

## GETTING TO KNOW OUR PARISH FAMILY

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### **Bernard & Mary Lou Bauer**

Bernard Mathias Bauer was born at home to Jacob and Clara Bauer in 1930. His father was a carpenter. Jacob and his crew of 3 or 4 men built many houses, over 200 barns in the area, and also doing the masonry work. Bernard's mother took care of the housework and farm work assisted by his sister, Viola and four brothers: Arnold, Sylvester, Herbert and John. Three children died as infants before he was born. Bernard attended St. Mathias Catholic School during his 7th and 8th grades. He remembers his teachers and classmates, and most of the other students.

Bernard, the youngest, bought the home place when he grew up. He still lives and farms there with his sons, Michael and John. He has many happy memories of his family and also of local people and events.

Mary Lou was born to Louis and Mary Geronime in Rosemount on their dairy farm. Her parents came from St. Paul's east side and were part of the Swiss settlement there. Her three older brothers are Robert, Donald and Eugene.

Bernard and Mary Lou married 2 days after Christmas in 1969 in St. Joseph's Church in Rosemount. They set up a trailer on the farm. The trailer became home to 3-week old Michael in 1971. Two weeks later, Joey was born to them. In 1972, 4-month old Maria arrived from Korea on Christmas Eve.

While the trailer was large enough for this small family, a larger home was needed in 1973 for Mary Anne -7, Paul - 6, and Chris -4 who came through Father Ben Zweber a Maryknoll priest from Korea. He taught them to say "good morning" and "thank you very much" - all the English they knew. They were always happy to see Father Ben when he visited them each year.

In 1974, little John came from St. Paul and became the baby who always woke up with a smile in the morning. In 1975, Peter arrived from Vietnam at age 5, happy and untouched by the war. Later that year, 2 teenage boys, Vincent and David, came from the same orphanage. Peter felt important showing them around the farm. Clara, Bernadette, and Anna came in 1976, three friendly little girls from Bogota, Columbia. Summer softball on the farm would never be the same.

The parents and children had space to sit together around the "Great Table" that took up half the dining room area. Mary Lou was asked to write an article for OURS magazine that she entitled "30 Feet Under the Table".

A year later the family found room for more feet under that table. She came from of Mother Teresa's orphanages in India, and her nickname over there meant "naughty little bird". Here her name was changed to Mary Margaret.

In those days all 14 children and the parents could ride together in the yellow station wagon. They were encouraged with the words, "Get In! There's plenty of room".

All the children were enrolled in Catholic school, the youngest 12 went through 6th grade at St. John's in Vermillion. Vincent and David went to the 6th grade at St. Mathias and then to St. Thomas. All the Bauer children graduated from Hastings High School.

Bernard and Mary Lou pray that this family stays together as best friends. Bernard Bauer farm continues to be the gathering place for these grown up children and the 33 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren, ages 4 months to 22 years.

As parishioners at St. Mathias, Bernard is a lector and Mary Lou brings Communion to people who request this service. They attend daily Mass together.