



*Rt. Rev. Joseph Schrembs, D. D., Bishop of Cleveland
Founded St. Clement's Parish, April 27, 1922.*



Exterior view of St. Clement's Church, Southwest Corner of Madison Ave. and Lincoln Ave.

St. Clement's Parish

***The Story of its Foundation and Growth
April 27, 1922 to September 16, 1923***

THE rapid growth in population of Cleveland's westerly neighbor, Lakewood, justly heralded as the most beautiful residential city in Ohio, made it necessary to establish new centers to serve the spiritual interests of the Catholics located there. The crowded conditions of the churches of St. Rose and St. James hastened the decision of the Right Rev. Bishop, and therefore he established two new parishes, St. Luke's to serve the territory from the lake front to Detroit Avenue and St. Clement's the territory from Detroit south to Fischer Road. The official announcement of the foundation of St. Clement's Parish was made April 27th, 1922, by the appointment of a pastor, the Rev. Jos. J. Schmit, and the fixing of definite parish lines, which briefly outlined are as follows: Beginning at the intersection of Detroit and Clarence Avenues in the city of Lakewood; thence west on Detroit Avenue to Lakeland Avenue; thence south on Lakeland Avenue to Hilliard Avenue; thence southwest on Hilliard Avenue to Madison Avenue; thence west on Madison Avenue to Rocky River; thence southerly along Rocky River to Pilgrim Avenue, if extended west to the



Main Altar—a copy in wood of the main altar (marble) of St. Clement's Church in Rome.
It is a gift of Mrs. H. Bollinger.

river; thence east on Pilgrim Avenue to 165th Street; thence south on 165th Street to Alden Avenue; thence east on Alden Avenue to 159th Street; thence north on 159th Street to Rose Lane; thence east on Rose Lane to Warren Road; thence northeasterly on Warren Road to Fischer Road; thence east on Fisher Road to the New York Central Railway; thence northeasterly along the New York Central Railway to 117th Street; thence north on 117th Street to Madison Avenue; thence west on Madison Avenue to Clarence Avenue; thence north on Clarence Avenue to Detroit Avenue, the place of beginning. 7

Nothing had been done in preparation for the establishment of the new parish, but through the courtesy of Father Stewart of St. Rose and Father Leahy of St. James a partial list of the Catholic families living within the newly-established limits was obtained. As many of the men as could be reached were notified and the first informal meeting was held at the home of Mr. John Hahn on Detroit Avenue on the eleventh day of May, 1922. At this meeting the following councilmen were appointed and approved: Messrs. Frank Smith (now deceased), John Hahn, Frank Butler and John T. Creahan. It was further decided to hold a mass-meeting at the Homestead Theatre Building on Detroit Avenue on May 17th, 1922. This was really the first Red-letter Day of the newly-organized parish. About 100 interested families were represented at the meeting, and after an address by the pastor a subscription was asked and about \$4,000 was promised. The announcement was made that St. Rose parish had donated the handsome sum of \$2,500. A beginning had been made, and the good work of the pioneers was taken up by the rapidly increasing number of those who were moving into the parish as soon as the news was broadcasted that at last the much needed church would be built in the heart of Lakewood on Madison Avenue.

Through the courtesy of Mr. John Feighan the pastor established a temporary residence at 1510 Elmwood Avenue and began a systematic visitation of the families within the parish limits. Every month, beginning in June, he sent a letter to every family with the usual monthly-collection envelope enclosed, and by special arrangement with the respective pastors of St. Rose and St. James the members of the new parish were able to give their contribution to the new parish by dropping it into the collection basket wherever they attended services. This arrangement lasted until the new church was ready for services.

On June 30th, 1922, property was purchased at the corner of Madison Avenue and Lincoln with a frontage of 202 feet on Madison Avenue, about 250 feet on Lincoln Avenue and 80 feet on Marlowe Avenue. In the purchase was included a six-room brick residence on Lincoln Avenue which was at once remodelled and enlarged to serve as pastoral headquarters. The purchase price of the entire property including the residence was \$40,000.

It was the original plan of the pastor to build a temporary frame church and at the same time a permanent school, but this plan had to be abandoned because the fire regulations in Lakewood forbid the erection of a frame building on Madison Avenue. It was therefore decided to build a permanent church, and Mr. Wm. Koehl was engaged as the architect to draw the plans. It was not to be a church of cathedral proportions nor built on cathedral lines, but a church that would serve the ordinary spiritual needs of a rapidly growing parish and inspire devotion in the hearts of all who came to worship where God had chosen to take up His dwelling place. Just how wonderfully Mr. Koehl has succeeded in satisfying these requirements with the limited means at his disposal may be learned from the description of the church in another part of this book. The general contract exclusive of plumbing, heating and lighting was given to the lowest bidder, the Schrader Construction Co., for \$68,000.

Ground was broken for the new church on August 17, 1922, and one month later, September 17, the cornerstone was laid by Rt. Rev. Joseph Schrembs, Bishop of Cleveland, assisted by three Monsignors and about fifty priests in the presence of a large concourse of people.