

# St. Francis Historical Society

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## MEMORIES OF ST. FRANCIS

### MR. FRANK STRANAK, ST. FRANCIS RESIDENT

In 1918, when Frank was about three years old, he moved to a house on the north side of Howard Avenue. His home was about two blocks east of the Lake Protestant Cemetery. His recollection is that the house was on Koenig's farm which was earlier a part of the Thompson estate. This land is now owned by the electric company. At that time there were only three or four other homes between there and Kinnickinnic Avenue. Kinnickinnic Avenue was often referred to at that time as the Old Chicago Road.

Frank remembers the small community church and the three schoolroom addition to it on the site of the present Thompson School. One of his first teachers was Miss Conley. Another was the popular Miss Olive Brader. She became Mrs. Roberts after her first husband, Hugo Swan, died.

When the caretaker of the cemetery died, Frank's father took over the job. Frank became his assistant when he was about 13 years old. One burial Frank remembers is that of Sea Captain Eggers of the Great Lakes.

Other recollections of Frank include sledding on Bessie's Hill, now the site of St. Francis High School, and of the Lakeside Dinky. The Dinky was a train that picked up workers and coal and ran between the power plant and Kinnickinnic Avenue. Area residents would hop on and ride free of charge.

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MEMORIES OF ST. FRANCIS

FR. RAYMOND FETTERER, ST. FRANCIS SEMINARY

It was on a Monday morning, September 8, 1924, shortly before noon, that I first came into the area now known as St. Francis, Wisconsin. With the recommendation of my pastor, Msgr. Dominic Thill, Holy Name Parish, Sheboygan, I had been accepted as a student at St. Francis Seminary. Early that morning, I took my trunk to the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad station and had it checked to St. Francis, which still had a depot to which baggage could be sent, perhaps also freight.

About nine o'clock, in the company of my pastor, noted above, and his assistant, Father (later Msgr.) George Orth, we boarded the train and arrived in Milwaukee shortly after ten. I remember walking down Wisconsin Avenue, then most probably over to Second and Michigan, to board the street car which went to St. Francis, Cudahy, South Milwaukee and Carrollville. Father Orth pointed out to me the sign on the front of the street car, which I was to take on those rare occasions when we were permitted to leave the Seminary grounds.

Something I distinctly remember, and which surprised me, was that the street car had a whistle and it was blown twice, as I recall, before we reached St. Francis Avenue. This would have been in the area south of Oklahoma Avenue, which still had a somewhat rural appearance.

My baggage check was given to Father (Msgr.) Nicholas Brust, the Seminary procurator or business manager. On the following days one of the Seminary workmen took a horse and wagon to the St. Francis depot and picked up students' trunks that had arrived. The depot was located where the tracks cross St. Francis Avenue. A heavy plank with a pulley and long rope was anchored on the fifth floor porch of the Seminary's main building, now called