

St. Boniface Church

Bonifacts

Our Historical Crèche

I don't think anything gives us more tranquility than to enter the church on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day and be greeted by the peaceful scene in the corner of the sanctuary. After the hectic weeks of Advent, in preparation for Christmas, we can finally fall on our knees, take a breath, and totally experience God's reassuring love as we gaze upon the cozy little stable full of animals, all tucked in the straw, awaiting the birth of the Christ child.

Our nativity figures at St. Boniface were made in Munich, Germany in a company started by Joseph Gabriel Mayer. The Royal Bavarian Art Institute was founded in 1847 to "reactivate the idea of the Middle Ages cathedral building trades" through fine arts, sculpture, architecture, and painting. Our statues of Mary and Joseph were also made by this same company.



Crèche, continued



St. Boniface was founded in 1865 and the figurines were purchased about a year thereafter. The crib scene has been displayed in various areas of the church every year since 1866. A few wooden pieces have been added over time and our current crèche includes: the Holy Family, 3 shepherds, 2 angels, 3 kings and their slave, a camel, donkey, cow, and sheep. Realizing the figurines had not been refurbished for over 40 years, Fr. Tim had them sent to Sharon Huseman in Mooresville, Indiana ten years ago. She cleaned the statues, touched up the paint, and repaired the fragile areas such as the angels' wings and the cow's horns.

The crèche is stored at the church and the Tom Korty family sets it up in the sanctuary around the 21st of December. Little children always enjoy the chance to come forward and stand in front of the manger scene for the Christmas Eve Children's Mass homily.

The children are encouraged to take a piece of straw home to remind them that the joy of Christmas is meant to be lived all year long. It also becomes a gathering spot for many families after Mass as their little ones want the chance to see the animals and the Holy Family "up close."

Many little girls of St. Boniface who are awaiting their first Holy Communion have been privileged to carry the Baby Jesus in the procession to the crib on Christmas Eve. Father Tim's mother carried Baby Jesus in 1938.

As you have noticed, the Magi have "followed the star" and made their way to the Christ Child to pay him homage and present their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, which we celebrated on the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord. The crib scene will remain on display until the Baptism of our Lord (Jan. 9th).



Thanks to Mary Ann Haan, Editor