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# The Virgin and the Grasshoppers: Persistence and Piety in German-Catholic America

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The Virgin and the Grasshoppers:  
Persistence and Piety in  
German-Catholic America

Stephen Gross  
Professor of History

*Faculty Center for Learning and Teaching  
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The Virgin and the Grasshoppers:  
Persistence and Piety in German-Catholic America

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Atop a small hill, known in German as Marienberg, outside the town of Cold Spring in the heavily German-Catholic Stearns County, Minnesota stands a small chapel dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. This shrine (*Gnadenkapelle* in German), built in 1952 of native granite and measuring about 16 by 26 feet, is the second chapel to occupy this space. The original, constructed in 1877 in response to the devastation caused by a plague of Rocky Mountain locusts, was destroyed by a tornado in 1894. The existing building--its location, design and purpose--evokes and commemorates the faith and piety of the original settlers, the ancestors of many of today's residents. Its dedication to the Assumption of the Virgin recalls the consecration of the first shrine on that feast day, and above the entry is a carving of the assumed Virgin with two grasshoppers kneeling at her feet. Rosary beads surround the figures of Madonna and locusts, and a wooden statue, created by a local craftsman for the original chapel and then later rescued after its cyclonic destruction, stands on a ledge above the altar and depicts the Virgin holding the Christ Child. Two bent and gnarled oak trees, survivors of the 1894 tornado, stand guard over the new shrine and remind today's visitors of the sacrifices of those who had gone on before.<sup>i</sup>

The chapel is still used. The secluded glade attracts auto travelers who are drawn by the shrine's quiet and solitude, and area residents during the annual agricultural cycle still stage public devotionals. During May and June of each year local parishes organize weekly pilgrimages for a novena of Thursday night masses in hopes of procuring a good harvest. Later on August 15th, the feast of the Assumption, the parishioners of St. Boniface parish in Cold Spring, in imitation of their ancestors, walk the processional route from the parish church to the chapel for the same purpose. Thus, the shrine not only speaks to the need of contemporary

residents to connect to the lives of their immigrant ancestors but also to the continued importance of agriculture in this land of small towns and dairy farms.

According to the memory of today's residents, at least as expressed in both the official Cold Spring parish history and in a small commemorative booklet sold at the shrine, the construction of the first chapel was part and parcel of a larger miracle which resulted after years of plague in the expulsion of the locusts from the area. However, the extent and timing of the miracle is a matter of some dispute. The official history of St. Boniface parish in Cold Spring, written by a Protestant and long-time official of the Cold Spring Granite Company, one of the area's most important businesses and a major contributor to the reconstruction of the chapel in the 1950s, takes an ecumenical approach and locates the departure of the grasshoppers in the spring of 1877. According to this version, the insect pests departed the entire state after John S. Pillsbury, the governor of Minnesota, proclaimed a state-wide day of prayer and fasting to effect divine deliverance.<sup>ii</sup> Robert Voight, a Catholic priest and the author of "The Story of Mary and the Grasshoppers," a small pamphlet sold at the site, is less appreciative of the governor's efforts and notes that the locusts remained in the area until late summer and then left only after the dedication of the chapel that August. The miracle, then, according to Voight, was more localized and more the product of German-Catholic piety, and, in fact, the historical record is more consistent with his account.<sup>iii</sup>

The narrative that follows insists on a more complex reading of events than that offered by either of the "official" versions, both of which emphasize the power of prayer and the grace of God. Rather, this history engages, on a basic level, parish politics, including the machinations of a restless young priest, and, on another, it involves the response of a group of erstwhile

peasants, Catholic and German-speaking, to a rapidly changing social and economic environment. Understanding the story, then, demands examining the immediate political motives of individual actors, including those of the local parish priest who had, it seems, both a penchant for dancing and a devotion to the Virgin. It requires, as well, examining the values and behaviors of local residents as they confronted new sources of social and economic tension. The story, after all, is set in a specific place in time, in an area which was being inundated by grasshoppers but which was at the same moment rapidly forging market connections with a larger regional economy. This is key, for the construction of the chapel and the ritual processions which it fostered had to do both with seeking divine relief from insect pests and with assuaging anxiety over a new dependence on distant agricultural markets. What becomes clear in excavating this story and, more specifically, in considering the extent to which it exposes the language and function of ritual is how residents used the shrine and its devotionals to reassert the primacy of pre-capitalist values and reaffirm the workings of an economy based on sharing and reciprocity, an “ethic of equity,” which stood at the center of both spiritual and social arrangements. However, as we shall see, the construction of the original chapel functioned in yet other ways and worked to heal and unite a community rent by dissension and struggling to find grace. The primary victims, here, those most vulnerable to the collective dislocations of immigration, settlement and farm building, were the community’s women. But others were also at risk, and the construction of the shrine can also be understood in more general terms as part of a decades long struggle to curb conflict and build solidarity.

The two central issues here, the ability of rural Americans, both immigrant and native-



born, to negotiate the transition to market capitalism and the disruptive impact of migration on families and communities, have attracted significant scholarly attention. My approach to these concerns can be explained by asserting a few sets of basic propositions. One is that these German immigrants and their children adjusted economic behavior in accord with certain moral principles, and thus their engagement with the market was guided by communal concerns and limited by group pressure.<sup>iv</sup> Another is that those European peasants who became American farmers and embraced commercial agriculture, despite the threat posed by market capitalism to values and identity, were not signaling their abandonment of traditional culture and their commitment to eventual assimilation. In short, the immigrant approach to the market was necessarily fluid and creative.<sup>v</sup> The subject of this essay, the ritual walk to Marienberg, evidences that creativity, but this work also suggests that we need consider not only the strength and tenacity of community institutions and structures, always an essential project in immigration studies, but also the entire repertoire of values, beliefs and behaviors which comprise culture. According to Kathleen Neils Conzen, who has spent two decades researching central Minnesota's larger German-Catholic cultural region, understanding the persistence of ethnic culture in the American countryside "demand[s]...an altered conceptual framework, with a clearer focus upon culture itself--the socially produced structures of meaning expressed in and engendered by public behaviors, language, images, institutions--than generally has been the case in immigration historiography."<sup>vi</sup> In this instance, the German Catholics making their way to Marienberg enjoyed an especially rich liturgical tradition of public prayer and ritual, an important cluster of symbolic resources, whose very plasticity facilitated invention, easy mobilization and expanded utility. This heritage would prove to be especially efficacious in

their encounter with American agrarian capitalism; however, because of this rich tradition, this encounter would be more complex, more multi-faceted, more marked by competing goals and aspirations and thus more often tinged with tension and anxiety than that described by other scholars.<sup>vii</sup>

I also insist that religious rituals are necessarily both polysemic and multi-functional and that their meaning and purpose are always contingent upon the subjectivities of the various participants.<sup>viii</sup> This particular ritual, which engaged the entire community, surely carried multiple meanings and reflected differently the situations of men and women. In contrast to the major trend in immigration studies which emphasizes the extreme functionality of social institutions, especially the family, and their easy “transplant-ability,” I propose that moving to a new environment disrupted traditional social relations, based primary but not exclusively on gender, and exposed tensions within families.<sup>ix</sup> The relevant factors in this story, those which contributed most to upheaval, include the geography of settlement, the arduous work associated with farm breaking and the nature of American property law. But the simple impossibility of maintaining intact family and community systems was another, perhaps more universal, source of social disruption. Women were most affected--and then secondarily children--although all residents faced the challenge of making sense of altered social arrangements. I take seriously, then, the possibility of demoralization. This is not to advocate a return to those earlier models in immigration historiography that stress alienation and anomie; it is, however, to redirect our attention to both the inevitability of social change and the capacity of people to mobilize cultural resources to meet new exigencies, to limit turmoil and perhaps to achieve a measure of healing.

Cold Spring is located in Wakefield Township in the southeastern quarter of Stearns

County, Minnesota. St. Cloud, the county seat, is about fifteen miles away. The Sauk River follows a gentle northeasterly path as it makes its way through the township, although the river below Cold Spring and the dam, which once furnished power for first a lumber and then a grist mill, has overflowed its original banks and now shares its path with a small chain of lakes. The geography is hilly, especially on the southern bank of the Sauk, and the landscape was originally dominated by oak and poplar groves with occasional glimpses of small prairie breaking through the bush and woods.

Although Wakefield, as well as most of the surrounding townships, was from an early date almost exclusively German and Catholic, it did attract settlers from a number of different regions in German-speaking Europe. The charter group, immigrants from Kreis Bitburg of the Eifel area of the Rhineland, arrived in 1855 and clustered in the northeast quadrant of the township. They were almost immediately joined by settlers, some of whom may have been relatives, from the other side border shared by the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg. Other Eifelers from an area farther to the north and east around the cities of Mayen and Daun would later join these charter members, although immigrants originating in the Grand Duchy and in the area around Trier and Bitburg would remain the largest contingent of Rhinelanders in the township.

In 1856 the original settlers were joined by Bavarians who settled in the north and northwestern part of the township. They were originally from the diocese of Regensberg in the Kingdom of Bavaria, and by 1860 at least fifteen Bavarian families had settled in what became known logically enough as the "Bavarian Settlement." A group of families from Kreis Lingen and Meppen in the Kingdom of Hanover and who settled in the western third of the township completed the original settlement process. These North Germans were part of a larger settlement

cluster extending into the neighboring Munson Township; they traveled to Richmond in Munson for church and they sent their children to that village's district school.<sup>x</sup>

Fr. Francis Xavier Pierz, a Slovenian Benedictine already in his seventieth year in 1855 and whose first duty was to administer to the Indians in the Upper Midwest, provided much of the initial impetus for German settlement. In the mid 1850s Pierz, a German speaker, launched a letter-writing campaign in the nation's German language newspapers and was at least partially responsible for drawing settlers to the area. He also had a hand in attracting Benedictine missionaries to the area, who arrived in the spring of 1856 and eventually established a monastery and college in Collegetown just to the north of Wakefield.<sup>xi</sup> Two rival parishes quickly grew up in the township. One, St. James, was located at Jacobs Prairie, a small crossroads boasting a church, a country school and sometimes a blacksmith shop, in the northeast quadrant of the township. The other, St. Nicholas, lay along the town line between Wakefield and Luxemburg Township to the south and with a saloon was only marginally more cosmopolitan than Jacobs Prairie. Although both these parishes seem to have been spared any significant in-fighting during their early years, parish battles were a reality during the founding process and would become even more common in the last two decades of the century.<sup>xii</sup> Significantly, Cold Spring, which would become the township's only true urban center, was without a parish during the area's settlement phase. Despite the early construction of a dam and mill in 1856, Cold Spring experienced slow and uneven growth. Its population in 1870 hovered somewhere around 100 residents, but in the next decade the village's population grew by about 150 percent. It was only late in this decade, in 1878, after the grasshopper infestation had ended that Cold Spring could boast of a parish church. As we will see, the construction of the small

*Gnadenkapelle* outside of town would play a central role in parish development.<sup>xiii</sup>

The movement of these German immigrants to a new environment and the reestablishment of social relations and boundaries was neither easy nor painless. Although the settlement process relied heavily on the workings of immigrant chains which extended first to Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana and Illinois and which would later function to bring settlers directly from the Old Country, immigration and settlement still truncated extended family and community networks. That the immigrants never considered establishing nucleated villages but instead opted to follow the American pattern of dispersed farmsteads in an open-country settlement plan served further to isolate families within tight rural neighborhoods and to disrupt patterns of community surveillance and control. This segment of German America, then, never quite resembled a peaceable kingdom, as the structures of the traditional community were imperfectly transplanted and as mechanisms for social control were only slowly put in place.

Discord was also a product of the new environment. The primitiveness of the landscape and the inadequacy of the first land surveys encouraged a certain measure of disorder and pitted neighbor against neighbor in battles over fence lines, access to remote fields and the damage produced by straying livestock. Kathleen Conzen has noted the proclivity for violence and crimes against persons among these immigrants and cites the difficulty in replicating traditional society in a new, imperfectly mapped, environment as a primary factor. She goes on to argue that these immigrants were, indeed, heirs to conflict; the majority had originated in the small, intensely contentious villages of south and west Germany and were well-practiced in fighting periodic bouts over land, honor and personal property.<sup>xiv</sup> However, it should be noted that the sort of acrimony expressed, say, in fights over the damage wrought by wandering livestock or in

those saloon rows arising over the failure to participate in rounds of treating were not necessarily destructive of community. Rather, these sorts of incidents reveal a community, divided along German regional lines and lacking the methods of coercion found in the German nucleated village, engaged in the task of reassigning rights, duties and obligations and in the reconfiguring of community boundaries and social roles. Other factors, too, contributed to the violence. During the frontier period the sex ratio was skewed in favor of men, who, as a result, typically married in their late twenties. Thus, young men experienced a rather prolonged adolescence in which they were free to drink, fight and at least mimic their traditional role as monitors of community behavior. Still, the age-old role of young men as the conscience of the community seems to have been only partially reestablished in the process of movement and resettlement, and community development, village growth, the growing power of the church and the emergence of new social hierarchies would further undermine the ability of traditional bachelor associations to exact conformity to community standards.<sup>xv</sup> Of course, the level of conflict and violence never reached crisis proportions, and other institutions besides that of the traditional bachelor society functioned to contain discord. Township government in the aggregate and the common-sense equity of local justices of the peace, more specifically, lent structure and support to the community. And, of course, the major source of order and communal control was the local parish church. Still, conflict and violence persisted, and as the century was drawing to a close village elites, mainly general store merchants and newspaper editors, grew increasingly sensitive to the cues offered by their Yankee counterparts in the county seat and campaigned to control disorder.<sup>xvi</sup>

Violence was not solely a public problem, a problem for those men who fought over and

after drinks. It could also invade households. Stories of domestic violence were common fare in the newspapers published in the county seat, and the occasional divorce file found in district court records often contains disturbing accounts of domestic turmoil. Many of these cases, especially those in which women brought significant amounts of real and personal goods to the marriage, evidenced the extent to which property issues structured marital conflict. This is hardly surprising and indeed is reminiscent of European peasant marriages in general. But many of these cases also testify to the relative absence of those who could offer protection and support--either parents or adult children--and thus underline the increased marginality and vulnerability of women as a product of immigration and settlement. Married couples fought over more than property, though, and the intense labor demands borne by farm wives no doubt contributed to contention. For example, a story from a county-seat newspaper in 1913 described a German farmer appearing before the county judge of probate and asking for the commitment of his wife. She was insane, the farmer claimed. The woman, however, convinced the judge that the charge was frivolous and the result of "domestic lack of harmony," arguing that her husband, "had demanded of her the work of a man, and that he then complained that she did not properly manage the household affairs when she returned from a full day's work in the fields."<sup>xvii</sup>

Many historians of America's countryside insist rural women in the nineteenth century were able to maintain bonds of community through family ties, shared work and rounds of visiting. To be sure, German Catholic farm wives in Stearns County valued and depended upon the company and support of other women. Consider, for instance, the experience of Anna Kirchner who in flight from a beating by her husband encountered a neighborhood woman who convinced her to seek help from the local justice of the peace.<sup>xviii</sup> Consider too the group of

German mothers from Holding Township who invaded the local school house, apprehended the Polish-born teacher and doused him with molasses and feathers, all of this in retribution for having had excessively punished one his scholars.<sup>xix</sup> But other evidence paints a different picture, one in which the isolation produced by the open-country settlement pattern, the decline in the age at marriage for women, the corresponding increase in marital fertility and the labor demands of frontier farm breaking, all combined to compromise the status of women and erode sources of support. Some of the best evidence for female isolation is provided by the records of public health officials investigating an 1881 county-wide smallpox epidemic. Although an officer from St. Paul would report that the residents were “very social in their habits, visiting freely from house to house, though the country is not thickly settled,” virtually all the carriers of the disease were young men. An immigrant family, ethnic Germans from Hungary, introduced the disease into the county, and they, in turn, infected their relatives in Spring Hill Township to the west of Cold Spring. The relatives spread the virus to a threshing crew, and from there the disease was introduced to another township by “young men visiting the saloons of Spring Hill.”<sup>xx</sup> An unofficial report from a county newspaper described a visit by state health officials to the afflicted area: “They found assembled at a store...not less than twenty men, part of them directly from their homes in which from three to ten were lying ill of the foul disease.”<sup>xxi</sup> The disease eventually made the rounds of much the county, but the state health officers were only able to identify one female, a little girl who caught the disease while at church, who served as a carrier of the virus. That men were largely responsible for spreading the disease is hardly surprising; one memorialist, a man who had immigrated in the 1870s, recalled in his later years that “the only time the women got together was on Sundays.”<sup>xxii</sup>



Considering the high fertility of women and the burdens of farm work, it is hardly surprising that Sunday mass would offer one of the few opportunities for visiting. Women married young during the frontier period; in 1860 the mean age at marriage for women in Wakefield and neighboring Munson Township was a little over 20 years. It would fall an additional year during the subsequent decade and finally grew to a more normal 24.19 years in 1880. Marital fertility, as a result, was very high. In fact, as in other immigrant communities, fertility rates initially surpassed those in the immigrant source areas, although they quickly reverted to the same level.<sup>xxiii</sup> Moreover, comparative figures from other Midwestern communities, settled by different national and religious groups, fail to match rates for rural Stearns, pointing to a pattern in which marital fertility is only curtailed by breast feeding.<sup>xxiv</sup>

Raising large numbers of children was not necessarily incompatible with fulfilling demanding work roles, and as a number of historians of rural America have demonstrated, the contribution of farm women to the family economy provided the subsistence basis necessary for participating in commercial agricultural. Stearns County wives and daughters, however, seem to have been more active economically than non-German women; they not only worked in the barnyard and garden, caring for the cattle, making butter, gathering eggs, etc., but evidence, some gleaned from farm accident reports published in county newspapers, demonstrates that women also figured prominently in field work. For instance, a newspaper item from 1862 described the death of a Wakefield Township couple. According to the story, the husband “was in a field plowing when he was struck by a flash of lightning and killed instantly, the fluid passing forward killing both oxen, and also his wife who was leading them.” Other newspaper reports of similar accidents locate women in the dairy and in the fields with their husbands

during the harvest season. Still other accounts situate German Catholic women at the side of their husbands and sons during battles with neighbors over property lines and the livestock oblivious to those boundaries.<sup>xxv</sup>

Significant work roles could translate to significant economic power within families, and at least some women brought substantial property to their marriages. Partible inheritance was the rule throughout much of southwest Germany, and young women typically received their dowries before they wed. Widows could inherit considerable property, they faced few disabilities in managing the estate and indeed were often the final arbiters of the disposition of family property. American property law, however, was less generous to married women, and those German American husbands who wrote wills in Stearns County did so in order to bypass the more restrictive American dower provisions.<sup>xxvi</sup> This should serve to warn that the lot of these German women had not deteriorated in every respect and that some women continued to exercise real power within the family economy. Still gender relations had changed as a result of immigration and settlement; women, who were accustomed to playing significant and important roles within the family economy were now more isolated, more marginal and more vulnerable.

Although historians of rural societies, often in search for historical alternatives to commercial capitalism, typically emphasize the reciprocal basis of pre-capitalist rural life, they have been reluctant to recognize the link between rural mutuality and discord. The ethic which governed social relations among these German Catholics and which had its origins in the small villages of peasant Europe flowed from an appreciation of the close unity of the sacred and the material and the extent to which people remained both vulnerable to and dependent upon supernatural forces. This dependency and vulnerability was simultaneously expressed and

controlled through ritualized attempts to negotiate with the sacred, but such easy access to the sacred also promoted discord as people strove to protect honor and their share of scarce resources against those neighbors and strangers who, motivated by forces of envy and enmity, might also mobilize the sacred for their own interests. At the same time, conflict was controlled as people eschewed overt displays of wealth and power in fear of encouraging jealousy, malice and retribution. Thus, the corollary of bargaining with the saints was the establishment of reciprocal social relations, all of which were necessarily conditional and continuously open to renegotiation. Power, even that enjoyed by the clergy and local notables, was never absolute but always structured by the need for alliances and support. Conflict, then, can be seen as part of the negotiation process and as the expression of the continuous imperative to construct alliances, as well as the need to apportion rights, duties and claims. Of course the logic of capitalism and the larger “civilizing” process which accompanied it worked to transform this ethos and substitute for it a commitment to market-driven individualism. But German Catholic farmers in Stearns County continued to honor the spiritual, they continued to refer to an ethic of equity in structuring social relations and only slowly, while maintaining a family subsistence base, constructed larger connections to outside markets.<sup>xxvii</sup>

That an ethic of equity survived into the nineteenth century and withstood the trans-Atlantic voyage reflects the backwardness of much of Catholic Germany as well the frontier isolation of Stearns County. The German Church was only slowly embarking on reform, and the early priests in frontier Minnesota were too few in number and sometimes too poorly trained to control fully the acrimony and discord which occasionally erupted and was sometimes even directed at the Church itself.<sup>xxviii</sup> Moreover, as suggested above, other factors--the isolation of

the region, the primitiveness of the landscape, the open-country settlement pattern, the provincial diversity of the population--all conspired to open up social relations. Finally, the poverty of the charter group of settlers and the slow pace of economic development worked to foster a persistent egalitarianism. Rates of farm ownership were high and the distribution of property remained consistently fair.<sup>xxix</sup> Because the social and economic situation was so fluid and open-ended, the traditional ethic, because it relied upon negotiation, functioned to help reconstitute social relations. These, however, could not be perfectly reassembled, and the conflict inherent to an ethic of equity, because mechanisms of surveillance and social control were not easily put in place, automatically placed at risk the more vulnerable members of society. Conflict and the violence it sometimes engendered were, of course, most deleterious to the family, and while a certain level of contention--reflective of a basic clash between sentiment and economic function--was intrinsic to the peasant family, movement from Catholic Germany to the Minnesota frontier undermined, in particular, sources of female power and support and left women especially isolated and vulnerable.

The same sorts of peasant values, which could nurture both cooperation and contention, also guided these settlers in their encounter with the market. Unlike other immigrant farmers, these German Catholics were slow to grow wheat, the primary cash crop in the middle of the nineteenth century, and instead made sure to establish a secure subsistence base before turning to commercial farming.<sup>xxx</sup> To be sure, the deliberative pace of the area's integration into a larger market system was not merely a reflection of peasant conservatism; it was also a product of events beyond their control. Rocky Mountain locusts had already visited the area in 1856 and 1857, at a time when European settlement was just beginning, and countless memorialists would

later remember the period as a time of hardship and near starvation. A few years later the area would be caught up in the conflict with the Dakota, who launched a few raids into the county but mainly succeeded in causing widespread panic and in driving farm families to the fortified confines of the various villages. More significant was the war's impact on the area's few Yankee farmers and merchants, who had the necessary capital, motivation and connections to encourage rapid development but who quickly abandoned the area and its growing population of immigrant German-Catholics.<sup>xxxii</sup>

This slow pace of economic development should not be interpreted as evidence of a widespread antipathy to commercial farming. Rather, local farmers were virtuosos at safety-first agriculture, and sources suggest that members of the pioneer cohort during the settlement and farm-breaking phase never consciously avoided the market as much as they sought to control its impact. Early on farmers forewent St. Cloud, the county seat, as a market center and instead traveled the Red River ox-cart trail to the eighty-mile distant St. Paul in order to sell their produce.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Even more annoying to St. Cloud's Yankee merchants, the area's German farmers often withheld produce from the market and waited patiently for the proper time to sell.<sup>xxxiii</sup> At the same time, surviving tax assessment lists reveal little interest in accumulating consumer goods and accouterments of status, and most plowed their earnings back into the family farm.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Indeed, only the few village merchants held excess real estate; farmers typically purchased extra land only to establish their children in close proximity. In short, these German Catholics were not so much uninterested in the market as they were committed to making the profit motive secondary to a specific set of ideals organized around notions of equity and reciprocity. In any case, by the mid 1870s, the time of the immigrants' second encounter with grasshoppers, many

Stearns County farmers had already begun the transition to wheat growing. The trigger was the expansion of the railroad across the Mississippi in St. Cloud in 1872 and then its extension to St. Joseph and Albany in the north central tier of townships a few years later.<sup>xxxv</sup> Still, it should be noted that the damage caused by the second great grasshopper infestation in the middle years of the decade and, therefore, the necessity of some farmers to meet a spiraling debt load accelerated this trend, and Stearns County farmers in 1881 devoted to wheat approximately double the acreage they had in 1875.

Residents responded to the damage wrought by these insect predators in creative ways. Some temporarily diversified and planted corn rather than wheat, and Stearns County farmers planted over 4,000 more acres of corn in 1877, the last year of the infestation, than they had in the previous year. This experiment in diversification was brief, though, and after the grasshoppers left the county's farmers quickly removed about 1,000 acres of corn from cultivation. Some used fire, first by raking straw into windrows, hoping to attract the locusts and then igniting the straw. When this failed, some started large scale prairie fires. At least a few men were forced to leave home and seek jobs elsewhere, and no doubt most sought to supplement their family diets by hunting and fishing.<sup>xxxvi</sup> One innovative Stearns County resident experimented with using captured grasshoppers as hog feed, and others used the so-called "hopper dozers," horse drawn implements, designed to gather up locusts in canvas skirting. The residents of Spring Hill Township had, perhaps, the most creative response; they issued bonds, which they sold in Minneapolis and, thus, raised money for subsistence needs and for seed grain.<sup>xxxvii</sup> A more long-term response, and the one not employed--at least, immediately--would have been to abandon wheat growing and to diversify by raising other

crops. Farmers, however, were not yet prepared to follow that path. The grasshopper plagues of the 1870s demonstrated the uncertainty and unpredictability of rural life; they did little, though, to change the logic and trajectory of agricultural production.

The answer, then, was not to abandon the market. Its call was too seductive, and its benefits—more efficient production, the increased means to expand acreage and finally a greater access to consumer goods—outweighed the disadvantages. Moreover, as a result of the grasshoppers, many farmers faced increased debt and could not, even if they wanted, easily abandon wheat growing. The wealthiest merchant in Cold Spring, the Slovenian-born Marcus Maurin, who would later lead the drive for the establishment of a new parish for that town, raised interest rates on loans from 10 to 12 percent. His countryman in the neighboring village of Torah, Jacob Simonitsch, likewise increased his interest rates. Both men, though, seemed to have been reluctant to pursue bad loans and generally deferred legal action until the 1880s. Still, the plagues did cause hardship, and the number of farmers listed on the census rolls declined slightly during the decade.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

Another possible solution to the crisis and the one increasingly pursued by their cousins in Catholic Germany, was to organize, buy and sell cooperatively, and perhaps even join other agriculturists in political activity; however, this alternative could not be seriously considered as America's premier farmers' organization, the Grange, was dominated by Yankees and Protestants and was tainted with the evil of prohibitionism.<sup>xxxix</sup> The ultimate answer, then, was to reaffirm, in the face of growing market pressure, all the old verities and the principles of a moral economy, both as a way of assuaging anxiety and as a reminder that caution, good sense and safety-first might still guide them in crop selection and marketing decisions. This project then

would be to discipline the market, not by invoking statist solutions, but through the reaffirmation of and recommitment to communal values. This was the course they chose.

As noted above, the grasshopper plagues of 1870s were actually a repeat performance. Rocky Mountain locusts had invaded the area in the 1850s during the initial stages of European settlement and had reduced many pioneer families to near starvation. The religious response of the 1870s was also a reprise of long-practiced rituals, and during both sets of plagues the area's German Catholics from a number of different parishes arranged processions in response to what was in both cases a multifaceted threat. The processions established in the 1850s persisted into the 1870s, and Catholics from a number of parishes continued to meet and walk on a number of different feast days during spring and summer months. Interestingly, the English-language newspapers in St. Cloud in describing these rituals identified both the feast of St. Boniface on June 5<sup>th</sup> and that of St. Magnus, the patron for good harvests and the protector against hail, lightning and vermin, on September 6<sup>th</sup> as "Grasshopper Day."<sup>xl</sup>

Small parish-based processions were common in Catholic Germany, but they were often considered by both civil and ecclesiastical authorities as unhealthy expressions of popular religion and were thus, at least in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century, often discouraged. The German revival of these sorts of devotionals in the middle decades of the nineteenth century should be understood in part as a response to a trend toward secularization, rapid industrialization and the growing power of the state throughout Prussian controlled areas. Thus, the successful transplantation of these ritual forms to rural Minnesota speaks to significant cultural continuity.<sup>xli</sup> But if the structure and grammar of these rituals survived the immigration voyage intact, their meaning proved more fluid and open to subjective reading. Indeed, the first



set of rituals—those staged in 1857 and 1858—addressed needs which by the time of the second locust infestation had diminished in importance. Participants in the first set of processions were more anxious about basic survival, but the initial processions also helped map the land, proclaim it as sacred and assert Catholic power in a social and political milieu dominated by Yankees.<sup>xlii</sup> These functions were less important in the 1870s, although the translocative function of moving people emotionally and psychically back to the Old Country probably remained little changed.<sup>xliii</sup> Likewise, the way in which processions and pilgrimage evoke what Victor Turner has termed *communitas* and work to integrate both individuals and groups back into the larger community is universal.<sup>xliv</sup> It is significant that the original processions were staged on the feast days of St. Boniface, St. Ulrich and St. Magnus, all males saints and the last two especially efficacious in dealing with pestilence, and the Cold Spring shrine was dedicated to the Virgin on the feast of the Assumption and christened *Maria Hilf* (Mary Help of Christians). This stems from the renewed interest in Marianism during this period—signaled by the proclamation of the Immaculate Conception in 1854—but it also represents the extent to which the later rituals dedicated, after all, to the Blessed Mother, were connected to problems internal to families. On yet another level, the religious response of the 1870s was tied up with local parish politics and what was ultimately a successful campaign to establish a new parish for Cold Spring.

The driving force behind the founding of both St. Boniface parish in Cold Spring and the grasshopper shrine was Fr. Leo Winter. Cold Spring, despite possessing a mill and an ambitious, albeit tiny, business community, still lacked a parish church when Winter was assigned the twin parishes of St. James (Jacobs Prairie) and St. Nicholas. Fr Leo, who was then only twenty-seven

years old and recently ordained, had originally been assigned parish work in the area around St. Paul but was then brought back to the abbey at St. Johns after, in his words, “committing the foolishness of dancing,” apparently in public. During the summer of 1877, just before the grasshoppers abandoned the area, Fr. Leo persuaded his parishioners from both St. Nicholas and St. James to construct a chapel, a *Wallfahrtsort* (a place of pilgrimage), and to pledge an annual pilgrimage for the next fifteen years. For his part, Winter promised to say mass at the chapel every Saturday, weather permitting. Initially upon his assignment the young priest stayed in the rectory at Jacobs Prairie, but in October he was ordered to move to nearby Richmond, where he remained barely a week. But because he was now, in fulfillment of his vow, saying mass almost daily at the new shrine, his abbot allowed him to move once more and this time to Cold Spring. Although Fr. Leo would later disclaim any intrigue in picking a hill outside of Cold Spring as the site of his *Wallfahrtsort*, insisting instead that it was an act of God, not everyone shared that view; the Jacobs Prairie parish historian would later note that the construction of the chapel “served as an opening wedge for the movement into Cold Spring.” In fact, a few weeks after the consecration of the chapel Winter noted in a small document chronicling these events that some residents refused to contribute to the construction of the chapel, and on a separate page, which has since disappeared the young priest included “[a] small list of those who could have contributed but did not--out of malice or spite--which does them no good...to their eternal shame and that of their progeny.”<sup>xlv</sup> This seemed to have been part of larger pattern of dissent; Winter's later announcement that he planned to move to Cold Spring sparked a community protest at Jacobs Prairie. He later claimed that he attempted to negotiate with the farmers but that they would not cooperate. And so, in his words, he “made short work of the situation, closed the

church and said so-long.” Almost simultaneously and in partnership with Marcus Maurin, Cold Spring's leading merchant and one the wealthiest men in the county, he began to raise funds for the construction of a parish church in Cold Spring.<sup>xlvi</sup> Another document, authored by Cold Spring's parish priest in 1891 notes succinctly that, “On May 20, 1877 Fr. Leo Winter became pastor of the parish of St. James. Soon he felt very much at home in Cold Spring, and so he established his residence within these walls. And in a short time he became a very active advocate for the case of a church in Cold Spring, and as a result it quickly assumed a form and pattern.<sup>xlvii</sup>

It would be a mistake, however, to reduce the context surrounding the construction of the Assumption chapel to parish conflict and clerical intrigue. Fr. Winter, who admittedly had his own agenda in promoting the new votive procession, harshly described the attitude of some of his parishioners and the creeping corruption associated with market forces.

After they had gotten together some property, many thought they had it made and had almost forgotten how to pray. They thought themselves independent from God and his commandments... They had the proud impertinence to think that they had money and even paid for the upkeep of the pastor, or as the saying goes, hired him, therefore, the pastor had to do what the farmers wanted. I say this for the eternal memory of future generations. Many of these proud devils learned once more to pray.<sup>xlviii</sup>

Winter's analysis, despite the young priest's self-righteousness, points to the reality of an emerging crisis within the local ethos. The slow growth of the area's economy had structured a high level of family autonomy and had nurtured the maintenance of reciprocal obligations within and between households. Greater market involvement, according to Fr. Leo, was a threat as it encouraged an extreme individualism and tended to divorce the settlers from their God and perhaps more importantly, at least to the young priest, from God's servants. Indeed, all the

virtues advocated by the pioneer church, virtues that had served the settlers well in taking the land and in building family farms--patience, faith, hard work--were now at risk. Many of Winter's parishioners no doubt shared that reading; the devastation of the grasshoppers both signaled God's displeasure and revealed the uncertainty and insecurity produced by the market. The solution was to become a family again and "to turn seriously to the love of God's Mother and to pledge out of love to build a chapel in her honor...if she would free us from this horrid plague through her mighty intercession with God." In other words, the appropriate way to meet the crisis was to restore traditional relations based on the model of the Holy Family. Mary here is the "tender and concerned mother who calls her children away from the brink of disaster and offers them safety and comfort under her sheltering mantle." Her power, though, is exclusively intercessory, and her role is to restrain "the heavy hand of her son."<sup>xlix</sup>

The manner in which the language and grammar of the ritual processions reflected structural problems within the community while also asserting traditional values is apparent in a published description of the chapel's consecration. According to a report in the county's German newspaper, the activities of that August 15th began at 5:00 a.m. with a cannonade which could be heard at the seven-mile distant St. John's Abbey at Collegeville. At seven o'clock two groups of residents--one from Jacobs Prairie would march south toward Cold Spring and the other from St. Nicholas in Luxemburg Township would make its way north--began their processions, praying and singing hymns along the way, to the pilgrimage site. The Jacobs Prairie pilgrims were led by a wagon carrying the statue of the Virgin; surrounding the wagon were twelve girls dressed in white and bearing white flags. They were followed by four priests and by twenty-six men on horseback. Along the pilgrimage route the procession passed under "Triumphbogen"

(triumphal arches), and in Cold Spring, according to the paper's correspondent, the houses were decorated with flags and trees as if the Blessed Virgin herself or a king had made their way through the village. As in other processions, the marchers were organized as corporate groups, with men, women and children, walking separately. Upon the arrival of the pilgrims at the site, the four priests cooperated in the consecration of the chapel, and this ceremony was then followed by a solemn high mass. The pilgrims from St. Nicholas provided music, and "after mass the crowd scattered and sought to fulfill and satisfy their physical needs at designated tables and bars (Schenken)." The correspondent was able to report that \$340 was raised at the event and that \$200 was pure profit. He concluded by noting that the grasshoppers fled the area only eight days after Fr. Winter announced his intentions to build the chapel.<sup>1</sup>

Similar ritual processions in Italian Harlem have been seen as symbolic restagings of the immigrant journey, but ones which operated inversely and brought the participants back home again to the Old Country. Italian-American festas also worked as rites of healing and integration; movement from rural Italy to New York City and the adjustment to the imperatives of American capitalism severely strained the peasant family and conspired to disrupt the immigrant community.<sup>li</sup> The ritual march to Marienberg functioned in much the same way. The settlers temporarily abandoned their primitive log cabins and small frame houses, perpetual reminders of their uprootedness and dislocation in Minnesota, and solemnly walked a route made sacred and German by flowers, flags and Triumphbogen. The arrival of the pilgrims at the chapel site, at a locale existing within nature and sanctified with a German name, was very much a homecoming as they paid homage to the Blessed Mother and participated at first in a ritual meal, the sacrifice of the mass, and then joined together in a picnic lunch. A combination of

sensory experience—the smell of incense, the Latin prayers, the sermon and music in German and after the consecration of the chapel the taste of beer and German cooking—all must have evoked memories of Germany. In fact, an observer of an earlier procession, one staged in 1850s, reported, “Truly, one feels that they have been transported back to Germany when they see the beautiful customs of the Fatherland, votive and other processions, which proceed over fields and meadows.”<sup>lii</sup>

But this was more than a symbolic return to the Old Country and their mother’s house. In placing the life-sized statue of the Holy Mother in a wagon at the head of the processional and in surrounding the image with twelve virgins, these immigrant pioneers reenacted their original journey, but this time they were truly pilgrims, not just immigrants, and this time they had brought their Blessed Mother with them to the American frontier. Fr. Leo no doubt would have equated the Blessed Mother with the Holy Mother the Church; building the chapel, walking the countryside with prayer, with song and incense and installing the Virgin as the community’s protector meant reasserting Catholic values and proclaiming Catholic power. But many settlers no doubt felt guilt for having left parents and siblings behind in Europe. For instance, when the large extended Iten clan immigrated from Canton Zug in Switzerland in 1866 and joined their brother, who had made the same journey eight years earlier, on a farm outside the town of St. Cloud, the newly-arrived immigrants’ first act, as the family gathered around the dinner table, was to present a picture of their mother, recently deceased, to their brother.<sup>liii</sup> The settlers, though, did more than simply install the Blessed Mother, they also prepared the way for her. The streets and houses of Cold Spring were specially decorated to welcome the Virgin, and they made sure that she was accompanied by the most innocent and purest members of the community. The

site of her new home was beautiful, according to *Der Nordstern*, and “the place, which a month ago was a wilderness, and overgrown with wild brush, can today be called a paradise, a place of refuge for pilgrims.”<sup>liv</sup> The site was indeed a liminal space, located between two parishes, between nature and civilization, and a place which moved people back and forth between the sacred and the profane, between the Old World and the New. It was a good locale for someone whose role was to intercede and mediate and help provide peace, solace and pardon to her children in America.

Mary, thus, was a divine role model, and human mothers were expected to mimic the Blessed Virgin and perform the same functions of nurture, comfort and support. The ritual march, after all, did more than assuage guilt or express the need for sacred order by situating the Blessed Mother at the center of the community. The procession also sought order on a more mundane level by asserting the need to restore more humane family relations. But the restorative function of the ritual was necessarily ambiguous, as it simultaneously supported better treatment for women and their greater docility. Area women emulated the Holy Mother, because as the *Mater Dolorosa* she understood suffering and helped bear the burden of human sinfulness. Wives and mothers no doubt understood how this culture placed an unfair burden on women; surely the women in their cramped cabins nursing their smallpox infected family members while their husbands congregated at the local saloon grasped this reality. And the twelve young girls dressed in white, who led the procession to the pilgrimage site, would later understand more clearly their lot in adult life: extraordinarily heavy work loads, almost constant pregnancy, in some cases their husbands’ heavy drinking and occasional violence, and the expectation that they later mediate the needs of their many adult children when land, livestock and household goods were divided. The

lack of support and protection, their distance from other women, the high physical and emotional toll of child-rearing, milking and field work and the manner in which these expectations isolated women were all sources of suffering. It is no wonder that modern seers, those who most often report apparitions of the Virgin Mary, are women and children and perceive the Holy Mother through a prism of poverty and deprivation. Mary's purpose in these situations, as it has always been, is to clarify the meaning of suffering, to offer solutions and thus to prepare the way for grace.<sup>lv</sup> At the same time, the processions dismantled individual families and reorganized individuals into gender- and age-specific corporate groups, and thus at the end the community emerged as one true family. But it was still a patriarchal family; Mary's unofficial role as Mediatrix, in this case and in other settings where devotions to the Virgin grew up in the last two centuries, was conditional and limited to helping redeem a people sorely tested by her divine son.

Mary's redemptive function worked to restore a moral community by modeling ideal social relations and behavior. But if she reminded women of the need for redemptive suffering as a prelude for salvation, the popular theology of the Virgin also asserted the importance of her mediative role. The Holy Mother's ability to intervene on the behalf of her Catholic children, although limited and a matter of divine investiture, was also--according to Catholic theology--freely assumed at the Annunciation and reconfirmed by her co-suffering at the crucifixion.<sup>lvi</sup> Similarly, German immigrant women, although in need of protection and support, were not simply ciphers or proxies of their male relatives. They brought property to marriages--which in many cases was substantial--they provided labor vital to the family economy and generally in excess to the provided by women of other ethnic groups, and they actively participated in marketing the product of their work. But the expectation was that women would work for the



good of the family and the next generation, and like the Virgin they would arbitrate, mediate and, also like the Blessed Mother, who intercedes to “stay the heavy hand of her son,” work to establish those reciprocities necessary to control violence and conflict within families. These qualities, the ability to arbitrate, negotiate and construct reciprocal social relations, are not specific to gender, and in the case of Germans and other immigrant Catholics they stood at the center of entire ethical system.<sup>lvii</sup>

In much the same way the ritual worked to re-integrate community men, those who thought, according to Fr. Leo, that “they had it made and had almost forgotten how to pray.” But the pride, the independence, the impertinence of the community men--all characteristics which Fr. Winter linked to market involvement--was not simply a product of capitalist agriculture; the expression of these qualities also represented the extent to which the immigrant journey and resettlement had disrupted traditional village life and interfered with the establishment of familiar methods of social control. Moreover, the crude and sometimes unrestrained power of young men when they made the night hideous and punished deviancy was already under attack by the more bourgeois elements of society. Finally, the land supply in the township was for the most part exhausted, and although land was still available in other parts of the county, young men were already facing diminished prospects. In the succeeding years a growing number of family fights would erupt over inheritance and the maintenance of retired parents. Although the Cold Spring priest was clearly referring to the more established farmers when he noted that the grasshoppers taught these “proud devils...once more to pray,” the community's young men might have needed much the same lesson. That the procession worked this way is apparent in the way in which it re-situated young men as a corporate group and reminded them by their position within the

procession and by their placement on horses of their duty as protectors of community and as public monitors of order and good behavior. But here again the ritual speaks both to discord and the potentially corrosive effects of market involvement.

Specifically, then, the organization of the procession reintegrated the various corporate groups, divided by age and sex. It worked as well in bringing together people from rural neighborhoods divided along German regional lines, and taken together these processes accomplished a moral reordering of society.<sup>lviii</sup> More generally, though, the march to Marienberg also evoked the behaviors and ideals which formed the basis of family and community life. The proclamation of the pilgrimage, the pledge to repeat the ritual on an annual basis, the cooperative effort necessary to organize the march, the work--no doubt offered up by community women--to prepare food, and the free offering of cash donations by a people facing another bad harvest: all speak to communal values and reciprocal behavior. Indeed, the pilgrimage involved a profound act of exchange in the form of a sacred compact between the priest, his parishioners and the Virgin. Of course, relations based on exchange can nurture both cooperation and discord, and the centrality of exchange in this local culture easily gave rise to both sharing and violence. Interestingly, in a comparable devotional, also organized in the wake of the grasshopper plagues, the young men of two neighboring parishes engaged in a mock combat by placing a plank over a small creek and then fighting to throw each other in the stream. Thus, in this instance the potentially destructive aspects of the local ethos were ritualized and defused, while at the same time the integral role of exchange was reaffirmed. Incidentally, in the above case, these two parishes, located a few miles to the south and east of Cold Spring, were divided along ethnic lines between north Germans--*Plattdeutsche*--and Luxemburgers. After their arrival at their shrine

and a mass and picnic, the young males from the rival parishes began their ritual combat. The Plattdeuschers mocked the poverty of their neighbors and called them “*Knochenknarrer*”--bone gnawers. The Luxemburgers, in turn, called the Low Germans bacon eaters—“*Speckfresser*.” Fighting ended when a bell rang announcing the return procession. The issue which prompted this ritualized combat, as indicated by the epithets used by the young men, was property, and in these fights property was depicted as something invidious and destructive of community.<sup>lix</sup>

At least one member of the clergy continued over the next decade or so to advance a traditional, communitarian, interpretation of both sets of grasshopper plagues. Fr. Bruno Riess, an early Benedictine, chronicled the frontier history of the area in a series of articles for the students at the college at St. John’s in 1889 and 1890, and argued that the initial locust infestation of the 1850s was part of God's plan to restore the settlers to grace. In one piece he told a story of a German farmer who understood clearly the reason why they had suffered so from the locusts. This farmer explained to his neighbors that when they “lived in the states from which we emigrated we were good for nothing” and God set out to “cure” them by leading them into the wilderness and then by trying them with grasshoppers. Riess told another story about an old farmer living around Jacobs Prairie who was determined to plant his entire stock of seed in the spring of 1857. His sons attempted to dissuade him and argued that the locusts would eat everything they planted. The old man was not convinced and told his sons, “No boys we will do our part and plant as usual. But let me tell you this: if God gives us a harvest, we shall give one third to God and the church; the second third shall be the part for the poor, while for ourselves we will reserve the balance. Now if the good God wishes to accept of our gift, He will permit the grain to grow.” So he planted his entire allotment and was rewarded by having one half a normal

crop, while his neighbors' crops were a total loss. According to Fr. Bruno, the old man distributed his crop true to his word.<sup>lx</sup> God's gift here, the restoration of half of the crop, was actual grace, as understood in traditional Catholic theology, was attained through salutary acts—by faith and by the promise of charity—and thus a product of negotiating with the divine.

The reaffirmation of core community values was necessary if not essential to the participants, as one function of devotionals of this type is to explain and make meaningful the community's suffering. Fr. Leo, for all his heavy-handedness, assisted in that task by identifying market-generated wealth and prosperity as the source of declension. The ritual, however, did not work so much to legitimize unrestrained capitalist endeavor as it did to remind people of the need for care and caution in approaching the market. Economic relations still carried the germ of the sacred and were still to be guided by an ethic of equity, by a conviction that the invisible hand of the market was really the hand of God. The reorganization of the community into corporate groups--into, indeed, a moral community--as part of the processional structure served much the same function as it served to remind all community members of their ascribed positions within society. The young priest, of course, was primarily interested in the strained relations between God and his children, but the processions also addressed other tensions within families and the community. These, the persistence of community conflict and the reality of family violence, although in part expressive of the local ethos, were exasperated by the market and posed an additional threat to good order and family hierarchy. Participants, we might expect, found meaning in this conflict and suffering, and through their pledge and participation they experienced both grace and healing. Finally, the minor miracle of the grasshoppers' flight from the area, a departure which still left considerable damage in its wake, was seen by at least some as

evidence of divine pardon and a return to grace.

Other miracles were also possible. But these were only through penance and suffering. The St. Boniface parish history described the path up Marienberg and emphasized the pain necessary to complete the pilgrimage journey: “Up the face of the steep slope earthen steps were cut, on which the devout would kneel step by step with a Hail Mary at each.” Parishioners were convinced that such devotion might result in healing physical problems, and according to legend a “sickly” son of Nicholas Hansen, a parish trustee, was brought back to good health and later joined the priesthood. According to the story, Bonaventure Hansen was a twelve-year-old boy with a vocation to the priesthood but unfortunately before he could enter the seminary he was stricken with St. Vitus Dance, otherwise known as Sydenham’s chorea, a neurological disorder accompanied by involuntary spasms and twitching. This jeopardized his vocation, but his parents kept the faith and decided to walk the twelve-mile pilgrimage route with the invalid boy in tow in order to achieve a cure. The boy’s mother, it seemed, “had a great faith and trust in the Lord and a special love of the Eucharist. She very much wanted her son to get well so he would be able some day to offer the sacrifice of the mass.”<sup>lxi</sup> So the family set off, praying and singing in German along the way, and as they walked they noticed that young Bonaventure became “stronger as they went along.” After a few hours on the road, his jerking subsided, and by the time the family reached the chapel the boy was completely cured. This story represents, of course, a loving sacrifice, both on his and on his parents' part, and a miracle resulting in the young man's departure from both his family and his community and an exile both painful and liberating.<sup>lxii</sup>

The story of the Hansen boy and his parents is still told and still works to illustrate that faith, hard work, sacrifice and suffering are all necessary to achieve grace. These values are

enshrined in the local ethos and are plainly expressed in the events surrounding the construction of the grasshopper shrine. The chapel as a symbol, in the Catholic sense of the word, revealed and expressed an essential reality otherwise hidden and disguised by appearance or accident. Thus, the rituals inspired by the chapel opened the community up to itself and exposed it for what it was and for what it strove to be. Struggle, work and tenacity were highly esteemed, but the dynamic which structured social relations was exchange and reciprocity. In reality, though, the journey to the New World and the evolution of new market relations had undermined the dynamic. The ritual march had potential to heal, and participants no doubt emerged from the experience more cognizant of their ties to the community, more sensitive of their obligations to others and more hopeful of the community's ultimate redemption. For women, however, the message was more mixed. In ways indirect, but profound, the processional drama highlighted those problems— isolation, violence, greed, and an erosion of communal solidarity—which had a significant impact on the condition of women in this culture. The ritual made this sort of suffering meaningful and pointed both backwards toward a reassertion of traditional norms and forward toward a brighter future. While hardly condoning violence toward and abuse of women, the Marienberg processional still sanctioned unremitting sacrifice for the good of their families and the community as an important value and the inevitable lot of wives and mothers. Their role in the sacred drama of life—like that of their Blessed Mother and Katherine Hansen—was to suffer silently and sacrifice their all for the good of others.

But if the ritual promoted healing and made suffering and struggle meaningful, it also guided the settlers to the future by reminding them of those values which had served them so well in breaking their farms. The very act of walking the pilgrimage route affirmed the necessity of

persistence and meaningful suffering as a prelude to grace. Again, this is not to maintain that Stearns County farmers were oblivious to the impact of the commercial relations. Although conservative and pessimistic in their perception of economic forces, they still based their decisions on what to plant and when to sell on the behavior of commodity prices. They refrained, however, from any grandiose pretense of institutional or political reform, not only because they had the Virgin at their side, but also and more importantly because they had studied the necessary virtues. Rather than representing a superstitious surrender of power and will, the processions reminded the faithful that the appropriate solution to the deleterious impact of the market was to live a life of grace and thus control the impact of the new economic order. As expressed by the old missionary, Fr. Pierz, in an early letter inviting German-Catholic settlement to the area this involved practicing certain virtues:

This healthy and splendid region offers considerable advantages to the energetic, diligent, pious and persevering immigrant.<sup>lxiii</sup>

The crosses erected outside the pioneer churches after parish missions carried a similar reminder, “Blessed is he who perseveres to the end.”<sup>lxiv</sup> Of course, some capital, prior experience with American agriculture, a large supply of children and, perhaps, luck or knowledge in choosing land also helped. But piety, persistence and energy did not hurt.

#### Notes

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i. St. Boniface Parish, Cold Spring, Centennial Committee, *Amid Hills of Granite--A Spring of*

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*Faith, A History of St. Boniface Parish, Cold Spring, Minnesota, 1878-1978* (n.p., 1978); and Robert J. Voight, *The Story of Mary and the Grasshoppers* (n.p., 1991); *Minneapolis Tribune*, 18 May 1958.

ii. Centennial Committee, *Amid Hills of Granite*, 25.

3. Voight, 20-21.

iv. The literature addressing the larger issue of the transition to rural capitalism include, James T. Lemon, "Early Americans and Their Social Environment." *Journal of Historical Geography*, 6 (1980): 115-131; James A. Henretta, "Families and Farms: *Mentalité* in Pre-Industrial America," *William and Mary Quarterly* 35 (1978): 3-32, and "The Transition to Capitalism in America," eds. James Henretta, Michael Kammen and Stanley Katz, *Transformation of Early American History: Society, Authority and Ideology* (New York, 1991); Christopher Clark, *The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780-1860* (Ithaca, 1990); Michael Merrill, "Cash is Good to Eat: Self-Sufficiency and Exchange in the Rural Economy of the United States." *Radical History Review* 3 (1977): 42-71; Winifred Barr Rothenberg, *From Market-Places to a Moral Economy: The Transformation of Rural Massachusetts, 1750-1850* (Chicago, 1992); Daniel Vickers, "Competency and Competition: Economic Culture in Early America," *William and Mary Quarterly* 47 (1990): 3-29; and Allan Kulikoff, *The Agrarian Origins of American Capitalism* (Charlottesville, Va., 1992). Key works examining the experiences of immigrants to rural America include: Robert C. Ostergren, *A Community Transplanted: The Trans-Atlantic Experience of a Swedish Immigrant Settlement in the Upper Middle West, 1835-1915* (Madison, 1988); Jon Gjerde, *From Peasants to Farmers: The Migration from Balestrand, Norway, to the*



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*Upper Middle West* (New York, 1985); Jane Marie Pederson *Between Memory and Reality: Family and Community in Rural Wisconsin, 1870-1970* (Madison, 1992); and Royden K. Loewen *Family, Church and Market: A Mennonite Community in the Old and the New Worlds, 1850-1930* (Urbana, Ill., 1993). Jon Gjerde has written an especially useful synthesis: *The Minds of the West: Ethnocultural Evolution in the Rural Middle West, 1830-1917* (Chapel Hill, 1997). Other works examining ethnic differences in farming practices include: D. Aidan McQuillan, *Prevailing Over Time: Ethnic Adjustment on the Kansas Prairies, 1875-1925* (Lincoln, Nebr., 1990); Russell L. Gerlach, *Immigrants in the Ozarks: A Study in Ethnic Geography* (Columbia, Mo., 1976); and Terry Jordan, *German Seed in Texas Soil: Immigrant Farmers in Nineteenth-Century Texas* (Austin, Tex., 1966). For a more contemporary and more sociological perspective, see, Sonya Salamon, "Ethnic Communities and the Structure of Agriculture," *Rural Sociology* 50 (1985): 323-40; Jan L. Flora and John M. Stitz, "Ethnicity, Persistence and Capitalization of Agriculture in the Great Plains during the Settlement Period: Wheat Production and Risk Avoidance," *Rural Sociology* 50 (1985): 341-60; and Mark Friedberger, "The Farm Family and the Inheritance Process: Evidence from the Corn Belt, 1870-1950." *Agricultural History* 57 (1983): 1-13.

v. A large body of historical literature examines the issue of assimilation and the extent and pace in which immigrants surrendered their culture. An ancillary topic is that of demoralization and the social pathology that accompanied assimilation. For early discussions by sociologists who emphasized rapid assimilation, see William Isaac Thomas with Robert E. Park and Herbert A. Miller, *Old World Traits Transplanted* (1921; reprint, Montclair, NJ, 1971); William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1918-1920);

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and Edmund De S. Brunner, *Immigrant Farmers and their Children* (Garden City, NY, 1929).

Oscar Handlin's, *The Uprooted* (New York, 1951), of course, is an extremely important historical work that supports the assimilation model and equates assimilation with alienation and profound psychic pain. Rudolph J. Vecoli in "Contadini in Chicago," A Critique of the Uprooted," *Journal of American History* 51 (December 1964): 404-17, does serious damage to the Handlin position.

John Bodnar in ambitious synthesis, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1985), stresses cultural continuity and the basic compatibility of the immigrant family and the economic imperatives of an industrializing America. Recent reassessments include Ewa Morawska, "In Defense of the Assimilation Model," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 13 (1994):76-87; and Russell A. Kazal, "Revisiting Assimilation: The Rise, Fall, and Reappraisal of a Concept in American Ethnic History," *American Historical Review* 100 (1995):437-471.

vi. Kathleen Neils Conzen, "Making Their Own America: Assimilation Theory and the German Peasant Pioneer," German Historical Institute, Washington, D.C. Annual Lecture Series, No. 3., (New York, 1990); p.6.

7. See, for example, Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846* (New York, 1991). Sellers outlined a dual religious response to capitalist expansion in early nineteenth-century America: arminianism and antinomianism. Arminianism refers to a religious view based on a kinder and gentler God, a view tending toward secularism in understanding nature and the cosmos, and a view entirely compatible "with the market ethos of self-disciplined

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effort." Those who adhered to this theology rushed to engage the market and to impose the virtues of individualism, self-restraint, and work discipline on a traditional culture still wedded to communitarian values. Antinomianism represented exactly the opposite; it preferred spirituality to reason, tradition to change, mutual dependence to entrepreneurship, and a stern Jehovah to a loving God. Thus, American Protestantism became locked in a battle--a "*Kulturkampf*," according to Sellers--pitting "piety against moralism, the magical spirituality of a parochial and fatalist countryside against the self-reliant effort of a cosmopolitan and activist market." Sellers' religious dichotomy has been criticized on a number of grounds: his categories are too crude, they do not conform to generally-accepted theological distinctions, and his argument distorts the relationship between political identity and denominational affiliation. Moreover, it has been charged, he describes a too radically bipolar response on the part of nineteenth-century Americans to market relations: the virtuous yeomanry striving to guard egalitarian and communitarian ideals versus greedy, self-righteous entrepreneurs. See, Daniel Walker Howe, "The Market Revolution and the Shaping of Identity in Whig-Jacksonian America," 259-281; and Richard Carwardine, "'Antinomians' and 'Arminians': Methodists and the Market Revolution," 282-307; both in Melvyn Stokes and Stephen Conway, eds., *The Market Revolution in America: Social, Political, and Religious Expressions, 1800-1880* (Charlottesville, VA, 1996).

8. Much of this work is heavily indebted to Robert Orsi, *The Madonna of 155th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950* (New Haven, 1985); and Thomas A. Tweed, *Our Lady of Exile: Diasporic Religion at a Cuban Catholic Shrine in Miami* (New York, 1997). Beate Heidrich, "Die Heimat nicht vergessen," in Lenz Kriss-Rettenbeck and Gerda Mohler, eds.,

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*Wallfahrt kennt keine Grenzen* (Munich, 1994), 513-26, discusses the multiple perspectives and meanings attached to a post-World War II German pilgrimage site.

ix. See, especially, Orsi, *The Madonna of 115<sup>th</sup> Street*. The best example of a work emphasizing the functionality of the immigrant family is John Bodnar's *The Transplanted*.

10. This discussion is taken from sources too numerous to mention. They include: local newspapers, plat maps, federal and state manuscript census reports, land deed records, transcribed oral histories (originally conducted by the W.P.A. in the 1930s), as well as family histories compiled by local genealogists. Local histories, including parish histories, were very useful. Besides Cold Spring, Centennial Committee, *Amid Hills of Granite--A Spring of Faith*, see Brice J. Howard, *Sts. Peter and Paul's, Richmond--One Hundred Years* (n.p., 1956), and *Jacobs Prairie-100 Years* (n.p., 1954).

xi. For a biography of Pierz see William P. Furlan, *In Charity Unfeigned* (St. Cloud, Minnesota, MN, 1952). See, in addition, Colman J. Barry, O.S.B., *Worship and Work, Saint John's Abbey and University, 1856-1956* (Collegeville, MN, 1956), 20-23.

xii. For descriptions of parish fights, especially over education and the intent of the clergy to develop parochial schools, see Vincent A. Yzermans, *The Spirit in Central Minnesota: A Centennial Narrative of the Church of St. Cloud*, 2 vols. (St. Cloud, MN, 1989).

xiii. The population estimate for Cold Spring, which was unincorporated during the settlement phase and thus not counted as a separate government entity, was based on the United States, manuscript census schedules for Wakefield Township, 1870 and 1880.

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xiv. Conzen, "Creating Their own America," 25-26. See, in addition, her earlier essay, "German-Americans and Ethnic Political Culture: Stearns County, Minnesota, 1855-1915," working Paper No. 16/1989, John F. Kennedy-Institut für Nordamerikastudien, Abteilung für Geschichte, Berlin, 1988.

15. An article from the *St. Cloud Times*, 2 July 1890, suggests that at least some community members resisted the traditional role of bachelor associations. After a wedding, young men in nearby township gathered outside the home of the bride's parents where the newlyweds were to spend the night and began a serenade in anticipation to being treated to drinks. When some of the youths trampled part of the family garden, the outraged father demanded they leave his property. In retaliation, the young men of the neighborhood--some sixty to eighty boys and young men, as estimated by a county paper--returned on a number of different nights to parade up and down on the road in front of the farm house, "beating tin pans, ringing old cow bells, etc." The old man finally swore out a complaint against a number of the youths and had them arrested. A similar charivari in 1879 involving a group of German youths from a nearby county and the bride's stepfather degenerated into violence; the old man, described as "irascible" by a *St. Cloud* paper, had threatened the noise makers and thus prompted a melee in which he was accidentally killed. *St. Cloud Journal-Press*, 6 March 1879.

xvi. Stephen Gross, "The Battle Over the Cold Spring Dam: Farm-Village Conflict and Contested Identity among Rural German Americans," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 21 (2001): 83-117.

xvii. *Times*, 5 February 1913.

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xviii. Minnesota Historical Society (henceforth MHS), Stearns County District Court, Civil Case File 1595 1/2, *Frank Kirchner v. Mary Kirchner*; and District Court, Criminal Case File 106, *State of Minnesota v. Frank Kirchner*

xix. Holding Township on the northern edge of the county contained a mixed German, Polish and Yankee population. In 1895 three German mothers marched into the schoolhouse while class was in session, grabbed the Polish teacher and proceeded to molasses-and-feather him. Earlier that year he had been arrested for excessively punishing one of his German students. *Times*, 18 September 1895, and 25 September 1895.

20. MHS, Minnesota Department of Health, Miscellaneous Files and Reports, Dr. J.A. DuBois Report on Small Pox in Spring Hill and adjacent Townships of Stearns County, 1881.

21. *Times*, 23 November 1881, reprinted from the *Sauk Centre Herald*, 18 November 1881.

22. WPA, Interview of Peter Fuchs by Walter B. Haupt, 18 March 1937.

23. See John E. Knodel, *The Decline of Fertility in Germany, 1871-1939* (Princeton, N.J., 1974). For a detailed discussion of fertility in Minnesota's rural German America see my dissertation, "Family, Property, Community: Class and Identity among German Americans in Rural Stearns County, Minnesota, 1860-1920" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1995), 144-53.

xxiv. See the early work by a rural sociologist, Douglas G. Marshall, "The Decline in Farm Fertility and its Relationship to Nationality and Religious Background," *Rural Sociology* 15 (1950), 42-49, examining ethnic differences in fertility in rural Minnesota. Stearns County

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figures on fertility were also consistently higher than the Norwegian-American Communities studied by Jon Gjerde, *From Peasants to Farmers: The Migration From Balestrand Norway to the Upper Midwest* (New York, 1985), 209-13. Only in one township and only for one date was the fertility of Gjerde's Norwegian-Americans higher than that of the Germans in Stearns County.

xxv. St. Cloud *Democrat*, 3 July 1862. Other representative stories include an item from the *Times*, 21 September 1892, which describes the death of woman after being gored while milking; a story from the *Journal-Press*, 22 July 1880, detailing how "Mrs. Theodore Jacobs, of Jacobs Prairie, in jumping from a load of hay on Thursday last broke one of her legs;" and pieces from the *Journal-Press*, 13 August 1891; *Times*, 12 August 1908; and *Richmond Standard*, 18 August 1911; all of which narrate accounts of young women being hurt while engaged in field work. An item from *der Nordstern* (St. Cloud), 13 August 1891, describes a farm wife breaking her arm in an accident with a self-binder. See the *Times*, 23 November 1904 and 7 December 1904, for a story involving a married couple fighting with neighbors.

xxvi. Kathleen Neils Conzen, "Peasant Pioneers: Generational Succession Among German Farmers in Frontier Minnesota," in *The Countryside in the Age of Capitalist Transformation: Essays in the Social History of Rural America*, eds. Steven Hahn and Jonathan Prude, (Chapel Hill, 1985); 259-292, and Stephen Gross, "Handing Down the Farm: Values, Strategies and Outcomes in Inheritance Patterns among Rural German Americans," *Journal of Family History*, 21 (1996), 192-217. See, in addition, Sonya Salamon, "Ethnic Differences in Farm Family Land Transfers." *Rural Sociology* 45 (1980): 290-308.

xxvii. This discussion is heavily indebted to Jane Schneider, "Spirits and the Spirit of Capitalism,"

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in Ellen Badone, ed., *Religious Orthodoxy and Popular Faith in European Society*, (Princeton, 1990), 24-53. See, in addition, Bob Scribner, "Cosmic Order and Daily Life: Sacred and Secular in Pre-Industrial German Society," in Kaspar von Greyerz, ed., *Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1800* (Boston, 1984), 17-32.

xxviii. For changes in Catholic religious life in Germany, see Jonathan Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth Century Germany* (Princeton, 1984); and David Blackbourn, *Marpingen: Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (New York, 1993). For a history of the early church in Stearns County, see, Yzermans, *The Spirit in Central Minnesota*, and Barry, *Worship and Work*.

xxix. Over 95 percent of the farmers in Wakefield and the neighboring Munson Township owned their own land in 1880. In the course of the next decade the figure declined to 80 percent but then grew to back to 85 percent by 1920. At the same time the wealthiest 10 percent of property holders controlled only about one quarter of the two communities' property. and after a decade of somewhat interrupted growth that figure actually fell to 24 percent. Tax Assessment Records for 1870, 1880 1900, 1910 and 1920. Munson and Wakefield Townships, Stearns County Assessor, MHS. In comparison, according to data compiled from the 1860 agricultural census, the richest *five* percent of property holders in the rural Midwest in 1860 owned from 26 to 32 percent of the wealth; Jeremy Atack and Fred Bateman, *To Their Own Soil: Agriculture in the Antebellum North* (Ames, Iowa, 1987), 88.

xxx. Scholars who have noted the propensity for wheat growing among immigrants include: Gjerde *From Peasants to Farmers*, 178-82; Ostergren, *A Community Transplanted*, 198-200; and



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Bogue, *From Prairie to Corn Belt*, 123-24; and McQuillen, *Prevailing Over Time*, 163-70.

31. See the published accounts written by one pioneer Benedictine for the St. John's student newspaper. Bruno Riess, *The Record* vol. II, no. 2 through vol. III, no. 6 (February through August, 1889). See Barry, *Worship and Work*, 39-43; and the many oral history accounts recorded by interviewers for the W.P.A., Stearns County Museum Project, Stearns County Heritage Center.

32. W.P.A., Interview of Henry Evens by Walter B. Haupt, 13 May 1937, translation by Walter B. Haupt; Mitchell, 1010-11, 1029. John C. Hudson in *Plains Country Towns* (Minneapolis, 1985), 30-31, observes the same behavior in late nineteenth-century North Dakota.

33. *Democrat*, 6 June 1860, 1 February 1866.

34. Tax records from the period for Wakefield and Munson Townships list a couple of items which might be considered luxuries: pianos and watches. Nobody in either township owned a piano or organ in 1870, and only fourteen people had a watch or a clock. The number of watches and clocks increased ten-fold in the next decade (154 in 1880), one family had purchased a piano by 1880, and seven others now owned organs. However, farmers, who spent their money on more practical items, were slow to purchase even these modest symbols of bourgeois status. A merchant family owned the community piano, and only one farm family owned an organ. Farmers, instead, plowed their profits back into the land. The average farmer who remained in the community in these years saw the tax value of all property, both real and personal, increase by over \$277 in these years. Most of this increase, over \$238 worth, was in the value of real estate, and much of this was

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the result of bringing new acreage into cultivation. Stearns County Assessor, Tax Assessment Rolls for Munson and Wakefield Townships, 1870 and 1880.

35. Crop statistics were regularly reported in the local newspapers; *Times*, 10 March 1875, 2 July 1875, 19 July 1876, 25 July 1877; and *Journal Press*, 20 July 1876. William Bell Mitchell, *History of Stearns County, Minnesota* (Chicago, 1915), 452-474.

36. WPA, Interview of Henry Evens.

37. For the various responses of county residents see: *Times*, 13 June 1877, and 25 February 1880; *Journal-Press*, 7 June 1877, 14 June 1877, 5 July 1877, and 19 July 1877. The best description of the grasshopper plagues in Minnesota is Annette Atkins, *Harvest of Grief: Grasshopper Plagues and Public Assistance in Minnesota, 1873-78* (St. Paul, 1984). See, especially, 30-43.

xxxviii. MHS, Stearns County District Court, Civil Case Files. The number of farmers included in the agricultural census for Wakefield and the adjacent Munson Townships fell from about 240 in 1870 to 215 in 1880. The United States, manuscript agricultural schedules for Munson and Wakefield Townships, 1870 and 1880.

xxxix. For a discussion of the German cooperative movement, see, Robert G. Moeller, *German Peasants and Agrarian Politics, 1914-1924: The Rhineland and Westphalia* (Chapel Hill, 1986).

xl. See, for example: *Journal*, 5 June 1873; *Times*, 10 June 1873; *Times*, 28 April 1875; *Times*, 5 May 1875; *Times*, 9 June 1875; *Times*, 9 September 1875.

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xli. See, especially, Sperber, *Popular Catholicism*, and Blackbourn, *Marpingen*. Important works on German-Catholic immigrants include: Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815-1865* (Baltimore, 1975), and *Catholic Revivalism: The American Experience, 1830-1900* (Notre Dame, 1978); Philip Gleason, *The Conservative Reformers: German American Catholics and the Social Order* (Notre Dame, 1968). This discussion insists that the history of popular religion in this setting was never one of clerical control and oppression and popular resistance. The process was less dialectical with constant negotiating between the hierarchy and the laity. For examples of this theme, see Caroline B. Brettell, "The Priest and His People: The Contractual Basis for Religious Practice in Rural Portugal," in Badone, ed., *Religious Orthodoxy and Popular Faith*, 55-75; Bob Scribner, "Cosmic Order and Daily Life," and Herman Hörger, "Organizational Forms of Popular Piety in Rural Old Bavaria (Sixteenth to Nineteenth Century)," both in von Greyerz, ed., *Religion and Society*, 17-32 and 212-222.

xlii. See Tweed, *Our Lady of the Exile*, for an expansive treatment of religion and the construction of identity. That early processions in Stearns County had more to do with inventing a diasporic identity, mainly by referencing the dominant culture, is apparent in a report published in the Cincinnati *Wahrheits-Freund*, 2 July 1857. The piece described a procession in St. Cloud and noted that many Yankees, who had never witnessed such an event were in attendance. "Some of the Yankees witnessed the event and stared, as they had never seen this, and its meaning was strange to them. It must be said in praise of them that in such circumstances they were well-behaved and not once tried to disturb the atmosphere." ("Manche der Yankees sahen dies mit an und gafften; denn so was hatten sie nie gesehen und die Bedeutung desselben war ihnen fremd.

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Zu ihrem Lobe muss man sagen, dass sie sich bei solchen Gelegenheiten artig betrogen und nicht einmal durch eine Miene zu stören versuchen.") This suggests, in addition, that these processions had the potential to function politically and present an alternative picture of public power, one in which baroque piety was counterpoised with an increasingly intrusive and moralistic state. For a discussion of the political power emanating from religious processions within a roughly contemporary European setting, see, Iso Baumer, "Kulturkampf und Katholizismus im Berner Jura, aufgezeigt am Beispiel des Wallfahrtswesens," *Kultureller Wandel in 19. Jahrhundert*, Proceedings of the 18<sup>th</sup> Deutsches Volkskunde-Kongresses held in Trier, 13 September through 18 September, 1971 (Göttingen, 1973), 88-101.

xliii. I borrow this term from Tweed, 94.

xliv. Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1974) and with Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (New York, 1978). The integrative functions of these rituals is reflected in an article in the *Wahrheits-Freund*, 23 September 1858. The reporter described the congregation at St. Joseph meeting at 6:00 a.m. and beginning an hour later to walk the eight miles to Jacobs Prairie. Two miles from their destination they were met by the parishioners from Jacobs Prairie who accompanied the procession back to the church. Mass was held outside at the base of a huge mission cross, decorated with flowers and holy pictures. The priest in his sermon expressed his joy at the unity and love which prevailed in the parishes and his wish that it would always remain so.

xlvi. Howard, *Jacobs Prairie-100 Years*, 37.

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46. Translated documents written by Winter and describing the construction of the chapel are included in *Amid Hills of Granite--A Spring of Faith*, 2-5. However, a document authored by Winter and held at St. Johns Abbey Archives, St. Boniface Parish, Cold Spring File, which described his battle with the Jacobs Prairie farmers is omitted. According to the document, Fr. Leo was ordered in October by his Abbot to move to Richmond and from there take care of both St. Nicholas and St. James. He stayed only one week and then moved to Cold Spring, because he was saying almost daily masses in the new chapel. This alarmed the Jacobs Prairie farmers. Winter claimed he attempted to negotiate with the farmers but they would not cooperate. He "made short work of the situation, closed the church and said so-long." ("Ich machte kurzen Prozess, schloss die Kirche und sagte ihnen Adieu.") He admitted planning to move to Cold Spring and organize a parish there, but he denied any intent to harm St. James Parish. ("Die Ursache des ganzen Streites war weil diese Bauern wahnnten, dass ich für Cold Spring eingenommen, was ich auch in der Tat war, und dass ich, sorgend, dass eine Gemeinde in Cold Spring sich organiziren, ihre Gemeinde bei Seite setzen und ruiniren wolle, was aber nicht meine Absicht war."). See, in addition, *der Nordstern*, 2 August 1877 and 9 August 1877.

xlvii. St. John's Abbey, St. Boniface Parish, Cold Spring file, document dated, 20 May 1891.

“Am 20. Mai ‘77 wurde Rev. P. Leo Winter O.S.B. Pastor der St. Jakobus-Gemeinde. Bald fühlte er sich gar heimisch in Cold Spring, so dass er innerhalb dessen Mauern nun seine permanente Residenz aufschlug. Auch zeigte er sich in kurzer Zeit sehr eingenommen und aktiv für Cold Spring's Kirchensache, infolgedessen begann letztere schnell Gestalt und Form anzunehmen.”

48. Winter, quoted in *Amid Hills of Granite*, 2.

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49. Sandra L. Zimdars-Swartz, *Encountering Mary: From La Salette to Medjugorje* (Princeton, 1991), 19, 30.
50. *Der Nordstern*, 23 August 1877.
51. Orsi, *The Madonna of 155th Street*.
52. *Wahrheits-Freund*, 2 July 1857. See Heidrich, “Die Heimat nicht vergessen,” for a discussion of how German refugees from Central and Eastern Europe have used pilgrimages for comparable functions.
53. Urspeter Schelbert, “Grabbeters Iten wandern 1866 nach Amerika aus,” *Zuger Neujahrsblatt* 1994 (1994).
54. *Der Nordstern*, 23 August 1877.
55. Zimdars-Swartz, *Encountering Mary*, 8. See also Blackbourn, *Marpingen*, 3-41. William Christian, Jr. argues that the explosion of parish missions following in the wake of twentieth-century apparitions in the Mediterranean world targeted men as objects of conversion, and thus women, who were heavily over-represented as participants at apparition sites, used these religious moments as opportunities to pray for the souls of their men-folk. But bringing these men, who were not only irreligious but often members of the Communist Party, back to the church, it would seem, might also have worked to assert Christian love as the basis for human relations and to guarantee, then, better treatment for women. See Christian, “Religious Apparitions and the Cold War in Southern Europe” in Eric R. Wolf, ed., *Religion, Power and*

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*Protest in Local Communities: The Northern Shore of the Mediterranean* (New York, 1984), 239-66.

56. Jaroslav Pelikan, *Mary through the Ages: Her Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven, 1996), 86-87, 129. See also Giovanni Miegge, *The Virgin Mary: The Roman Catholic Marian Doctrine*, trans. Waldo Smith (Philadelphia, 1955), 155-77.

57. Robert Orsi, *Thank You St. Jude: Women's Devotion to the Patron Saint of Lost Causes* (New Haven, 1996), 136.

lviii. Walter Hartinger in "Neukirchen bei Heilig Blut: Von der geflüchteten Madonna zur Flüchtlingsmadonna," in Kriss-Rettenbeck and Mohler, eds., *Wallfahr kennt keine Grenzen*, 407-17, discusses the development of a Bavarian shrine along the Czech border which served a large transnational mission field and bridged national and class differences.

59. Described in Voight, "The Story of Mary and the Grasshoppers," 26. See, in addition, for a description of European precedents of ritualized combat accompanying local processions, Michael R. Marrus, "Pilger auf dem Weg: Wallfahrten im Frankreich des 19. Jahrhunderts," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 3 (1977), 335.

ix. Riess, *The Record*, July and August 1889.

61. This story appears in much the same form in a number of different sources. See the *Cold Spring Record*, 15 March 1994, for a detailed version of the story as it appears here. Another account, published in the St. James parish history, maintains that young Bonaventure was

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bedridden and that it was his mother and brother Henry who attended mass at the chapel, went to confession and received Holy Communion. After they walked home, praying the rosary all the way, they found the young Bonaventure “up and able to care for himself.” Howard, *Jacobs Prairie-100 Years*, 50-51. See also Voight, “The Story of Mary and the Grasshoppers,” 27, and *Amid Hills of Granite*, 26.

62. Orsi, *The Madonna of 115<sup>th</sup> Street*, 176, argues that stories of miraculous cures in Italian Harlem reveal a “longing to escape the confines of the [family] and ... anger at the futility of this longing.”

63. *Wahrheits-Freund*, 2 November 1864: "Dem rüstigen, fleissigen, frommen und ausdauernden Einwanderer bietet diese gesunde und prachttvolle Gegend die erheblichsten Vorteile..."

64. "Wer ausharrt bis ans End, der wird selig." Dolan, *Catholic Revivalism*, 79-80, describes how crosses were normally planted at the end of revival missions to serve as a constant reminder to the faithful. A mission cross with this inscription has been preserved at the parish church in St. Augusta in rural Stearns County.



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