

# Overlooked Orleans: Sacred Heart Church

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This image depicts the original Sacred Heart of Jesus R.C. Church in Medina, located at the corner of Ann Street and High Street.

The children of the parish are seen gathering on the front steps of the church and the appearance of white dresses suggests that it was a First Holy Communion celebration.

It appears as though the priest is standing on the porch of the house, which served as his living quarters.

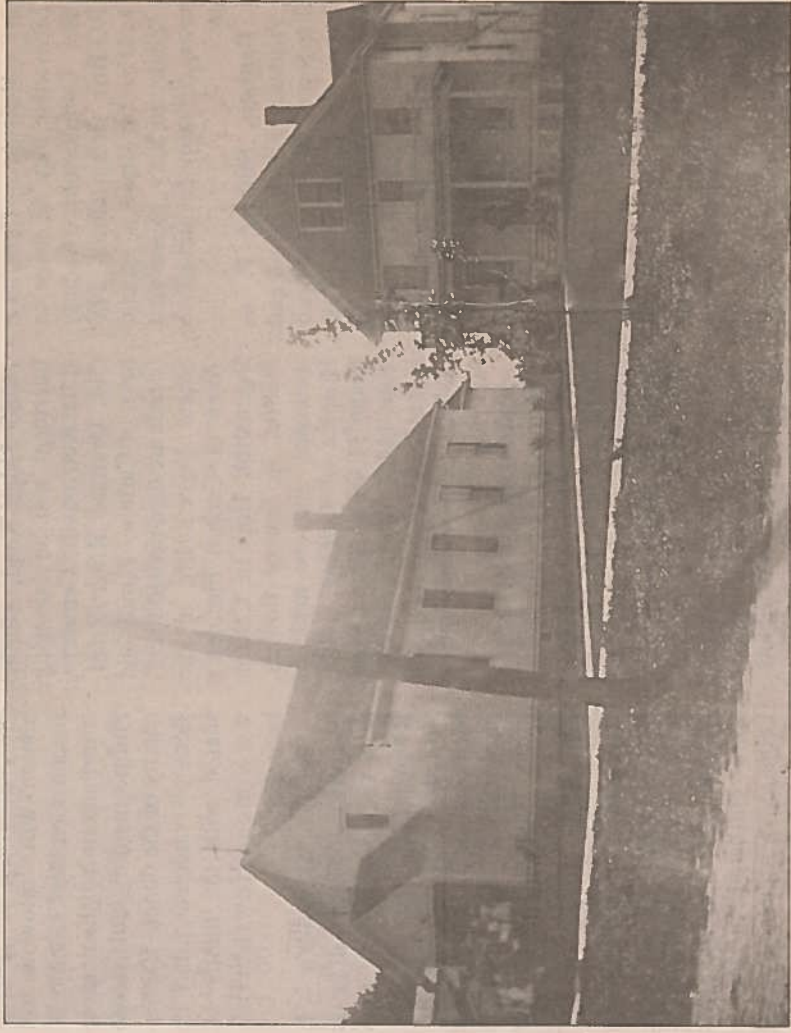
The original parish was established under the pastorate of Ks. Tomasz Gwodz who arrived in 1910, appointed by Bishop Charles Colton on Feb. 1 of that year.

Prior to the arrival of a resident priest, the Polish community of Medina was served periodically by Ks. Stanislaw Bubacz who was rector at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Albion. Construction of

this wood frame structure began in the spring of 1910 and the first Mass was celebrated on Aug. 7, 1910.

In October of 1910, the church was formally dedicated by Msgr. Nelson Baker, who attended in place of Bishop Colton. Ks. Jan Pitass of Buffalo, the father of Buffalo's Polish community, celebrated the Mass following the dedication ceremonies. Ks. Wojcik, Ks. Burtkowski, Ks. Bubacz, Ks. Gwodz, Rev. O'Brien, and Rev. Malloy were also present. The choir from St. Mary's in Albion sang the Mass and men from the St. Joseph's and St. Stanislaus Societies were also present for the program.

A large delegation of men, accompanied by two bands, escorted the officiating clergy to the church where hundreds of people crammed into the new edifice. Those who could not fit into the church participated in the service from the front lawn of the property.



**Sacred Heart of Jesus R.C. Church, Medina, circa 1910**

The earliest members of the congregation, if they were still with us today, would recall the makeshift altar, wooden benches, and the Round Oak stove used to heat the new church. The building was covered in brick shortly after 1925, during which time the church was expanded, a school built for the children, a home purchased for the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph, and the rectory enlarged.