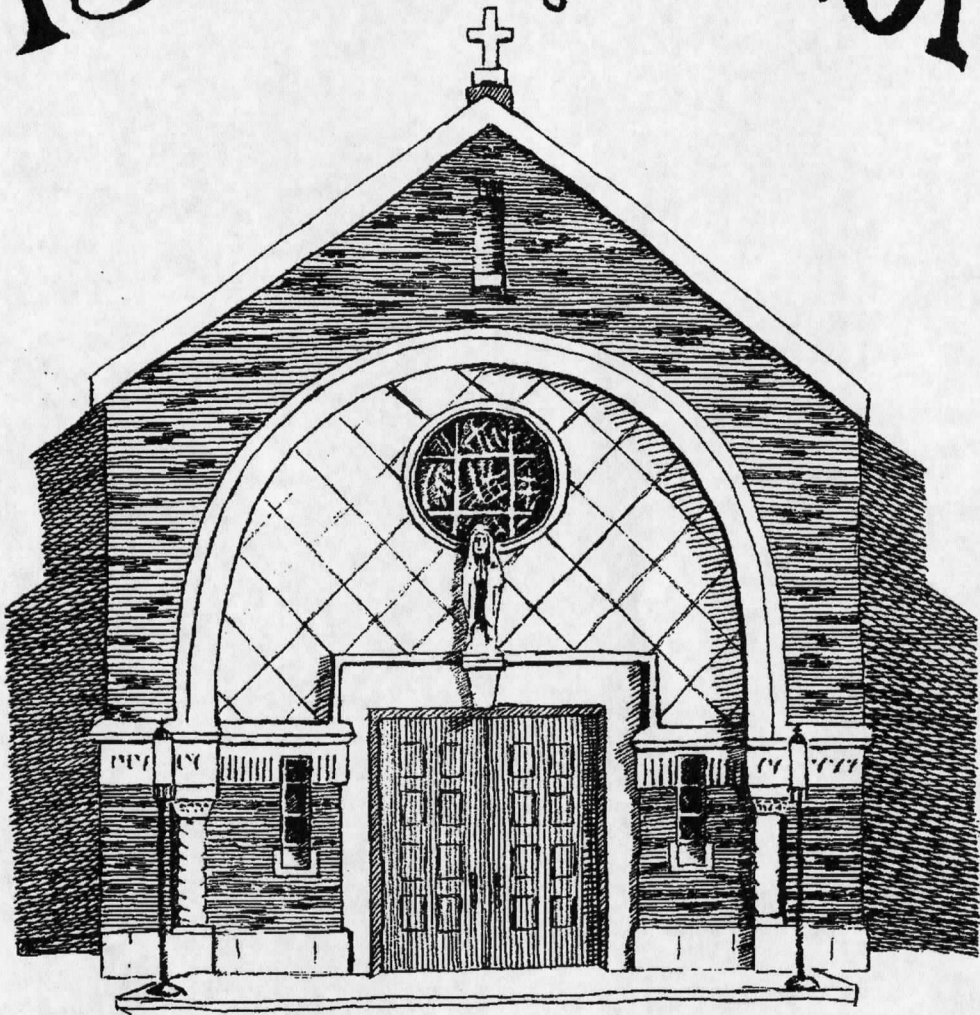


ASSUMPTION CHURCH



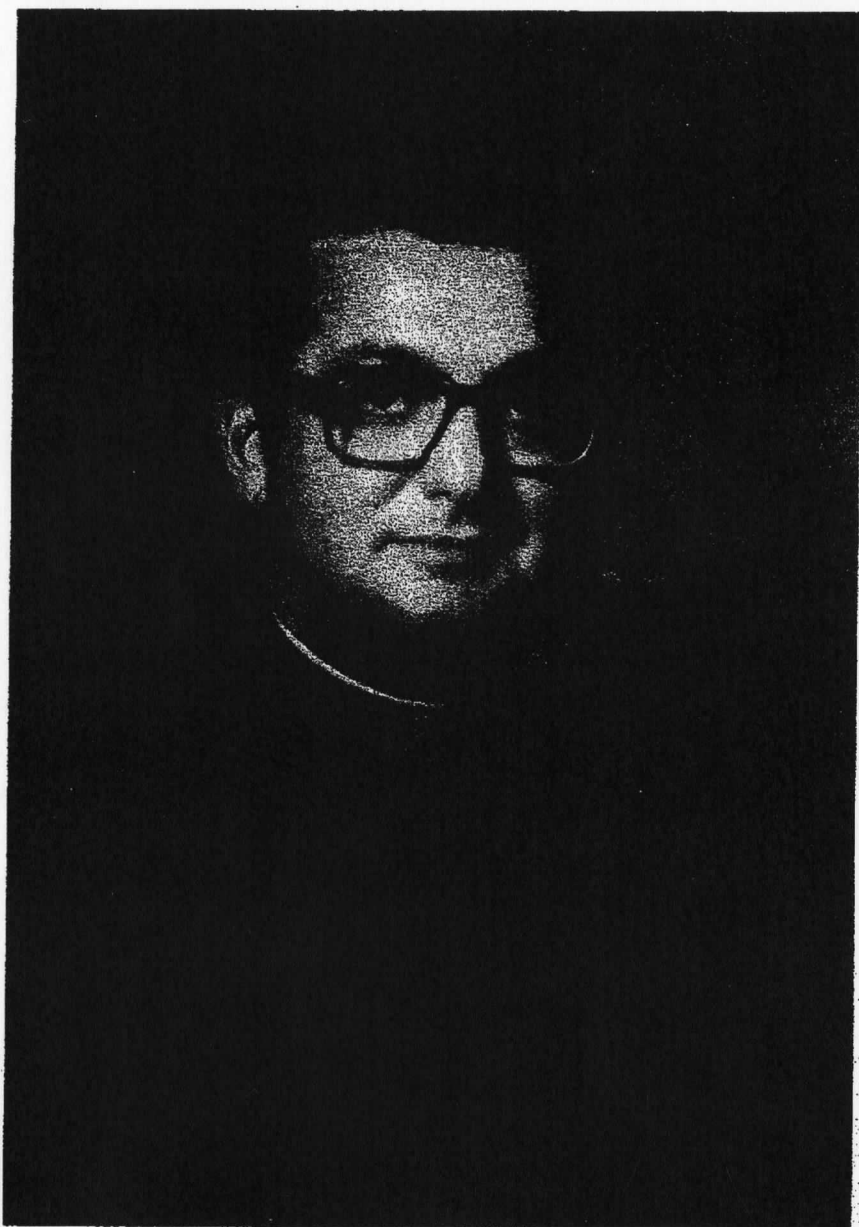
**SOLEMN
DEDICATION**

MARCH 30, 1984

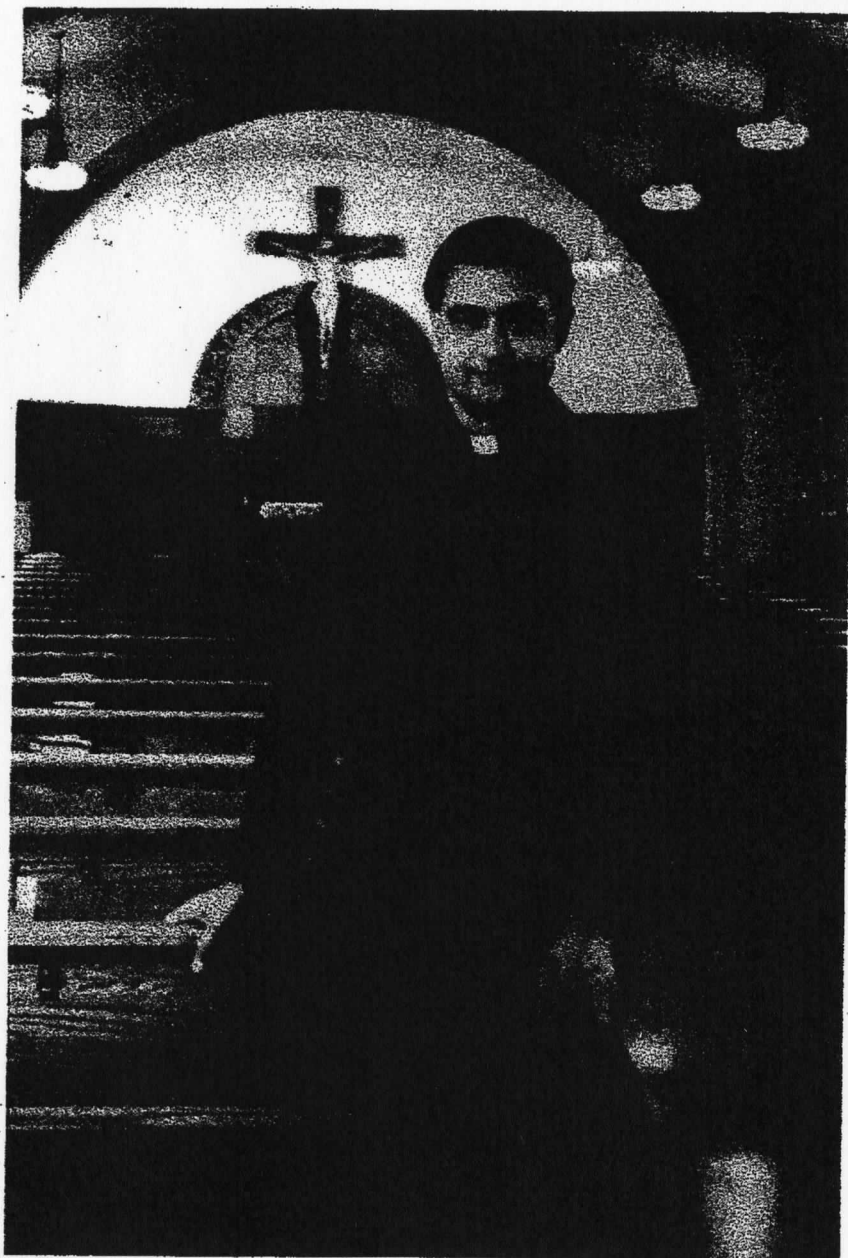




Pope John Paul II



**Most Reverend Anthony M. Pilla, D.D.
Bishop of Cleveland**



Reverend Ronald H. Bojarski, Ph.D.
Pastor of Assumption Church

ASSUMPTION CHURCH and PARISH HISTORY

1894 - 1984

The establishment of a Catholic Church in the Grafton area was first realized in 1835 with the construction of a small chapel which was named Saint John of the Cross. This chapel was located just north of Grafton at what is now Saint Mary Cemetery. This structure was small and quickly became inadequate to meet the needs of the many European immigrants moving into the area, many of which found employment in the stone quarries of Grafton. With stone from these quarries the church of the Immaculate Conception was constructed within the village and the chapel moved onto the present Erie Street grounds where it was used as a meeting hall for many years. Though the Catholic immigrants that were settling in Grafton were from many different European countries, there was an increasing number of families of Polish descent arriving and by 1892 there were about seventy-five families of Polish extraction living in the area. Since many of them had a very meager knowledge of English and, desiring to hear and understand the Word of God, these new settlers petitioned the Most Reverend Ignatius Horstmann, the Bishop of the Cleveland Diocese, for their own parish. The Most Reverend Bishop sympathized with their plight and granted their request but it was not until 1894 that a Polish speaking priest was available.

The priest that was assigned in 1894 to organize the new parish was Reverend Stanislaus Wozny, a Polish missionary. Through the combined efforts of the pastor and parishioners plans were made and construction begun of the Assumption Church. The structure was of simple design reminiscent of country churches of Poland. The building was constructed of wood set upon a foundation of stone quarried in Grafton. The exterior was simple and straight forward, accented with stained glass windows and crowned with a bell tower. The church interior was decorated with sculpture, stained glass, and ornate wood working. The sanctuary was similar in appearance to the sanctuary of the Immaculate Conception. The church was heated by a single coal stove in the church proper. The Assumption Church was dedicated in August of 1894. A financial report presented to parishioners dated December 31, 1895 showed that the Church was completed and furnished at a total cost of \$3,719.49.

Father Wozny was succeeded in 1896 by the Reverend Wenceslaus

Horak, who also served as pastor of Immaculate Conception parish. When Father Horak returned to Cleveland in 1898, the Assumption became a mission of Lorain and was served by pastors of Nativity parish for several years. Some of the men of the Assumption Church worked for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and would go by handcar to bring the priest to Grafton and after Mass return him to Lorain.

In the year 1900 the Reverend Charles Ruszkowski of Lorain established a parochial school at the Assumption. A lay teacher was placed in charge and was responsible for teaching seventy-five students. The school building cost \$1,500. to build. Because of lack of attendance the school was discontinued in 1917 and was converted into a pastoral residence.

In 1917 the Assumption was again assigned a resident pastor. Father A. Swierczynski assumed the position followed by Father Charles Ruszkowski, Father Ignatius Piotrowski, Father T. Wilk, Father J. P. Wachowski, Father Joseph Kocinski, Father J. Paczuski, Father John Dorowski, Father Anthony Migdalski, Father Paul Koszyk, Father John Czyzak, Father Joseph Spanowski, Father S. Jastrzembski, Father Anthony Paluszak, Father Joseph Kuta, and Father Lawrence Budny. Father Anthony Orlemanski became pastor of the Assumption Church in 1925 and in the following ten years, with the help of the parishioners, renovated the church grounds, removing an old barn, outhouses, and an orchard which gave way to the construction of a grotto to the Blessed Virgin. The church building was modernized with the installation of a furnace and addition of plumbing facilities. In 1935 Father Foster became pastor till Father William Kopiczenski was appointed in January of 1949. With the continued growth of the parish the decision was made to build a larger church.

In order to amass enough capital for such an undertaking a parish hall was built to provide a means for fund raising. Working side by side, the hall was literally built by the parishers and priest and in 1950 the structure was completed. For many years to follow, the hall became the center of an active parish social life.

In January 1956, Father Kopiczenski was succeeded by Reverend Edward Gachowski. Father Gackowski found himself pastor of a parish of 185 families with a dream of a new church which would soon become reality. In September 1956, plans were unveiled for the new church. In May of 1957, a parishwide campaign was held. The generosity of the parishioners combined with accumulated revenue from the parish hall made it possible to break ground for the new church on Sunday, April 7, 1957. On Thursday, August 15, 1957, the Feast of the Assumption, the cornerstone was blessed and laid.

As a personal favor to Father Gackowski, a master builder, Mr. Angel, from the firm of Gabele and Biskup, came out of retirement to build the church which was to be his last project before his death. The style of the church is Romanesque executed in brick and stone. The interior of the church was finished much as it appears today in natural colors. The seating capacity is set at four hundred and fifty people and is warmed by radiant heating piped through the terrazzo floors. The altars of marble with the main altar having a mosaic insert. The altars, reredos, cabinetry, tabernacle and stained glass windows were obtained through a church furnishing outlet named Winterich's of Cleveland, Ohio. The sculpture pieces were also obtained through this firm with the four figures near the side altars being wood carvings from Italy. The life size Crucifix in the sanctuary was made in Grafton by a parishioner-artist, Joseph W. Filipiak. At the request of Father Gackowski, the left hand of Christ was sculpted to be an exact reproduction of the pastor's hand.

The church was designed to serve the needs of the entire parish with features such as a confessional for the hearing impaired, a street level entrance for the handicapped, as well as a "sound proof" room at the rear of the church for parents with vocal little children. This room also housed the baptismal font.

The Consecration of the marble altars took place Tuesday, April 22nd, 1958, with the Most Reverend John Krol, Auxiliary Bishop of Cleveland performing the Consecration ceremonies. The Dedication of the new church and its opening for services for the first time took place Sunday, April 27th, 1958 with the Most Reverend Edward F. Hoban, Archbishop-Bishop of Cleveland, dedicating the new church.

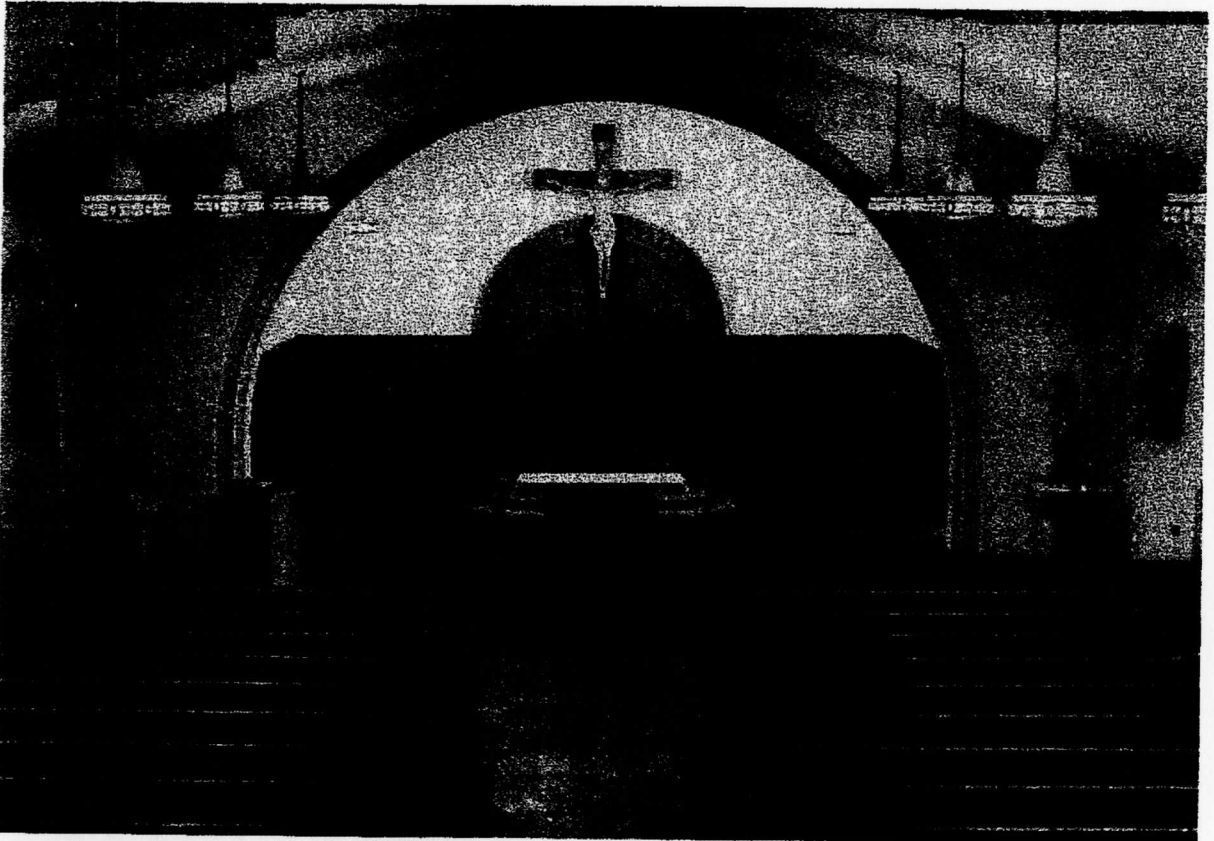
Father Gackowski was succeeded by Father Pilatowski in 1961. On Palm Sunday 1965, the Assumption Church came within seconds of destruction when a savage killer tornado sliced through Grafton and came within a block from the church complex.

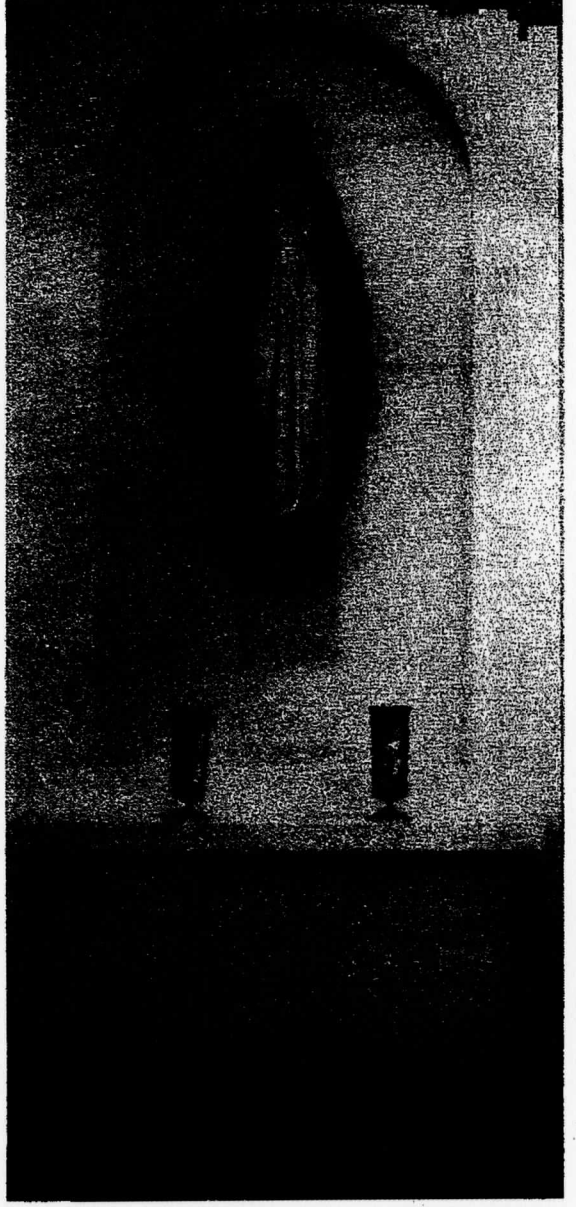
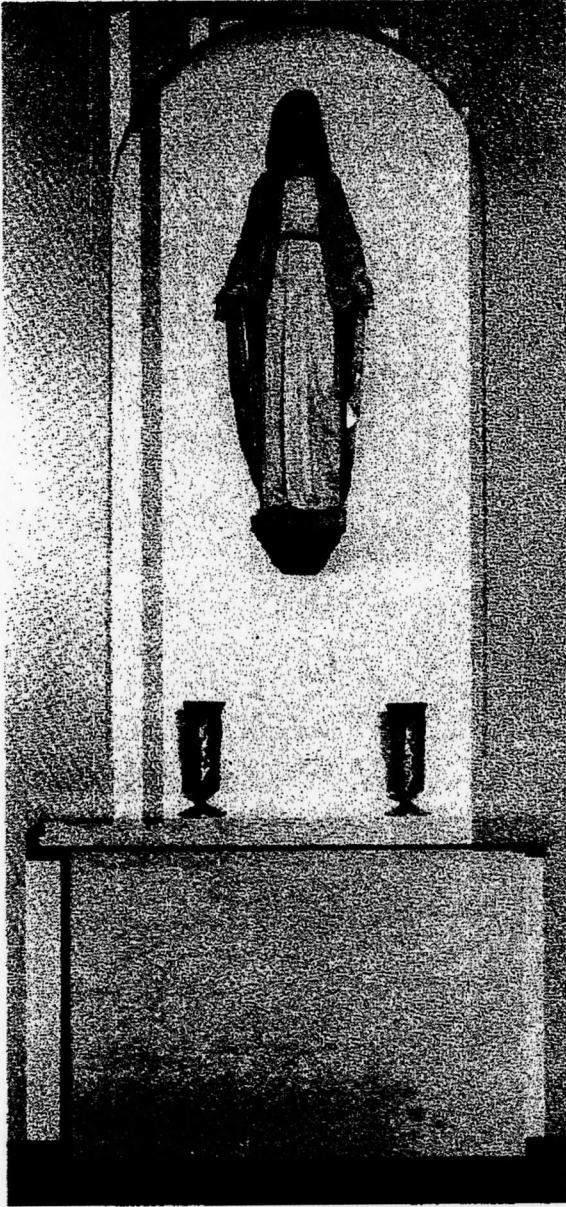
Father Pilatowski was reassigned as pastor of the Nativity parish in Lorain in 1971 and was replaced by Father Mitchell Cieslik. Father Cieslik received his schooling in Poland and was a class mate of Karol Wojtyla who is now Pope John Paul II. Through the generous gifts from parishioners the church was upgraded with the acquisition of a new organ, the installation of air conditioning, and the entire church was repainted. The grotto to the Blessed Virgin was re-established between the church and the rectory on the site of the original Assumption Church. Recently a modernistic bell tower has been installed behind the grotto. The bell in the tower is from the original church. Father Cieslik was also instrumental in the establishment of a council of the Knights of

Columbus in the Grafton area. This council now bears his name. Father Cieslik died on April 10, 1983.

Father Ronald H. Bojarski was assigned to replace Father Cieslik as pastor of the Assumption. After Father Bojarski became pastor, he instituted a vigorous program of restorative and preventative maintenance to the exterior of the church. The interior of the rectory was also totally refurbished.

The interior of the church, with the sanctuary receiving the primary attention, was reorganized to bring it into accord with the mandates of the Second Vatican Council published by Pope Paul VI. Because of these major changes, a Solemn dedication of the church is warranted; therefore, on March 30, 1984, a Solemn Dedication of the Assumption Church will occur.





PATRONS

Mr. & Mrs. Martin Batiuk
Mrs. Frances P. Bojarski
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Brattoli & Family
The John Burke Family
Florence Filipiak
Mr. & Mrs. Karis Garrett & Family
Mrs. Virginia Glowiske, Anthony & Helen
Mr. & Mrs. John Groboske
The Richard Justy Family
The Chester Kantosky Family
Mrs. Ursula Kazmierczak
Floyd & Jeanette Knight
Alex & Genevieve M. Ksenich
The Edward T. Kubuski Family
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Martin
The Michael McHugh Family
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph P. Noga
Mr. & Mrs. Edward J. Ols
Resar Florist & Greenhouses
Walter & Mildred Szymczak
Dr. & Mrs. Edward A. Tomko

Since 1951

FORTHOFFER & SONS **BUILDING CONTRACTOR**

NEW HOMES • REMODELING
ADDITIONS • CONCRETE WORK
MASONRY • SEPTIC TANK INSTALLATION

"NO JOB TOO LARGE OR TOO SMALL"

Call: LeRoy: 458-4831
Bill: 458-6277
John: 775-2575

39697 Butternut Ridge Road
Elyria, Ohio

Building Lots Available On:
Southwood Drive • Midview Schools
Patricia Court • Keystone Schools