

History of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish was established by Bishop George Speltz on September 1, 1976. One hundred twenty founding families and the first pastor, Father Leroy Maus, dedicated themselves to building a Catholic Christian faith community. The first Masses were held in the Isanti Elementary and Middle Schools. Daily morning Masses took place either in the garage or rectory of the newly purchased parish rectory located on 5th street in Isanti.

Construction of the church began in June 1977. At that time, Isanti County was the fastest growing area in the state. The building design therefore allowed for seating of 300 parishioners, with the intention of expanding to a larger, more permanent worship space. The first Mass celebrated in the new church on All Saints Day, November 1, 1977. A dedication ceremony presided by Bishop Speltz took place on January 22, 1978.

In 1983 the Rosary Shrine was built on the church grounds, the result of a dream of Ernie Haase, a member of the Knights of Columbus of Richfield. Ernie had collected contributions and donated his own funds to erect a grand enough rosary that it would survive the trials of both man and nature. However, no land was available in his area. Phil Frischmon, a friend of Ernie, sponsored the project at St. Elizabeth. The shrine of the Most Holy Rosary was dedicated by Bishop Speltz on May 18, 1983. In 1999, the Knights added a monument to the unborn next to the rosary shrine.

Over the years, the parish paid off the building debt and began to lay aside funds for the future expansion. Income from the annual summer Rodeo Days food stand, and SetonFest and personal contributions provide the majority of the donations. The Mother Seton Guild for women and the Knights of Columbus for men were organized as well as a youth group. A lay pastoral ministry was formed to provide assistance to fellow parishioners who are experiencing difficulties in life.

In March 2001, with the help and direction of our new pastor, Father Jose Edayadiyil, a feasibility study was completed to determine if our community was financially capable of constructing a new worship space. Although original plans had called for building “up”, construction standards had changed and adding “on” was determined to be the right plan. After more than 18 months of fundraising a groundbreaking ceremony was held on November 24, 2002. On September 21, 2003, Bishop John Kinney dedicated our new church. The office area was finished in July of 2005. Classrooms were finished in 2012. St. Scholastic Academy began classes in our addition in 2016.

Mercy Chapel opened, and began perpetual adoration April 8, 2018

Our Parish Pastors: 1976-1983 Father LeRoy Maus
1983-1994 Father Frank Tomasiewicz
1994-2000 Father Dick McGuire
2000-2014 Father Jose Edayadiyil
2014- 2023 Father Donald Wagner
2023- Father Peter VanderWeyst