

Our History...

- 1957 In July, Archbishop Albert G. Meyer purchased ten acres just south of Good Hope Road, near 76th Street, from Joseph Spartz. The parcel was a consolidation area of both the City of Milwaukee and the Village of Brown Deer. It took the court a year to decide that it belonged to Milwaukee. This controversy delayed construction.
- 1958 In June, with 400 families, the parish of St. Bernadette was established by Archbishop Meyer. Father John A. Arens was appointed the first pastor. A house at 6881 North 91st Street became his rectory. The first Mass of St. Bernadette Parish was celebrated on July 13 in a 110' x 40' canvas tent erected by parishioners on the parish grounds. This Mass is commemorated every year as a tent Mass at our Parish Festival. From July through October, the Sunday Masses at 8:00 and 10:00AM were celebrated in this tent. During the cool months they were celebrated at St. Catherine Church (Granville). The first daily 7:00AM Mass was held on September 1 in a small building adjacent to the rectory, which has been converted into a small chapel.
- 1959 October 11 was the groundbreaking for the temporary church/gymnasium. This phase consisted of a 750-seat church/gym facility, the cafeteria, and the future convent.
- 1960 On September 4, Archbishop William E. Cousins presided at the Solemn Mass and dedication of St. Bernadette Church.
- 1963 The outdoor grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes was dedicated by Father Arens during the 5:30PM Mass for the Feast of the Assumption.
- 1964 St. Bernadette's new school, with eight classrooms, was dedicated by Archbishop Cousins on April 19.
- 1965 Delayed a year due to teacher shortage, St. Bernadette School opened tuition-free with 286 students. 617 children were on the waiting list. Father Arens had a staff of six lay teachers and two Dominican Sisters of Kenosha. 961 families were in the parish at this time.
- 1966 Two more classrooms and a meeting room were added to the school.
- 1967 Six additional classrooms and a library were built.
- 1981 First installation of Parish Council officers and trustees was held on August 24.
- 1983 On May 22, the parish celebrated its Silver Jubilee.
- 1991 In February, 686 parishioners responded to a survey with their ideas for the renovation of the parish church.
- 1993 By June, \$681,850 had been collected for the renovation. Debt was paid in full early.
- 1994 On January 30 at the 11:00AM Mass, Bishop Richard Sklba dedicated the newly-renovated worship space.
- 1997 A Bereavement Ministry was organized to give service to parish families at visitations and funerals held at church.
- 2008 The parish celebrated its 50th anniversary with activities such as a Brewers baseball game, sock hop, celebration dinner, alumni brunch, and a Mass and picnic.
- 2009 Starting with the 2009-2010 school year, the schools at St. Bernadette, St. Catherine of Alexandria, and Our Lady of Good Hope merged to form one school, Northwest Catholic, with classes at two campuses (Our Lady of Good Hope and St. Bernadette).