

# 350 Attend Two-hour Celebration To Install Father Mott, Dedicate New Altar

## Priest Built Altar That Contains Relic of St. Ignatius of Loyola

By Karen Gould

As a light dusting of snow fell over the city Saturday evening, tradition, ceremony, and faith filled St. Ignatius Loyola Catholic Church during a Mass that included the dedication of a new altar and the formal installation of Father Allen Mott as pastor for the St. Ignace parish and the Immaculate Conception Parish in Moran.

Most Reverend Alexander K. Sample, the 12th Bishop of the Diocese of Marquette, presided over the February 2 Mass attended by 350 parishioners.

In the newly renovated church, a processional marked the beginning of the two-hour celebration with the Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree Color Guard lining the center aisle as Bishop Sample, six priests, five deacons, 10 altar servers, and six lay members of the parish, carrying relics of saints, entered the church.

Music from the St. Ignatius Choir and Folk Group and the Immaculate Conception Ensemble wove a thread of continuity among the readings, homily, installation of Fr. Mott, and the dedication of the altar.

Fr. Mott began his ministry here July 2, and last weekend he was formally installed as pastor of both parishes by the bishop. Applause, a standing ovation, and cheers echoed through the church following the brief ceremony.

"I guess I don't have to ask you if you like him," said Bishop Sample. "You are his first flock as pastor. What a joy."

Offering the homily, the bishop spoke of the responsibilities of the priest and his relationship with

parishioners.

"He is your teacher. He teaches in the person of Christ. He is your shepherd. He will be the one whose responsibility it is to lead to you into the kingdom of God," said Bishop Sample. "A pastor is a priest to whom a portion of the people of God have been entrusted to as your shepherd. The priest as pastor and shepherd represents the presence of Christ in your midst."

Fr. Mott then began his ministry by leading the people in the Nicene Creed, a profession of faith.

The first-time pastor, Fr. Mott, who is an accomplished woodworker, built the altar that was dedicated in an elaborate ceremony. The dedication included tipping the altar on its back, encasing the relics of saints permanently under the surface of the altar, and anointing it with sacred oil.

Fr. Mott had earned a commercial builder's license and a degree in construction management from Northern Michigan University before he entered Mundelein Seminary in Illinois. He used no design drawings, prints, or measurements when building the piece.

**At left: Bishop Alexander Sample (center) of the Diocese of Marquette presided over the Saturday, February 2, Mass at St. Ignatius Loyola Church in St. Ignace as a new altar was dedicated and Fr. Allen Mott was formally installed as pastor. Pictured (from left) are Deacon Scott Jamieson, Deacon Don Olmstead, Bishop Sample, Deacon Tom McClelland, Fr. James Williams, and Fr. Norbert Landreville.**

## Offers To Buy Properties Cause Residents Concern

*Advice: Check Property Values Before Signing Anything*

By Amy Polk

Residents are being told by county officials to be cautious when dealing with unsolicited offers to buy their property, and to make sure they have an attorney review such transactions. The cautions are in response to out-of-state letters offering to buy local properties that some residents say are way below market price.

The St. Ignace News has been contacted by several people in December and January out of concern for vulnerable property owners, particularly elderly people, who have received letters from Asset Holding, LLC of Scottsdale, Arizona, offering to purchase their property for amounts much less than their market value. In some cases, the letters also contain descriptions for property the resident does not own.

The offers reported by citizens to the Chippewa and Mackinac equalization departments and The St. Ignace News range from \$150 per lot or acre to \$350. Neil W. Hill of St. Ignace said his 96-year-old grandmother received a \$450 offer for a property he suspects is her

house, prompting his concern. Margaret Patrick of Cedarville was another who was concerned about longtime residents and property owners like her father. Some older residents, they say, have owned their property for so long, they might not know the current value. Property owners can check the assessed value of their homes with the city or township assessor or the county equalization director. State Equalized Value (SEV) seen on tax statements is usually about half the true cash value.

The property descriptions used by Asset Holding are public information and can be obtained online, or by purchasing a county's property tax identification labeling program, said Mr. Hill, who is a land surveyor.

The letters include a purchase agreement that the property owner can sign and return.

Regardless of the price offered, Chippewa County Equalization Director Sharon Kennedy advises residents, "If you plan to sell property, talk to an attorney or trusted real estate agent, and never, never do

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## Les Cheneaux Snowfest Fishing Contest Begins Fri.

By Amy Polk

A new Snowfest Fish Contest starts this Friday, February 8, reviving a local winter tradition of holding an ice fishing contest in the Les Cheneaux Islands.

The Chamber of Commerce previously hosted a pike fishing contest. The last pike contest was in 2000. Improved fishing conditions around the Les Cheneaux Islands since then, however, have prompted a return to the ice and renewed enthusiasm for the sport.

"There's no question it's better," said John Torsky of Cedarville of fishing around the area.

The usual ice fishing "hot spots" are Muskie, Muscoe, and Hessel bays, Mr. Torsky said, but unstable ice conditions so far this winter have cooled anglers' efforts. Slush and soft ice has characterized recent conditions, but Snowfest Committee members are hoping the ice will firm up with the recent cold snap and blizzard. Everyone is urged to use caution and common sense

when traveling on the ice, and never assume any ice is safe. According to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), clear ice is the strongest. Ice formed by melted and re-frozen snow, such as what now covers the channels, is porous and weak. Ice travelers should assume that ice covered by snow is not safe. Anglers should wear a set of ice rescue picks when heading out. (More ice safety tips were featured in the January 24 edition of *The St. Ignace News*, and are on the DNR's Web site.)

The weekend of February 16 and February 17 is a Free Fishing Weekend, so people of all ages can fish that weekend without a license. The Snowfest fishing contest will end Sunday, February 17, at 3 p.m. Awards will be announced soon after the end of the contest at Cedar Pantry in Cedarville.

Anglers must register for the contest at Cedarville Ace Hardware, Cedar Pantry, or Fish Tales, all in

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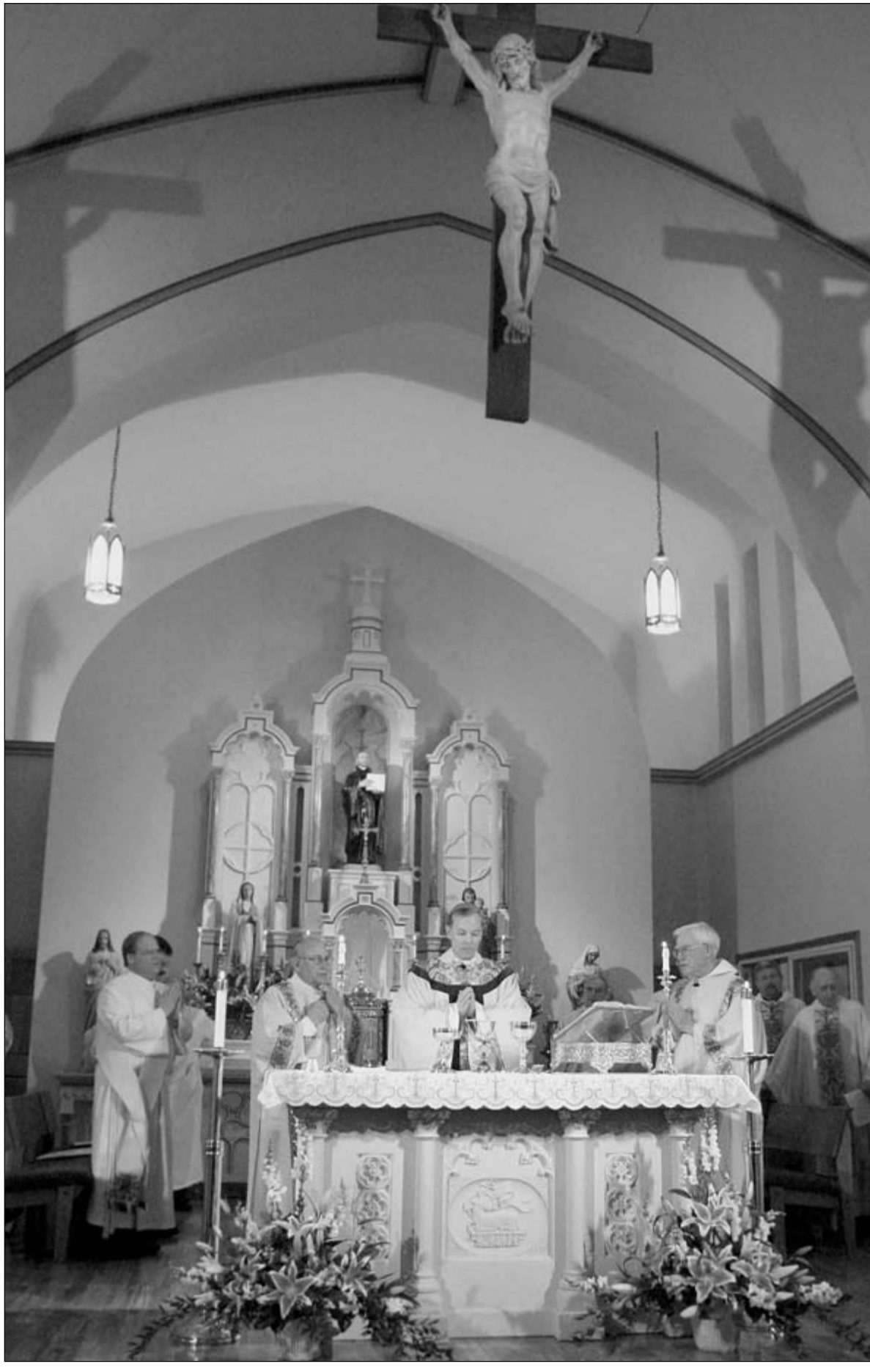
"It was in my head," Fr. Mott told *The St. Ignace News* Wednesday, January 30.

When building the altar, said Deacon Tom McClelland, Fr. Mott's intention was to integrate

the furniture with the architecture of the building.

"The design of the new altar," he said, "is consistent with the design of the reredos that has been in the church for many years."

Construction began on the altar December 31 with the help of Otto Roggenbuck of Moran. The piece, which was created in Mr. Roggenbuck's shop, was brought to the church Saturday morning.



**At the request of Fr. Mott, the students and leaders who attended a youth rally in Marquette in January offered two songs to the bishop for his prayers, ministry, and presence. Joining Fr. Mott (left) are (from left, front row) Melissa Brown, Chelsey Chambers, Abby Chambers, Torie Litzner, Devon Chargo, and Lori Luepnitz; (back) Michael Wilk, Mrs. Betty Litzner, Chris Moran, Nick Grogan, Mrs. Theresa France, Dorothy Chargo, and Bryanna Litzner. Larry Boburka (far right) of Marquette played the guitar.**

## Finnish War Film Will Be Shown Sunday

Documentary filmmaker Ben Strout will show his Emmy Award-winning film "Fire and Ice: The Winter War," about Finland's fight for freedom from Russia in 1939, at 2 p.m. at Little Bear East Arena and Community Center in St. Ignace Sunday, February 10. Local residents of Finnish descent will also display war paraphernalia they have collected. The program is open to the public and free of charge.

Rudy Hennekes of St. Ignace, Joe Strohl of Madison, Wisconsin, and Jim Kippola of Marquette will show their collections of Finnish war artifacts.

The program was made possible through their relationship in the Ohio Valley Military Society, an international organization for dealers and collectors of military artifacts, Mr. Hennekes said.

"I met Ben Strout and Jim

Kippola last year at the society's annual convention," said Mr. Hennekes. "That's how we got this started."

Mr. Strout has been writing and producing television documentaries since 1981 and founded Masters Work Media in 2003.

"Fire and Ice" was the first documentary released by Mr. Strout's company. It has been part of many film festivals and won Best Documentary at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Film Festival in 2006 and won an Emmy Award last September.

Since its release, the documentary film has been broadcast on the Public Broadcast System and on television networks throughout Europe.

"The Winter War was an important event in Finnish history," said Judy Luoma of St. Ignace, who is

helping promote Saturday's program. "But it was also a unique military campaign, in that a small country without an army and little in the way of military weapons demanded their freedom from Russia, the largest military power of that time."

Much of the two-hour film was portrayed by war reenactors, said Mr. Hennekes. He said anyone who is interested in history would enjoy the program.

"Though this program is targeted toward the Finnish community in the Upper Peninsula, I think anyone who comes will be really entertained and awed by this documentary and the many old artifacts that they will see there," said Mr. Hennekes.

Coffee and Finnish cardamom bread, known as pulla, will be served to participants.

Fr. Mott estimates it weighs between 300 and 500 pounds.

"This is a great honor for me to make this altar," he said. "It allows me to express my love for the people of this parish through a gift God has given me."

A combination of events made it possible for the St. Ignace parish to obtain a first class relic from the body of Saint Ignatius, which was to be sealed in the new altar Saturday.

Brother Jim Boynton, S.J., was told about the church's desire to obtain a relic by his parents, Ollie and Patty Boynton of St. Ignace. Br. Boynton, who is in Rome for a world meeting of Jesuits, was instrumental in obtaining permission from the Jesuit Order for release of a bone fragment of St. Ignatius to Bishop Sample, who also happened to be in Rome at the time on other church business. St. Ignatius of Loyola, who lived from 1491 to 1556, was the founder of the Society of Jesus (The Jesuits).

The St. Ignace parish was founded by Father Marquette and other Jesuits in 1671. The current church building was constructed in 1904 and was dedicated by Bishop Frederick Eis, Fourth Bishop of the Diocese, February 19, 1905.

Catholic tradition, said Deacon McClelland, has called for a relic from a saint to be encased within the altar of a church, although since the 1990s, the church has moved away from this requirement. Relics now, he said, are difficult to acquire.

"We are very fortunate," he said, "to have a relic of St. Ignatius for this altar."

There are three categories of relics. A first class relic is a piece of a saint's body, a second class relic is an article of clothing or personal artifact worn or used by a saint, and a third class relic is an item such as a piece of cloth that touched a first-class relic.

The relic of St. Ignatius was cemented into a marble altar stone. This stone, along with two other stones from earlier altars containing relics of St. Simplicius, were placed inside the new altar. During

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## Naubinway

# Snowmobile Show To Be Next Week

Naubinway will be the site of the 16th Annual Top of the Lake Antique and Vintage Snowmobile Show and Ride Friday, February 15, through Saturday, February 16.

There will be a vintage snowmobile ride at 9 a.m. Friday. No registration is required. Drivers will depart from King's Motel in Naubinway and proceed to the Garfield Township Hall in Engadine, where a breakfast will be hosted by the West Mackinac American Legion. The cost for the breakfast was not available at press time.

At 1 p.m., there will be a six-mile ride to the Pipeline Bridge. The second ride will include vintage sleds, antique snowmobiles, and newer models.

"All sleds are welcome," said show organizer Charlie Vallier.

Riders may bring their Huskies, to participate in the "Hus-ski Hustle" obstacle course, and a bonfire will take place at the site.

Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., sleds will be on display along US-2 in Naubinway.

At Garfield Township Hall,

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## South Manistique Lake

# Carnival Will Be February 16

The 14th Annual Curtis Winter Carnival will be Saturday, February 16, on South Manistique Lake in Curtis, from 10 a.m. to about 4 p.m. A fireworks display will follow at dusk.

The carnival will include a chili cook-off, music, food booths, a bake sale, children's games, a cake walk, a piñata, ice golf, turkey bowling, and a mini-sled challenge for children.

There will be a bonfire on the ice throughout the event.