

100th Centennial - Parish Anniversary

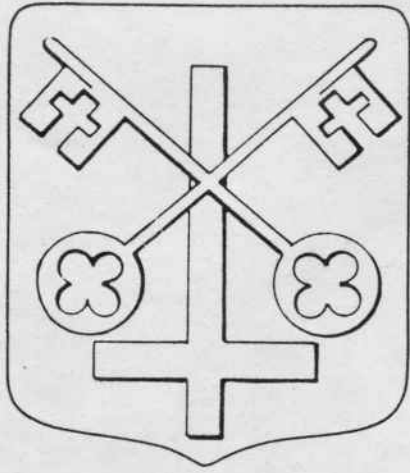
1886 — 1986

75th (Diamond) - Church Bldg. Anniversary

1911 — 1986



**SS. PETER & PAUL LITHUANIAN ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
HAZLETON, PA.**



ST. PETER, AP M., 1st cen.—Because he felt unworthy to die as had Christ. St. Peter requested that his cross be inverted so that he might look Heavenward as he was crucified. A gold cross, silver keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, all on a red field.



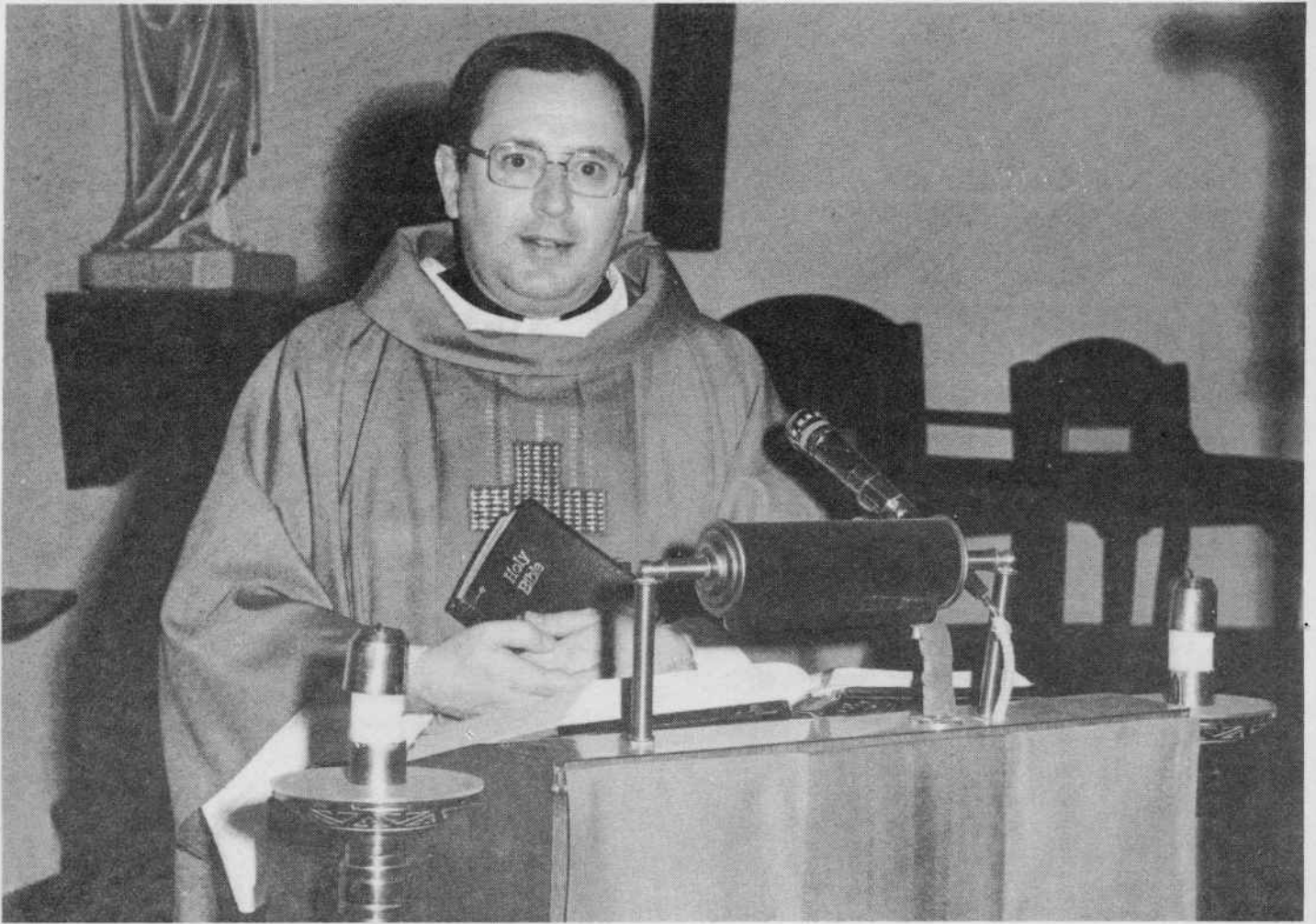
ST. PAUL, AM., 1st cen.—The Apostle to the Gentiles. St. Paul's symbol, as assigned by medieval heralds is two swords crossed saltirewise. Equally suitable is the emblem shown. A white book opened to display the inscription. "The Sword of the Spirit" in black with red upper case letters and a silver sword with gold hilt on a red field.

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.

Eph. 2:19-20

DEDICATION

This Anniversary Book is dedicated to the Founders, Parishioners, Benefactors, and Friends of SS. Peter & Paul Lithuanian Roman Catholic Church. May all which has been accomplished for the glory of God by so many in the past, serve as a challenge to achieve even more for those in whose hands the future rests.



Father Frank Skitzki - Pastor

Dear Parishioners, Friends and Benefactors,

The 75 - 100 anniversary of Saints Peter & Paul Lithuanian Roman Catholic Church is a special moment in the life of us all. Our church has been named after two of the greatest followers of Christ. For Jesus said to Peter "You are rock and on this rock I shall build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." May the faith of Peter in Jesus the Son of the Living God always be the rock foundation of our lives. To St. Paul, Jesus gave a commission through his Holy Spirit to preach the gospel to all the nations. May the gospel in all its fullness be preached and lived in our parish in all its history yet to be lived.

To all of you on this occasion, I wish God's choicest blessings and it is with deep appreciation that I say, "Thank you to all that each of you have done for our beautiful parish community of faith. May our common Lithuanian heritage be a beacon of hope for those who will come after us. May the peace, love and joy that God alone can give in Christ Jesus be always ours. God bless each and everyone of you."

Serving you in Christ,

Father Frank Skitzki - Pastor



His Holiness John Paul II

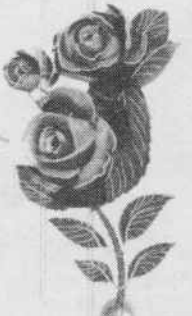
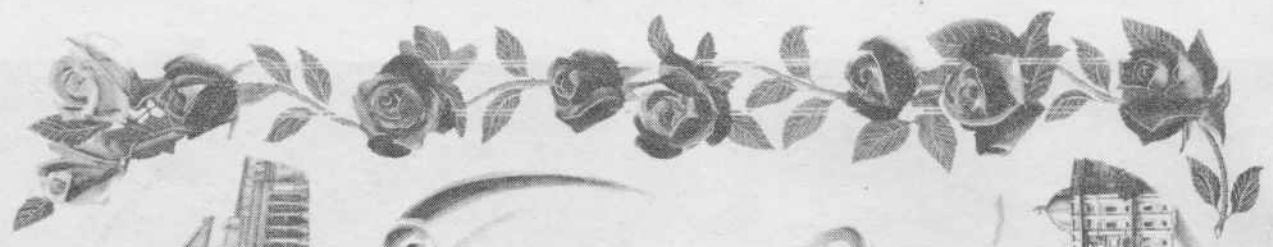
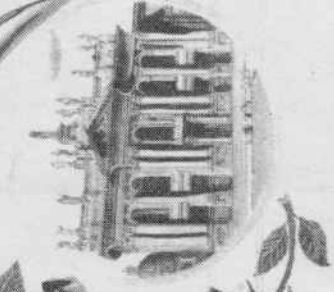
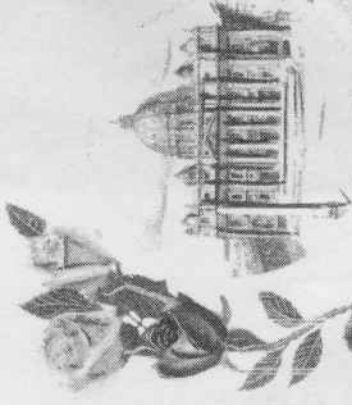
at the request of Rev. Frank P. Skutzi, Pastor of St. Peter and Paul Lithuanian Roman Catholic Church, Darleton, Pa. imparts a special Apostolic Blessing to the Parishioners, on the occasion of the building of the Church and the 100th Anniversary of the Congregation on June 29, 1986 of the Diocese of Scranton, Pa.

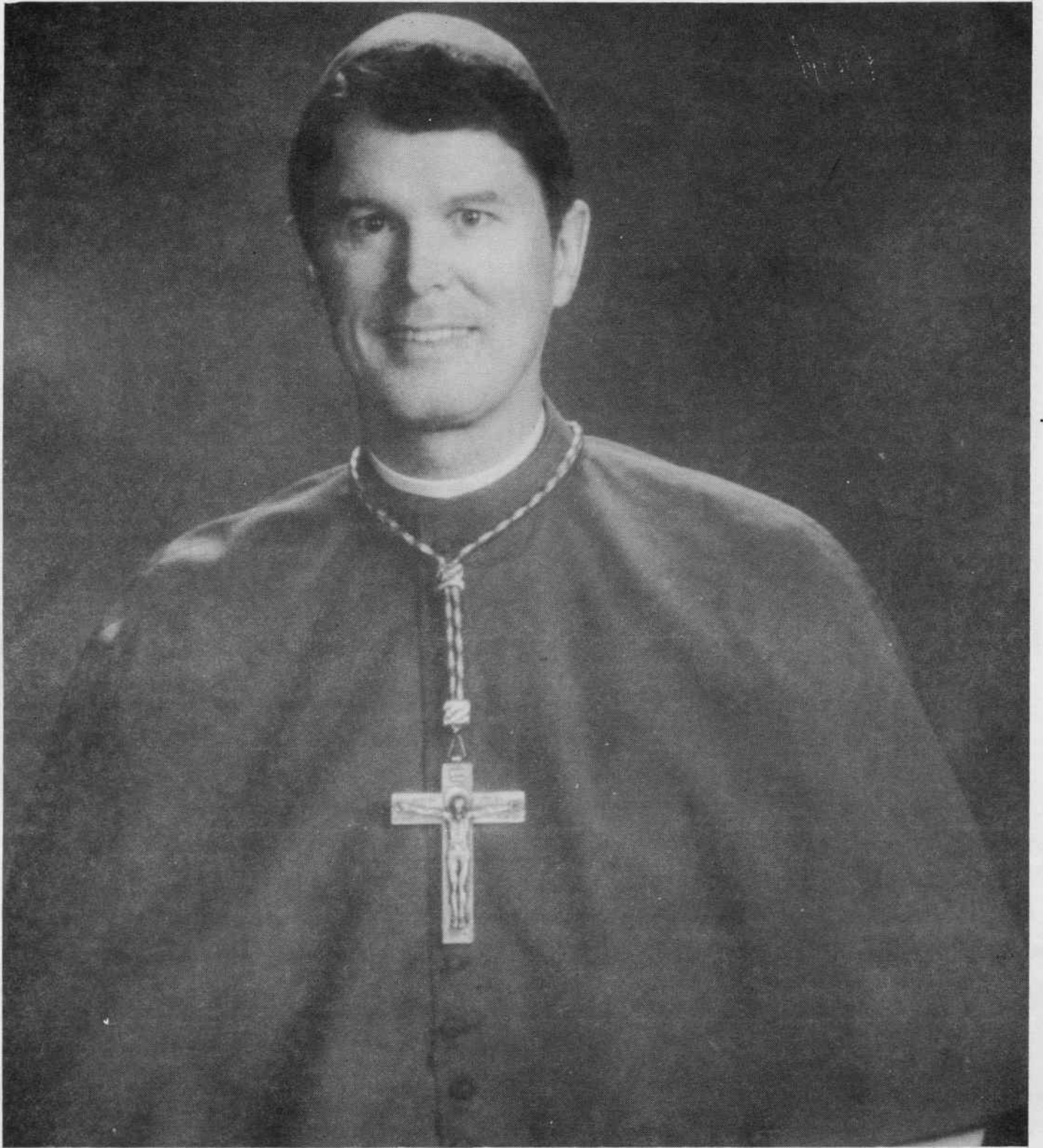
Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth

+ Deus in Unum

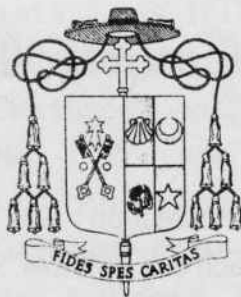
et Spiritum Sanctum

qui procedit a Patre Filio





MOST REVEREND JAMES C. TIMLIN, D.D.
Bishop of Scranton



Diocese of Scranton
300 Wyoming Avenue
Scranton, Pennsylvania 18503

June 29, 1986

Reverend Francis P. Skitzki
Saints Peter and Paul Church
837 West Diamond Avenue
Hazleton, Pennsylvania 18201

Dear Father Skitzki,

On the dual occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of the Church building and the Centennial Celebration of the parish founding of Saints Peter and Paul, Hazleton, Pennsylvania, I am pleased to extend to you and your parishioners my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes.

Certainly, two great days in a parish are those of its founding and the dedication of its Church structure. For a century now, the parish family of Saints Peter and Paul have come together to encounter the mystery of life in light of the faith of the salvific life and death of Jesus Christ. The Lord has revealed His presence by sacramental signs and made you one with Him through the unseen bond of grace.

My prayer this day is that the Lord will continue to build your parish family into a temple of living stones, bringing the Church to its full stature as the body of Christ throughout the world.

Asking God's blessing on you, while assuring you of my prayers,
I am,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ James C. Timlin

Most Reverend James C. Timlin, D.D.
Bishop of Scranton

1886 - 1986

History of

Saints Peter & Paul Lithuanian Roman Catholic Church Hazleton, Pa.

The story of our Church begins in the 1880's with the American Industrial Revolution --- in "The Land of the Brave" and with the desire of others to have the Freedom of Worship as each one chooses. At this same time, the God-fearing and God-loving, hard-working people in the already religious oppressed nation of Lithuania were longing to emigrate. America, the land of opportunity, fulfilled both their need and the need of the growing Anthracite coal industry.

In 1868, the Scranton Diocese was formed --- a separate Diocese from the original Philadelphia Diocese. Its first spiritual leader was Bishop William O'Hara. Just 18 years later, in 1886, a few dozen minority Lithuanian families in the Hazleton area, longing for their religious, educational, cultural and community identities established our Saints Peter & Paul Lithuanian Roman Catholic Church, located on Laurel Street, Hazleton, Pa. Bishop O'Hara's first official priest assignment to our parish was Rev. Matthias Jodiszius. In the early years of the Scranton Diocese there were too few priests to fill the needs of the many mushrooming, newly-formed parishes --- many, like ours, without their own church buildings. So priests were requested from European countries and religious services were often conducted in cooperating neighborhood churches. We, in our early history, benefited from the use of St. Stanislaus, Holy Trinity, and St. Michael's churches in Hazleton, as well as St. Casimir's church in Freeland. A rectory fire in 1904 destroyed all our early church records. In 1911, our current church building and cemetery were consecrated. The parish of Saints Peter & Paul Lithuanian Roman Catholic Church finally was taking "firm roots."

The first 25 years of our parish, 1886-1911, was the era of the nation's Presidents Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt and Willam Taft. The coal miner's hero, John Mitchell, founded the United Mine Workers Union in 1902. Horse and buggy, trolley cars and walking were the popular means of transportation --- automobiles were just entering the scene. A dollar a day was the miner's pay in 1911 and you could buy a loaf of bread for 4¢, although most families preferred to bake their own. Ice cream was 1¢, milk 35¢ a gallon, and butter was 35¢ a pound. If you could afford it, on the national average of \$1,2000.00 a year income, you could buy a Ford for \$780.00, gas was 12¢ a gallon and a new house cost \$3,300.00. If you could afford it or not, a complete funeral cost \$236.00. An ounce of gold was worth \$20.00. Few knew what the Dow Jones Industrial Average was and fewer cared that its index was 75.85. "You Made Me Love You" was a popular song and Charlie Chaplin and Douglas Fairbanks Sr. were the favorites at the silent movies. It was during this era that our immigrant forefathers and their children sacrificed, saved and mortgaged their few possessions to build our church building on the corner of Diamond Avenue and Lincoln Street for \$17,000.00. The Diocesan SEE was occupied by Bishop William O'Hara and later Bishop Michael J. Hoban. Our four Diocesan-assigned priests were Rev. Matthias Jodiszius, Rev. J. Kudirka, Rev. J. Masiotas and Rev. J. Delinkaites. The justification and need of our new parish church was due to the fact that there were 622 baptisms, 126 marriages, and 162 untimely deaths during the first 25 years.

1911 - 1936

The second 25 years, 1911 - 1936 was a scene of both parish growth and hardship: 1120 baptisms, 263 marriages and 326 deaths. Bishop Thomas C. O'Reilly succeeded Bishop Michael Hoban and our parish had nine Diocesan-assigned priests: Rev. C. Inczura, Rev. V. Kundirka, Rev. J. Casminus, Rev. C. Shimaitis, Rev. J. Kelmuelis, Rev. S. Struckus, Rev. T. Zilinkas, Rev. J. Milauskas and Rev. V.J. Nanorta, the first of our American-born priests. This was the time of World War I, 1914-1918, and the Great depression in the late 1920's and 1930's. During this time the average Sunday church collection was \$15.00, mostly nickels and dimes. Few people could borrow money from the banks at 4% interest. Our five Presidents during these trying times were Woodrow Wilson, Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

1936 - 1961

The third 25 years of our parish, 1936-1961, included World War II from 1941-1945, the Korean War, 1950-1953, the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1961, the Berlin Air-Lift and the construction of the infamous Berlin Wall. Our Presidents during these troublesome times were Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy. Bishop William J. Hafey succeeded Bishop Thomas C. O'Reilly and then was followed by Bishop Jerome D. Hanon in 1954. The stability of our parish is noted by the administrators of just three Diocesan-assigned priests: Rev. V.J. Nanorta, Rev. V.J. Kupstas and Rev. A.G. Brogus. Rev. Nanorta served our parish the longest --- 27 years --- and died this year, 1986, in January at the age of 92. There were 456 baptisms administered, 312 marriages, and sorrowfully 370 deaths. It was when Father Kupstas was pastor that a banquet noting the burning of the church mortgage was celebrated. All the preceding priests and parishioners toiled faithfully toward that accomplishment and are justly congratulated!!! Many times the \$17,000.00 the church cost originally was reinvested in renovations, additions and maintenance --- thanks to the generosity of the parishioners and prudent administrations of the pastors.

1961 - 1986

The fourth and most recent 25 years, 1961-1986, were a continuation of stability, accomplishments and spiritual growth. The years from 1962 to the present were deeply influenced by the Church's 21st Ecumenical Council Vatican II which greatly changed church life as most of us know it. The greatest reforms of the council, especially Mass in the English language and the restoration of the participation of the people in the Liturgy, led to the renovation of the church by Father John Dastick to meet the requirements of the new liturgy. The role of lectors came about and now after years of adjustment, the benefits to all are being seen everyday. In 1965, Bishop J. Carroll McCormick headed the Scranton Diocese followed by Bishop James C. Timlin in 1984. Our parish priests were Rev. V.J. Kupstas, Rev. William Pakutka (Administrator), Rev. A.G. Brogus, Rev. John J. Dastick, Rev. John Doris (Administrator), followed by our current pastor, Rev. Frank P. Skitzki. Continuous renovations, maintenance and improvements were supported by these pastors and administrators. In addition, our parish exceeded its \$19,000.00 goal in 1968 during the Diocesan Project Expansion by pledging \$25,500.00. It was during Father Dastick's service that our present hall was constructed at First & Lincoln Streets. In just a year and a few months Father Skitzki introduced a deluge of church activities including the establishment of Saints Peter & Paul's new Family Center to be

used as our parish C.C.D. center and multiple parish activities. Its current location is the newly-acquired apartment building at the south-east corner of First & Lincoln Streets, across First St. from our hall. This is the culmination of a successful request to our parishioners to pledge \$300.00 each, to liquidate the total cost of \$80,000.00 for this investment. The challenge was accepted by more than 200 of our parishioners and benefactors. The benefit to the church is obvious by the profit that was realized in just a few months for parish financial support and its use for the religious instruction of our youth.

Our parish societies and organizations deserve much credit for our religious and financial progress. The Third Order of St. Francis has served our parish for about 68 years. Along with its religious activities, its financial help is noted by its dinners and social activities.

The Altar and Rosary Society has been active for about 54 years. Together with its religious activities, it has been a consistent benefactor to the church by its ceaseless social activities including picnics, dinners, boutiques, and their help at the bleenie sales under the direction of Mr. Joseph Bentivoglio.

Our Holy Name Society is the male version of our women's societies. It too has supported our parish for many years and is responsible for picnics, bingo, 300 clubs, communion breakfasts, and church suppers, all for the parish's benefit.

The Knights of Lithuania was established in 1982 and has continued to encourage and keep alive our Lithuanian heritage and has helped in various parish affairs.

Our parish choir, loved and appreciated by all, is renowned throughout the Scranton Diocese for its quality and high degree of musical excellence. For many years, Mr. Michael Roland served as parish organist and was succeeded by his daughter, Mrs. Edwina Ustynoski. Mrs. Esther Kulig and Clarence Kulig have generously contributed themselves to helping all praise God in song.

We were blessed with loyal caretakers, sextants, collectors, housekeepers, acolytes, readers and parishioners throughout these 100 years.

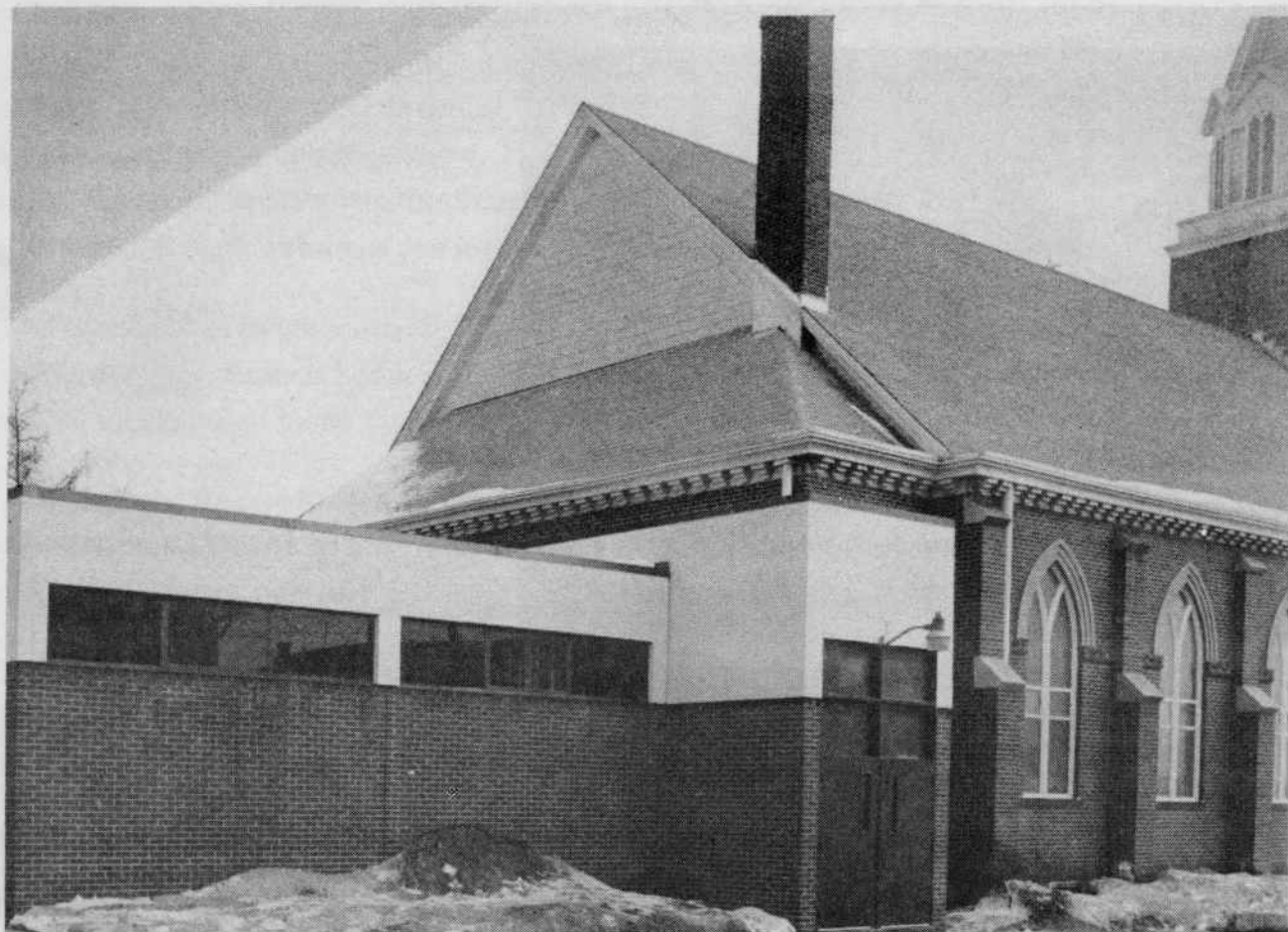
In 1985, the Second Synod of the Diocese of Scranton was held; its resolution for our parish and diocese will serve to enhance our church life for the next 100 years.

Our Century of History was not made by just one person or at any one time. Few have lived to be part of it for more than 50 years and most for just a few years. The recognizable result is that all are important and necessary. We, because it is our time, are writing the history for the next 100 years and eternity.

Celebrate and Participate In Its Glory!!!

Main Altar & Side Altars Before the Liturgical Changes

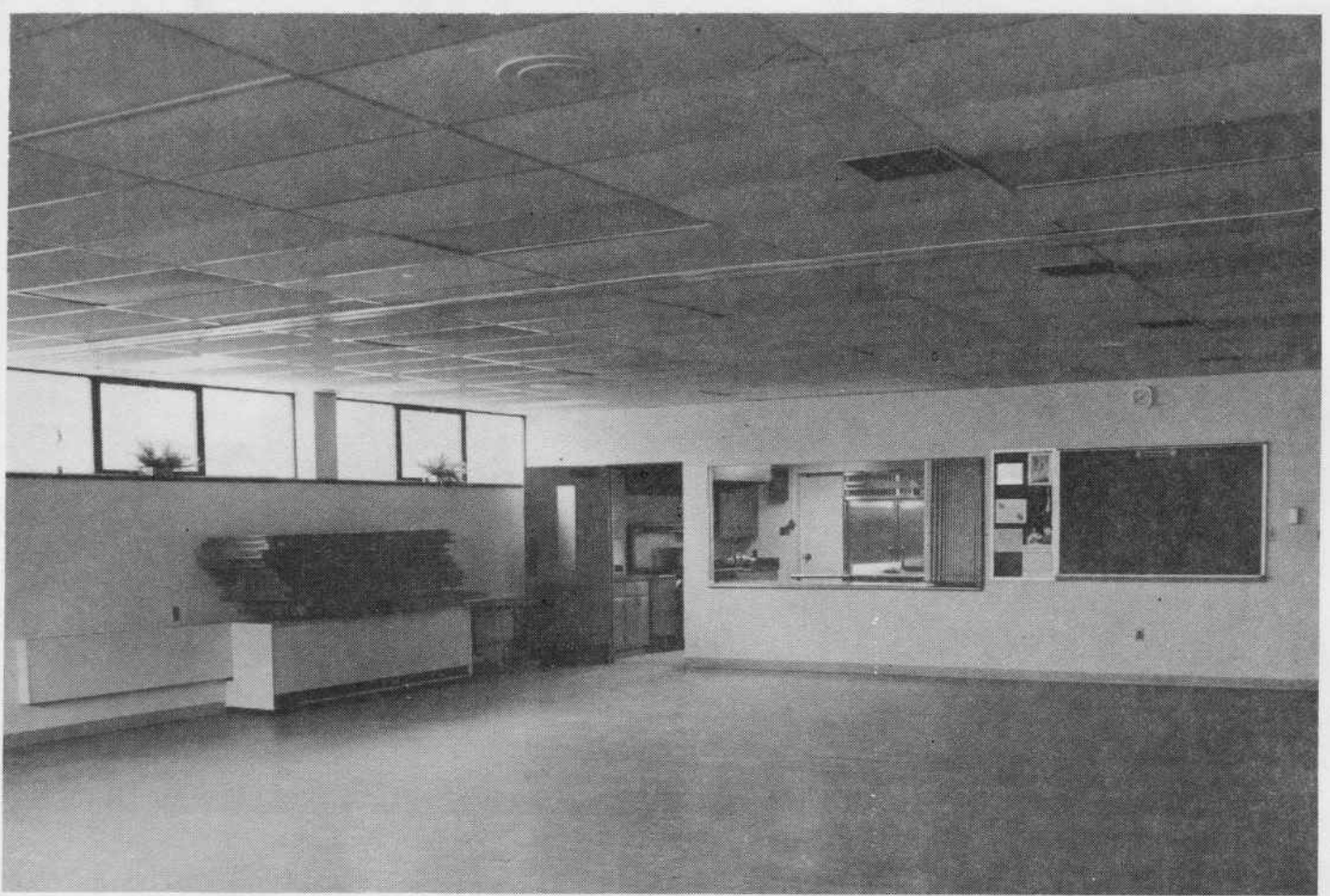




SS. Peter & Paul's Hall



Inside of SS. Peter & Paul Church



Inside of SS. Peter & Paul Hall



Father Frank Skitzki with Parish Dog, Sparky



Passion Play - 1985



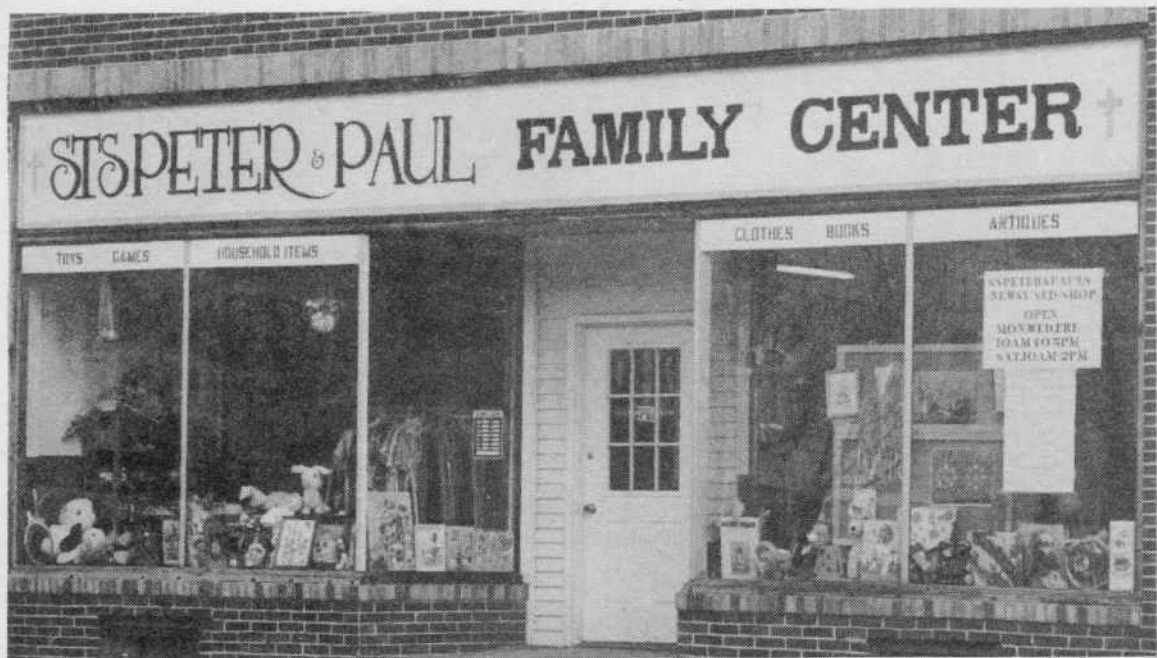


Christmas Boutique

Imagined by Pastor & Paul Family Center



Spaghetti Dinner - 1985



SS. Peter & Paul Family Center



Lectors - First Row L to R - Jean DeFazio, Frank Yacina, Margaret Knyrim. Second Row - Fred Krutz, John Lapinsky



Interior of SS. Peter & Paul Family Center with Workers



Knight of Lithuania Council 118 Early Halloween Party



Ushers - First Row L to R - Charles Yuscavage, William Marcinkevich, Albert Gelgot, Joseph Boris, Joseph Antanovich. Second Row - Robert Gallagher, Edward Chipkevich, Andrew Halechko, Joseph Bentivoglio, Dale Wittig. Third Row - John Bayzik, Frank Cammisa, George Norris



Holy Name Society - First Row L to R - George Norris - Secretary, John Lapinsky - Treasurer, Dale Wittig - President, Fred Krutz - Vice President, Joseph Boris - Sargent-at-Arms. Second Row - Edward Chipkevich, Charles Yuscavage, John Bayzik, William Marcinkevich, Frank Szutowicz. Third Row - Frank Grink, Joseph Antanovich, Albert Gelgot, Andrew Halechko, Joseph Bentivoglio, Frank Cammisa



Anniversary Committee First Row L to R - Albert Launikonis, Albert Juris, Father Frank Skitzki, Thomas Vilushis, Ronald Starkey. Second Row - Helen Vilushis, Elaine Rusetski, John Lapinsky, Betty Yemola, Barbara Vilushis, Frances Stefanisko, Maura Solonoski. Third Row - Milda Vilushis, Rose Marie Shewack, Donna Cocco, Edwina Ustynoski, Gloria Makuta, Pauline Rusetski, Alma Launikonis



Altar & Rosary Society - First Row L to R - Margaret Lapinsky, Milda Vilushis - President, Elaine Rusetski - Vice President, Marion Witcofski - Secretary, Margaret Knyrim - Treasurer. Second Row - Della Roland, Helen Vilushis, Helen Hopeck, Nellie Prokapas, Anna Pesda, Helen Szutowitz, Anna Bentivoglio, Betty Sotko, Margaret Hollodick, Julia Yeselski. Third Row - Betty Yemola, Anna Solon, Aldona Bayzik, Jennie Kapes, Pauline Rusetski, Melanie Maggio, Mary Pais, Elinore Matulevich, Sharon Matulevich, Nellie Masyjada



Knights of Lithuania - First Row L to R - Albert Launikonis, John Lapinsky, Doris Shanahan, Marcella Gelgot, Ruth Alansky. Second Row - Eleanor Kassick, Albert Gelgot, Dolores Yuscavage, Valentina Dancho, Margaret Lapinsky, Helen Vilushis, Dolores Skitzki. Third Row - Charles Yuscavage, Alma Launikonis, Cecilia Wittig, Mary Lapinsky, Joseph Dancho, Loretta Yourevich, Vincent Yourevich



Bleenie Sale Workers First Row L to R - Margaret Lapinsky, Joseph Bentivoglio, Anna Bentivoglio. Second Row - Nellie Prokapas, Helen Vilushis, Helen Hopeck, Aldona Bayzik, Betty Sotko, Betty Yemola. Third Row - Albert Launikonis, Marion Witkofski, Nellie Masyjada, Rose Marie Shewack, Helen Szutowitz, Frank Szutowitz



Third Order of St. Francis - First Row L to R - Betty Yemola, Margaret Hollodick, Mary Pais. Second Row - Nellie Prokapas, Julia Yeselski, Anna Pesda



SS. Peter & Paul Family Center Volunteers - First Row L to R - Jennie Kapes, Nellie Prokapas, Anna Bentivoglio. Second Row - Betty Yemola, Helen Szutowitz, Nellie Masyjada. Absent from picture were Marie Alansky, Julia Solonoski, Doris Shanahan



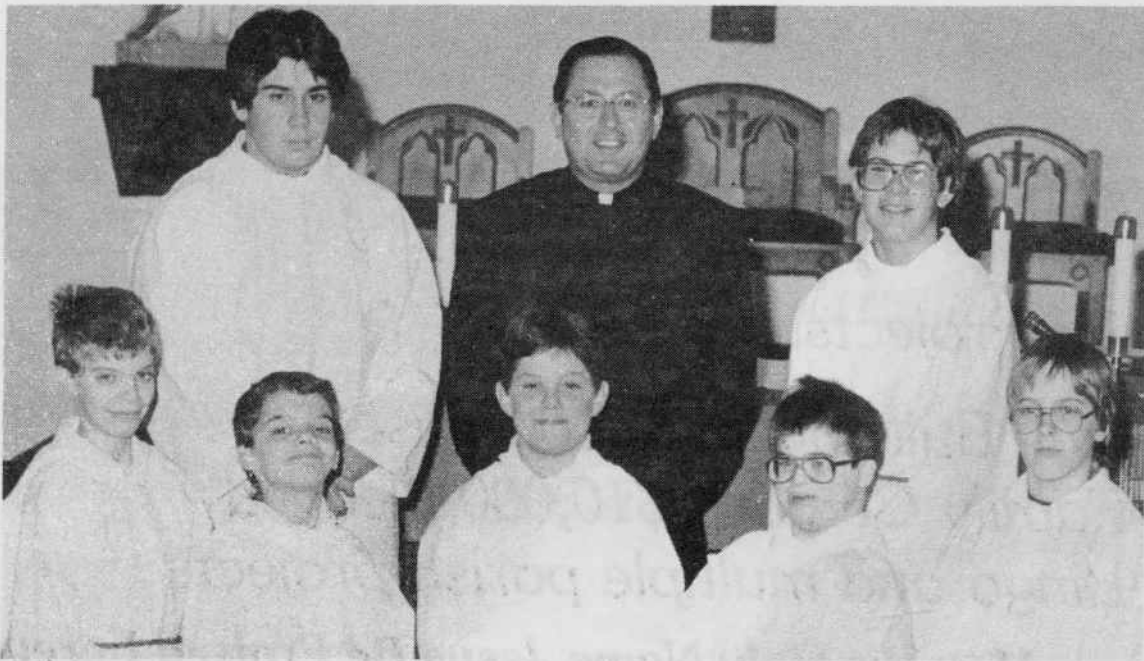
C.C.D. Teachers - First Row L to R - Anne Berlitz, Melanie Maggio, Mary Shockley. Second Row - Maura Solonoski, Elaine Rusetski



Parish Staff - First Row L to R - Frank Yacina - Cemetery Caretaker, Father Frank Skitzki - Pastor, Rose Marie Jubay - Housekeeper. Second Row - Anne Berlitz - Secretary, Joseph Leonard - Parish Caretaker, Edwina Ustynoski - Organist, John Bayzik - Parish Painter, Esther Kulig - Organist



Parish Choir - First Row L to R - Edwina Ustynoski - Organist, Milda Vilushis, Rose Marie Shewack, Frances Stefanisko, Esther Kulig - Organist. Second Row - Barbara Vilushis, Elaine Rusetski, Pauline Rusetski, Maura Solonoski, Evelyn Weber. Third Row - Ronald Starkey, Gloria Makuta, Patricia Bogaczyk, Thomas Vilushis. Absent from photo are - Isabella Baltrushus, Verna DeCusatis, Eleanor Zukowski, Blanche Viola



Altar Boys - First Row L to R - Harry Berlitz, Stephen Berlitz, Richard Maggio, Robert Solonoski, Jeremy Buchinsky. Second Row - Andrew Solonoski, Father Frank Skitzki, John Buchinsky. Absent from photo - Allen Pachence

HOLY NAME SOCIETY

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- 1. Hall Building - \$54,000 raised*
- 2. Family Center - \$10,000 pledged*
- 3. Bingo and multiple parish projects*

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Altar & Rosary Society

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And

Devoted to His Mother Mary

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Is Not To Know And
Love Christ

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Church Choir in the 1930's.

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Joseph

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Bronislova Zukauskiene
Edvardas Zukauskas
Ona Z. Dickinson
Michael Roland

SS. Peter and Paul Choir

under the direction of
Mrs. Edwina Ustynoski

Wishes all a Happy Anniversary

Let us continue to Sing Praises
unto the Lord now and forever.

*Best Wishes
for the next 100 years!*

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*Andy Solonoski, Sr.
Andy Solonoski, Jr.*

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James, Manus, and Gerald**

Thank you,

Mr. & Mrs. R. Gallagher

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the past and hope in
His love for the future
Ad multos annos!

A priest friend

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