



CLEVELAND IRISH

FRANCIS MCGARRY

## Faugh a Ballagh

Saint Joseph Academy invites members of its 1890 Society to a reception each year, and it is always an amazing evening. It would not be a comprehensive overview if the hors d'oeuvres were not mentioned.

Delicious as they may be, they are only an indication of the commitment to excellence on display. President Purcell's update and the opportunity to witness the quality of education and experience manifested in the students present is truly inspiring.

The 1890 Society's name is in

honor of the year the SJA was established. That year, the city of Cleveland supported 10 Hibernian divisions. Division No. 1 met at 174 Ontario on the second Sunday of each month at 3pm.

That location was a block and a half north of Public Square, and is listed as a Hibernian Hall in the Cleveland City Directory. It was about where the Cuyahoga County Court House now stands. That is the same location that Division No. 7 met on the first Sunday of each month.

**Hibernian Division** Division No.2 met at Van Tassell's Hall on the second Sunday of each month. The year before they met at St. Malachi's School House. Van Tassel and Charles E. Cooley owned a hardware store at 250 Detroit.

It is believed Van Tassell's Hall was at 303-305 Detroit, with a tin shop in the back. Tin was sold at the hardware store.

Division No. 5 met at 315 Detroit on the (WHAT?) Sunday of each month. That building had a Grand Army of the Republic Hall on the third floor. Those halls were just

west of the Eagle Hotel and between West 28<sup>th</sup> and West 29<sup>th</sup> Streets.

Hibernian's in Division No. 3 and Division No. 4 met at two locations on Broadway, just north of Harvard. 2318 Broadway was on the westside of the street, and 2514 Broadway was on the eastside of the street. They both met on the third Sunday of each month.

Case Avenue and Payne Avenue was the location for Division No. 6. There was a drug store on the corner and the hall was adjacently south. Case is now East 40<sup>th</sup> Street. Hibernians met every alternating Sunday there in 1890.

Division No. 8 met at St. Edward's School House, not Joe Fergus's Eagles, St. Edward Parish was at East 69<sup>th</sup> Street and Woodland. It was next to St. John's Catholic Cemetary and across the street from Woodland Cemetary.

The corner of Root Street and Lorain Avenue was the meeting place for Division No. 9. Root Street is West 47<sup>th</sup> Street today. Metro Health Ohio City is there now, just up the street from Forest City Shuffleboard.

There were only nine divisions in 1889. The new Division No. 10 met at 600 Pearl on the first and third Friday of each month. Those who have been keeping score at home realize this was the only division that did not meet on a Sunday.

On the Sanborn Fire Map for 1886, that address was a bank. The Atlas of Cuyahoga County and Cleveland for 1892 has it as the Pearl Street Market House. If we were there on a Friday night these days, we would be looking at the West Side Market and the menu at Great Lakes Brewing.

These Hibernian loci provide the foundation for the 2024-25 Hibernian Masses. Each Mass is a celebration of the Cleveland Irish who came before us.

A brunch and historical discussion of the parish will follow each Mass. This will be the third year for the Hibernian Masses. All are invited to attend.

### Hibernian Mass

**November 24, 2024.** Holy Name, established in 1854. Divisions No. 3 and No. 4 met directly to the north and to the east

of the Church. It is also home to a Hibernian window.

There are over 300 Hibernian windows that have been donated to Catholic Churches in America, two-thirds of those by the LAOH, which was founded in 1894. Ohio has 16, and Cleveland has one.

Holy Name Parish in 1890 had 165 baptisms and 159 first communions. Its school was named after Irish St. Columba and had 12 teachers for 816 students. It is the remaining Irish parish of the Broadway-Woodland corridor.

St. Bridget's (1857) on East 22<sup>nd</sup>, across the street from St. Vincent's Hospital, St. Edward (1871) on East 69<sup>th</sup>, the home of Division No. 8, and St. Catherine (1898) on East 93<sup>rd</sup> have all be closed. Only St. Catherine's building remains.

**January 19, 2025.** St. Aloysius, established in 1898. This is the only Hibernian Mass at a parish that was not in existence in 1890. Early members of what would be the congregation were part of a mission from Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish and met in a small framed building.

St. Thomas Aquinas was at 9205 Superior Avenue, the intersection of Ansel Road. You can walk a block or so to the Irish Cultural Garden from there. It was called by some the "Irish Cathedral" and supported the growth of fellow Irish parishes St. Aloysius, St. Agatha and St. Philip Neri.

St. Al's was consecrated in 1925 and at that time had over 800 students. It was visited by Eamon de Valera and in 1930 it was home to 1958 Hibernian of the Year, and Roscommon born Mary Duffy, who raised funds for Irish freedom.

Parishioners also included Joseph Clarke, the police chief for Bratenahl, also visited by de Valera, was on the parish council, and a former Royal Irish Constable. Former IRA members (PD, 3/17/72) Bartley Kilkenny and Patrick Byrnes, who lived a house apart on East 117<sup>th</sup>, attended St. Al's.

They would move to Euclid and become founding members of the Euclid Irish Association in 1934. When Father Malloy passed away in 1937, after 35 years as Pastor, St. Al's was one of the largest parishes in the city, with over 2,000 families.

**February 23, 2025.** Immaculate Conception, established in 1865. The Mac housed Fenian rifles before they invaded Canada, according to folklore and Father Godic. It is home to more bells than Notre Dame, Paris. The bells were baptized and are inscribed with the names of their Irish benefactors.

This was the home of Division No. 6. St. Columbkille was established in 1871 at 2642 Superior, just two miles from Immaculate Conception. It is believed this proximity was to serve parishioners from Mayo at The Mac and parishioners from Cork at Columbkille.

**April 27, 2025.** The Cathedral of St. John, established in 1848. Irish born Father Peter McLaughlin petitioned Irish born Bishop Purcell to create the Cathedral on East 9<sup>th</sup>. The argument used was that the Irish needed a parish that was not in the Flats and was not shared with the Germans. Father McLaughlin was considerably more direct in his letters.

The Cathedral had 238 baptisms in 1890 and 198 first communions. Its school had 15 teachers for 989 students. Enrollment had decreased

from 1,100 in 1879 with the creation of new parishes.

This was still the largest parochial school in the Diocese. This year it is a memorial Mass for those who we have lost in the last year.

**June 22, 2025.** St. Malachi, established 1865. It is now combined with St. Patrick's on Bridge, which was established in 1853. St. Malachi was home to Division No. 2 and Division No. 5. St. Pat's Bridge was home to Division No. 10.

In 1890 St. Malachi had 187 baptisms and 108 first communions. Its school had 729 students and 11 teachers. St. Pat's had 256 baptisms and 147 first communions. Its school had 820 students and 12 teachers.

Some researchers note that St. Pat's school grew to over 1,800 students, but that has not been verified via Emily and Kathy at the Diocesan Archives. These parishes were, and are, the bookends of the Old Angle, and their archives include the surnames that populate the Irish organizations of today.

As the internal migration of the Cleveland Irish expanded from its

first parish in all directions, St. Mary's on the Flats, communities created new parishes and new Hibernians. St. Patrick's Day in 1905 was celebrated at the newly created St. Aloysius with a presentation of *Faugh a Ballagh*, a corruption of the original Gaelic, meaning "clear the way." It was first published as a nationalist song in 1842. The Royal Irish Fusiliers had used it as their motto.

These parishes and the Irish of their pews cleared the way for the students of SJA and all of the Catholic schools in the Cleveland area. We look forward to collectively celebrating our present and venerating our past, with a few hors d'oeuvres. ●

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