

Erin Go Bragh At Averill Park For Fr. Nunan St. Patrick's Day

By MARY BILT

Predominantly a resort area, the Sand Lake section has been quiet all winter, but what a St. Patrick's Day the parishioners of St. Henry's Catholic Church at Averill Park have planned!

The party is in honor of Rev. Jeremiah Nunan, assistant pastor. Last September, Ireland sent a welcome gift to St. Henry's in the form of Father Nunan as assistant to Rev. Thomas H. Kay, pastor who had had no assistant since the death of Rev. George B. Rennie in March, 1962.

Since Father Nunan cannot be in Ireland for St. Patrick's Day the parishioners of St. Henry's are bringing Ireland to Averill Park. A fun-filled St. Patrick's night party has been planned for Tuesday at Crooked Lake Hotel. The committee has planned a program not only for the "sparin' but the sparin' of the green, and they're shamrock sure it will please everyone.

How could it be otherwise in a town where the supervisor's name is Fitzgerald, the town clerk's is Warren, the postmistress is Helen Kase and the only liquor store is owned by an O'Donnell?

With German Settlers

Irish night at St. Henry's. How times have changed! The more-than-century-old parish that began in the hills of East Pusteenkill with German settlers, farmers and charcoal burners of Taborn and Pusteenkill will go completely Irish this March 17.

The parish patron, St. Henry, was Holy Roman Emperor around the year 1002 and his complex consist St. Camoganda and the long line of German parishioners whose hedges lie quietly in the old cemeteries of East Pusteenkill and in St. Henry's Cemetery at Averill Park should rejoice in the happiness of bringing every race together.

When Father Nunan arrived fresh from his ordination in Ireland to assist at the old German parish of St. Henry's, the way had been paved for him years before. The priest who greeted him had learned to live with and love the Irish. The initial experience was aboard an Irish freighter, the Irish Rose.

She wasn't wild, was wasn't pretty. She was stout and slow. The Irish Rose went out from Erie Basin in Brooklyn carrying an assorted cargo of pipes and equipment for the oil fields of South America, destined to pick up Colombian coffee at the port of Bonaventura on the Pacific coast.

Captain After Boy

In the crew of 28 were 26 Catholics. The first of the bay was closed (of course, the back door was left open), and in the public room Mass was offered daily with the captain as the altar boy. The crew, up from the engine room and in from topside, knelt on the deck to receive Communion. It was a floating monastery.

When the trip ended, there were 26 invitations to visit Ireland preferred with such sincerity and cordiality that they could not be easily overlooked. And so . . . Ireland was visited.

Coming into the cove, leaning over the rail, listening to the bells of St. Colman's Cathedral chime out "Come Back To Erie, Marymount, Spavounneen," an Irishman with tears of joy streaming down his cheeks turned to the present pastor of St. Henry's and asked, "How long since you have been back, Father? And the priest had to answer, "Not since my great-great-grandmother on my mother's side."

Satisfied With Faith

The weeks spent living among the Irish and meeting the old friends only confirmed how happy and zealous and satisfied with the faith are the Irish people. During that journey, the priest passed east to Kiamark, little realizing that one day a boy from that section would be starting his priestly work at St. Henry's in Averill Park.

And so now Ireland will be revisited, in a way, on March 17 in Crooked Lake Hotel. The show will be all Irish, and will feature Justine Coides, the Kerry Dancers, Leathan Brothers, Kathleen Barnard, Betty Butt, Sean Robbins, Maureen Johnson and, as



ERIN GO BRAGH -- Rev. Jeremiah Nunan, left, and his boss, Rev. Thomas Kay, pastor of St. Henry's Church, Averill Park, look over a handful of shamrocks just shipped in from the Emerald Isle in time for the parish's St. Patrick's Day celebration. The occasion will honor Father Nunan, assigned in Ireland last year for service in the Diocese of Albany.

master of ceremonies, Mike Kelly.

Dancing will be to the music of the Embers.

At an added attraction, a fashion show will parade forth Midway's styles for spring, the Village Shop in Averill Park; furnishing the clothes, and the latest in hair styles by Sabina's Hair Stylist.