Our story of our Foundresses left off in December when they were packing up their few belongings and preparing for their move after Christmas to their new home in Manitowoc. It’s hard to imagine packing up their belongings and traveling by wagon for eleven miles through the country, probably on a dirt road now known as “JJ”, then over thru Manitowoc Rapids, across the river, up and over the hills past present sight of Holy Family Hospital, down the hill and over to 10th street where they finally spotted the little church and “Little Nazareth.” They must have brought Mary Doyle’s cow along, plus the sheep and some chickens as they would be needing them for food, eggs, milk, cheese, and even the wool for clothing,...plus whatever household items they had accrued: lanterns for night time light, pots and pans, bedding, and much more...prayer books, their spinning wheel, candles, etc. Imagine what else....

Theresa now writes: “Father Joseph allowed us one month vacation because we were to have retreat and reception in fall.” Although she does not specify which month, it was probably June as school for the children would begin again July 1 and they needed to be ready to teach by then. She continues: “Our little Nazareth was finished and blessed by Father Joseph.” Now they got busy!!

“Vacation” seemed to be a time for them to get thoroughly moved into their new home. Rosa Wahl was still in Milwaukee at school until August, Theresa’s teaching didn’t let out til June 29, so this left the main work up to Mary Ann, Josepha and Sophia. The downstairs of Little Nazareth was to be divided into two classrooms. Desks needed to be acquired, school books, paper, writing materials. Mother Gabriel continues her writing:

“Josepha Thoenie tended to the stable and outdoor work.” Possibilities: collecting eggs, milking the cow, getting feed for the cow and the sheep, shearing the sheep for its wool, planting the garden for food: potatoes, beans, corn, etc., maybe a few flowers.

“Mary Doyle went to school which started beginning of July.”

“Mary Ann Graff tended to the household needs.” Possibilities: Cooking, washing clothes, scrubbing, Dusting, etc.

Theresa, who is writing this, was probably helping with numerous tasks to get the classrooms ready for her to start teaching.

“Sophia Fessler tended to the priest’s house.” This was her brother, Father Joseph. The possibilities: mending his clothes, cleaning the house, fixing meals, etc.
TRADITION is defined as the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation. In our community, a tradition is “something that has existed for forty years”. This issue of Heritage Happenings compares (sort of) the historical writing of Mother Gabriel and what she was relating about their early beginnings. These photos depict how the work of our Foundresses during their early years continues in the work and events that we still enjoy doing.