the parish mission to "build faith, cherish the Lord, and love and serve one another as Christ has us."

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What a wonderful day April 13th was! I found myself caught up in the wonder of the day. Granted, there is much left to be done, yet I still felt that this was a pivotal moment in our four year process of visioning and renewal. So many people have been involved in planning, discussing, contributing, suggesting, and, now, building. For me it was a deeply spiritual moment when the bishop and then so many others broke ground for our new ministry center. When all the children came up on their own to break ground, I was touched by the reality that they and their children will get full benefit from what all of us are doing to secure the future of our parish for them. This is one of your greatest contributions to the future of our parish since it is part of your faith legacy. People will use these buildings and grow closer to the Lord because of what we are doing. I pray we are all filled with a spirit of gratitude to God for helping us cobuild His Kingdom.

Blessed be God forever! Amen.



Preparations for construction have already begun as crew members worked to save the outdoor drinking fountain and transplant the trees

Father Joe

Peace and Love in the Lord,

Build Faith ✦ Cherish the Lord

Love and Serve One Another as Christ Has Us