



In the year 1908, some Italian families from the city of Ripacandida, in the Province of Potenza, Italy, settled in Blue Island. Here, wishing to preserve the faith of their forefathers and to pay an annual tribute of honor of their Holy Patron, Saint Donato, they established, at their own expenses and with the permission of Archbishop Quigley, a small chapel. In order to perform the religious services on special occasions during the year, they secured the valuable help of Rev. O. D'Adrea, pastor of the parish in the neighboring town, Kensington, IL.

Owing to the gradual increase of the Italian families, it was deemed necessary to provide a large place of worship for them. At that time the German parish of St. Benedict had for sale a frame church, and thus an apposite committee of Italians went to the Archbishop's house in order to present to him the project of buying the frame church from the German

parish. The Archbishop approved and granted the wish of that small Italian colony, so that after due arrangements with the pastor of St. Benedict's Church, the above-mentioned frame church was bought and was transferred to the corner of Orange and Division Street, near Burr Oak Avenue, where it was placed on ground purchased for that purpose by Archbishop Quigley.

After such work was finished, the church was put in charge of the Rev. J. Angeletti, but since this church had no parish residence, nor had the church any means of building one, the pastor was therefore compelled to stay in Chicago, whence he went to Blue Island every Sunday in order to say Mass for the people and administer the Sacraments. After two years the Rev. J. Angeletti was commissioned by Archbishop Quigley to establish a new Italian church at Grand Crossing (Chicago), and this he was obligated to cede the charge of the church of Blue Island to the Rev. P. Renzullo, a priest of the Congregation of the Most Precious Blood, who lived at Chicago Heights, Illinois. But this priest had already a parish at Chicago Heights, and since Blue Island was quite distant from his place, it was a great sacrifice for him to go every Sunday to Blue Island in order to fulfill his pastoral office towards the people.

It was about the month of October of the year 1912 that the Rev. P. Renzullo, with the permission of the Archbishop, entrusted the care of St. Donato's Parish to the Rev. O. Pappito, formerly an assistant of the church of Our Lady of Pompei, Chicago, who being free from all other cares had plenty of time to work for the further development of St. Donatus' Parish. One of the hardest trials which the new pastor had to undergo was the daily journey from Chicago to Blue Island, for as it has been mentioned above, the church had not yet a residence for the pastor. But thanks be to God, after five years of strenuous work, the generous offerings of the little colony and his own personal sacrifices made it possible for the Rev. O. Pappito to build in the year 1917 the small wooden parish house that is now the pastor's residence, and from which he is enabled more readily to attend to all his pastoral duties (Joseph J. Thompson, *The Archdiocese of Chicago, Antecedents and Development*, St. Mary's training School Press, Des Plaines, IL, 1920).