



Key Moments in St. Peter's History

A series of historical highlights from the first 200 years of St. Peter – Libertytown.

St. Peter's Celebrates the Centennial of the Dedication of the Second Church

St. Peter's second church was dedicated on June 25, 1871, according to an article in the *Catholic Mirror* which reported on the event 7 days later. Consequently the centennial of that dedication should have occurred in 1971. However, when the date of the dedication was memorialized on the foundation of the Statue of the Sacred Heart (which became the Statute of St. Peter in the 1950's), it was the year 1870 – not 1871, which was displayed. Maybe that is why the centennial was celebrated in 1970, rather than in 1971. Or perhaps the Parish needed a reason to celebrate something in 1970. Earlier that year it was announced that St. Peter's school – the former Notre Dame Academy, would permanently close its doors at the end of the 1969-1970 school year, after nearly 80 years.



Figure 1 Lawrence Cardinal Shehan celebrating Centennial Mass at St. Peter's June 21, 1970

But regardless of the reason that 1970 was chosen, that was the year St. Peter's celebrated the centennial of the dedication of its then existing (second) church - on Sunday, June 21, 1970 with a Mass at 4PM and a buffet dinner afterwards.

Similar to our current Bicentennial celebration, a centennial committee was set up to plan the celebration. Invitations were mailed to all parishioners who, along with local businesses, become patrons by purchasing ads in the Centennial Program. Tickets to the dinner were available for \$1 per person (children under 10 were free). The event was held at the Libertytown Fire Hall; no doubt because St. Peter's Hall could not hold the over 200 people who had purchased tickets (and the Parish Center had not yet been built).

Both the *Catholic Review* in Baltimore and *The Post* in Frederick, reported on the celebration. His Eminence Lawrence Cardinal Shehan was the chief celebrant of the Jubilee Mass and Fr. Edward Sargus, former pastor at St. Peter's, was one of the concelebrants. Fr. Richard Mitchell,

former assistant pastor at St. John's in Frederick also assisted. Fr. Herbert Jordan, former pastor at St. John's in Frederick delivered the sermon.

In the weeks leading up to the celebration, the weekly bulletins contained a list of 'do's and don'ts for the day, to ensure a successful event.

St. Peter's Church, Libertytown, Md.
FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

June 14, 1970

PREPARING FOR THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION:

Friday, June 19, 7 a.m. Mass for parishioners - in the services, for those who may be ill and for those in difficulties, material or spiritual.

Saturday, June 20, 8 a.m. Requiem Mass for deceased parishioners and Sisters and priests who have served in this parish.

Sunday, June 21, 4 p.m. Jubilee Mass commemorating 100th Anniversary of Dedication. The plans for the centenary dinner have been finalized. The number of dinners ordered was based on the RSVP cards that were returned. It is hoped that everyone understands that only prepaid tickets will be honored at the door. The tickets for which no reservations were made cannot be accepted.

Due to the large number of dinner reservations, there must of necessity be two seatings. To dispatch the serving as orderly as possible the following priority is suggested:

First Seating of approximately 200 persons -

1. The Cardinal and his associates.
2. Our visiting neighbors and guests.
3. Families with small children (who would be restless if kept waiting.)
4. Other parishioners (the hungrier ones) to complete the 200 count.

While the first group is eating there will be punch served downstairs in the engine room of the firehall where those waiting can visit and view the exhibit of memorabilia. As the tables empty those waiting will be notified.

More than two hundred have responded as patrons in the program!

And in the week after the celebration, Pastor Morrison's bulletin remarks confirmed that the day was a success, specifically congratulating Chairman J. Sebastian Grabenstein, who just passed away this Spring at the age of 106. Sebastian's daughter, Lucia Kline, is carrying on her father's traditions as a founding member of the Flower Ministry and one of our Bicentennial Committee members.

St. Peter's Church, Libertytown, Md.
SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

June 28, 1970

DEDICATION OF PARISH CHURCH CENTENNIAL SUCCESS! We are pleased at the cooperation of those who made this affair successful. It would not be possible to list all the names of the individuals or groups who aided in this matter. The parish expresses its debt of gratitude to J. Sebastian Grabenstein, Chairman of the Centennial Committee. He has asked that we not mention his name and, since most of you are indeed aware of Sebastian's efforts in this matter, I might comply with his request for anonymity except it just wouldn't be fair! Sebastian and I acknowledge our gratitude to the many who shared in the preparation of the printed program as well as to those who made arrangements for the buffet supper. Since I was concerned with the matter of church ceremonies primarily, I hereby express my gratitude to the choir, the ushers, the parishioners, and the altar boys for their fine cooperation. Cardinal Shehan expressed to me personally his appreciation of every phase of the centennial program and, in turn, extends his blessing to all!