Covers of the Parish centennial commemoration liturgy program and the 1988 Parish Directory.
Title: Stones and hills = Steine und Huegel: reflections, St. John the Baptist Parish, 1875-1975.
Publisher: Collegeville, Minn.: St. John the Baptist Parish, c1975.
Description: v. 179 p.; ill., ports.; 23 cm.
Available online, in the SJU Archives, and in the SJU Library's General Collection: BX4603.C64 S85 1975
“...not a detailed history of the parish from 1875 to 1975, but rather an accounting of major events of that century’s parish life and a reflection through anecdotes and photos of the flavor of that life.”

http://www.csbsju.edu/SJU-Archives/SJUHistory/BooksaboutStJohns/StonesandHills.htm
Weddings were usually small and celebrations took place in the home of one of the parents. Beer barrels were rolled out, the floor cleared, and the Meyer Band would frequently play its same selections over and over again — like "Over the Waves, Our Director, The Village Tavern, and the Sharp Shooters March." Sometimes a baseball game, to work up the men's thirst, preceded the dance. For a large wedding the crowd would be invited to the Granite City Coliseum.

The traditional love of a German-American for lager and schnapps was not suppressed at Collegerville during the "great experiment." When prohibition became law in the United States on January 17, 1920, the law was taken lightly in Collegerville.

During the prohibition era, Collegerville was an integral part of the Stearns County "heartland" that produced what many considered the best moonshine in the country called "Minnesota 19." Only after prohibition did it become known that one of the probable reasons for the excellence of the moonshine was that it was produced in good corner stills, made by Brother Justus of the abbey.

Prohibition did not hurt the wedding celebrations or parties. "We ate, drank lots of moonshine at 6.10 a drink. There were stills all over the place." this helped to better relations between the abbey and the neighborhood farmers.

*Stones & Hills*, p. 113 & 120
Abbey Banner article "Minnesota 13" by Aaron Raverty p. 22-23
https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/49638
2019 Volume 19 Number 03 Abbey Banner Winter
http://www.csbsju.edu/SJU-Archives/SJUHistory/BooksaboutStJohns/StonesandHills.htm

Photos from Stones & Hills p. 163 – pastors from 1944 – 1978

Peter Engel was the abbot from November 28, 1894 - November 27, 1921
Jubilee photo from Stones & Hills p. 94; “ buggy” quote from p. 100, longer text from Godfrey Diekmann’s sermon for the Parish Centennial Dec. 12, 1975, p. 4
Pew renters were “in arrears”!

Date: Dec. 20, 1953

Of parishioners owing pew-rent payments, over one-fourth are still in arrears for this year. The parish account books should properly be closed at the end of the year. Payments may be left with the trustee, Mr. Schreiner, at the Porter’s office or deposited in the collection basket. Receipts will then be mailed. Better still, call at the parish office.

Photo: Stones & Hills p. 105

Clippings are from the parish bulletins, in the St. John’s Abbey Archives.
Some of the bulletin notes dealt with doctrine & church rules:

Some were witty and reminiscent of the SJU Chaplain's Letters:

A common theme was harping about attendance at mass:

...and occasionally about attendance at other things:

Fr. Lancelot Atsch, pastor from 1956-1965

Clippings are from the parish bulletins, in the St. John’s Abbey Archives.
Parish financial matters were frequently mentioned:

**Date: October 30, 1960**

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS OF THE PARISH
will close for the year on November 30. Because we need it, we are hopeful that all unpaid P/W REMIT (Church Support or whatever name you give it doesn’t matter) will be in by them.

A question: Has a sudden wave of unemployment or some financial tragedy hit the parish during October? This is why we ask. Get 9 the entire parish envelope collection got to the law of 65.19. Oct 16 was 76.14.

With our 220 wage earners, this means an average contribution of 91 and 99 cents per wage earner for these Sundays.

The backbone of parish support is the regular minima of an hour’s wage per week — 1/40 of what you make in a 40 hour week. Our “backbone” seems to need a chiropractor!

**Date: February 26, 1961**

WITH THE HELP of “Church Support” that came in during the week, we managed to pay two months teacher salary. We rushed it to the bank and then wrote out the check.

**Date: November 4, 1962**

On the assumption that the average gross hour’s wage in parish is more than 1.18 — 4times 72 — we arrive at this frightful fraction: 1/80. If St. Cloud finds this out, watch for the real estate boom.

…apparently for good reason!

Fr. Lancelot Atsch, pastor from 1956-1965

Clippings are from the parish bulletins, in the St. John’s Abbey Archives.
Fr. Lancelot Atsch, pastor from 1956-1965

Clippings are from the parish bulletins, in the St. John’s Abbey Archives.
1924 aerial view of St. John’s

...just before the Parish built its school past the cemetery
From 1925 to 1967, the parish conducted a parochial school on land leased from St. John's Abbey.

Cornerstone photo from 1975 Parish Directory p. 17
School photo from *Stones & Hills* p. 125
Text:
Besides the Sunday contributions, parish organizations regularly raised money for the school. From 1928-1929, during the depression, the parish paid $630 on the school debt. Payment in full was made in 1935. The school continued for forty-two years, closing in 1967. Every morning began with Mass, followed by religion classes.
“[In 1967] The members of the parish voted to close the school plant to regular parochial school classes. The reasons: rising costs of operating and a sharp decrease in the student population served due to the available public school facility (JFK elementary in St. Joseph) and the new bus laws.

-- Edward Vessel, Education Committee (attached to A Partial Report of the Parish Survey, 28 Feb. [1972])

Photo from Stones & Hills p. 125
More vandalism and a fire continued to raise havoc with the empty building. Thus in the fall 1974 the structure was razed and the debris hauled away, almost overnight.

*Stones & Hills, p. 141; text from Stones & Hills, p. 143*
The parish school site today

Stones & Hills, p. 141; text from Stones & Hills, p. 143