



# SACRED HEART OF JESUS CHURCH

1888 – 2010

A CELEBRATION OF ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-TWO YEARS

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*of* JESUS CHURCH

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This book is dedicated to the people of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, past and present, whose great faith, courage, perseverance, generosity, and dedication, along with a love of God, helped make this church achieve a spiritual and financial success that should serve as an example to other churches that follow.

May God show His blessings on you all!



# FOREWORD

Many years ago your parents and grandparents arrived from Poland and were faced with many challenges in settling in this new frontier. The southeast corridor of Slavic Village, known as Goosetown, became their settlement. The challenges they encountered were many and varied, but nothing was going to deter them. Sacred Heart of Jesus School and Church were founded in 1888. They labored to build a faith community that would serve the spiritual and many times the physical and emotional needs of the Polish community. Over the years they continued to face challenges both physical and spiritual, but their faith kept them strong for the task at hand.

Over the past eleven years, we have encountered many challenges and have faced them head-on with class and determination. We are a community of faith and spirit. Classy people remember those who came before them, your parents and grandparents who suffered, sacrificed, and saved so that this parish could begin.

Being classy means doing daily jobs with style. It's a smile when the day is tough, praying when hope is dying, a helping hand or a kind word when a task ahead seems insurmountable. Some days the first step on a journey of faith is the toughest one—closing up our "Parish Home" has been emotionally and spiritually challenging for all of us. But just as your ancestors, we can't allow this to deter us from our God, our relationship with our Heavenly Father. As your parents and grandparents did, we must pick ourselves up and move on to another faith community to share God's love with them.

Activity with other members of God's people keeps our spirit, faith, and the ability to function alive. My brothers and sisters, Sacred Heart will always live in all of our memories. Our customs and history will be displayed, enjoyed, and continued in the living faith community we share with other members of God's people.

Most of you descend from Polish ancestry whose faith and "can do" spirit helped to forge this church. That same duty now falls to us in this difficult time. This challenge is not easy, but it's something that should not stop us. We believe that God is with us, and He will not abandon us, but will be with us wherever we go. He offers us His love and mercy despite our own weaknesses and failings. Jesus will never abandon us even in our darkest moments. We must continue to have faith in God. We can be humbled by our heritage as children of God, because it is God's love and grace that holds our church family together.

Just as the Israelites forged ahead to a new life and the Promised Land, we too must keep our faith strong as we forge into a new and exciting land of promise. I am humbled by the faith of this parish, by the stick-to-itiveness, and the never-ending support that I have received over the past eleven years as your pastor. I have always been proud to say that I am the Pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish. May God bless you today and every day as you continue your mission of bringing His love to other faith communities.

—Reverend Joseph S. Mecir



## Chapter One

# THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH



**O**n the third planet from the sun, on God's good earth, on the North American continent, at the corner of East 71st Street and Kazimier Avenue in Cleveland, Ohio, stands a firmament of sandstone, wood, concrete, and mortar that is Sacred Heart of Jesus Church.

But it is much more than that. A church is a reflection and testament of the people that make up its parish community, and nowhere is this more evident than in the long history and success of Sacred Heart.



WIDOK PRZYSZŁEGO KOŚCIOŁA NAJSŁODSZEGO SERCA JEZUS W CLEVELAND, OHIO,  
WEDŁUG PLANÓW W. P. GINTHER ARCHITECT CO.

*Architectural rendering of what designers envisioned Sacred Heart of Jesus Church to look like upon completion. Twin spires and overall design was similar to and maybe would have intentionally out shined "Big Sister" church, St. Stanislaus from whom Sacred Heart's origins derived.*

Shortly after the end of the Civil War, the Industrial Revolution was taking hold of the United States, especially in large cities like Cleveland. During the 1870's large numbers of Poles began emigrating to America through Ellis Island and Canada in search of relief from religious oppression, political dominance of other nations, and to escape the poor economic conditions of their home country.

The steel and woolen mills of the Cuyahoga Valley area offered just such an opportunity for a

better life for themselves and their families.

The region was still mostly farmland which suited this proud, pragmatic, hard-working people who brought old world values with them, with many a family keeping a small plot of land for planting and live poultry. There were so many birds at the time that the large numbers of wandering geese and ducks that roamed freely gave the area the nickname "Goosetown" from passersby.

The concentration of Poles south of the city quickly grew, and in order to fulfill the spiritual





*In its earliest years parishioners arrived by foot, horseback or horse drawn buggies from surrounding areas parking in a schoolyard large enough for their needs at the time but cramped and too small later on after the advent of cars.*

obligations of this new community the first Polish Catholic parish, St. Stanislaus, was established in 1873. But, St. Mary's in the Flats would continue to provide a place of worship until 1881 when the parish of St. Stan's was finally built. It was here in an area known as "Warsawa" that the Polish community took root.

The growth of the Polish population from 1880 to 1890 was so rapid that within ten years after the founding of St. Stanislaus, there were two hundred families alone living south of the church in the Brecksville Road and Harvard Avenue district. It was an area that was dubbed "Krakowa." Having their homes too far removed from the school made it hard for children to attend and difficult for older members to attend church services on a frequent basis. People of the time came on foot, horseback, horse and buggy, or sleigh as it would be another twenty years before even the first Model T automobile would be mass produced. This group gathered together and decided to form their own parish, founding it in 1888.

After deliberation, and Father Kolaszewski, then pastor of St. Stanislaus, having been graciously granted permission by His Excellency Bishop Richard Gilmour, it was decided to buy a piece of available land 315 feet by 250 feet located between Krakow Avenue and Kazimier Avenue off of Marcelline Avenue (which was later renamed E. 71st Street) in the spring of 1889 for the amount of \$2,500.00.

With the help of many parishioners who volunteered their help to the contractor and his crew, construction of a two-story wooden structure was completed quickly, and on Christmas Day of that same year of 1889, a large gathering of proud and happy parishioners joyously celebrated Mass for the first time with Father Kolaszewski officiating. The blessing of the church along with that of a new bell would wait until June 22nd of the following year.

Cost of the building, including pews, altars, and other church furniture, amounted to \$15,000.00. The upper story second floor held

church services while the first floor was divided into a four-classroom school. There were orchards to the north and south of the church for as far as the eye could see in as much as the local railroad lines paralleling Berdelle Avenue and Grant Avenue had not yet been built. In the spring of 1890, one hundred fifty children would attend the opening of school.

Father Kolaszewski and other priests from the "mother" parish of St. Stanislaus continued to attend to the needs of the parishioners, but it soon became evident that with a fully equipped church and thriving school, a full-time pastor was needed. Finally, after repeated requests to the bishop, Father Felix Orzechowski, on November 4, 1891, was appointed as the first pastor of Sacred Heart Church.

That very year construction of a parish rectory was begun, at a cost of \$2,000.00. It was agreed that each parish family should contribute an annual \$6.00 pew rent. But it was clear from the start with what had been already accomplished, that many families gave unselfishly, well in excess of their fair share.

Astoundingly, in less than three years, land had been bought, and a church, school, home for the nuns, and a rectory were built. The following year, in 1892, the entire group of buildings was enclosed by wrought iron fencing. Adding in the costs of furnishings and sacred vessels, one can only appreciate and admire the ambition, zeal, and generosity shown by those first families. They are traits that would resurface time and time again in generations to come, helping to personify the parishioners of Sacred Heart. With the financial affairs of the church seemingly in order, Father Orzechowski would leave the parish after one year and eleven months in mid 1893, followed by the Rev. James Kula as new pastor.

But in that same year, with local employment at capacity and probably with some ethnic prejudice in new hiring, there was a scarcity of work for many immigrants, and financial difficulties arose in the parish as it labored under the heavy debt from its mercurial development. Factions of the congregation disagreed with the approach and direction the church should now take regarding further development, and this discord would carry over with the leaving of Father Kula through the assignment of the Rev. Paul Cwiakala as the next pastor in 1895.

The energetic Father Cwiakala directed his untiring efforts and self-sacrifice toward paying off the parish debt as quickly as possible, although his primary interests lay in the peace and unity of the parish. A church organ was purchased a year after his arrival, as was a baptismal font from the kindness of a family's donation, and new chalice, cope, and monstrance through society fund raising. But the work soon taxed his health, forcing a leave of absence. He returned following a three-month vacation with a renewed vigor that carried over to the people, and he was soon rewarded with a stronger mutual cooperation and reconciliation between opposing forces among his congregation who now worked for a common interest.

In July of 1900, Rev. Victor Szyrocki came to the parish as pastor only to be greeted by overflowing crowds in as much as parishioners now also came from surrounding suburbs which included Garfield Heights, Independence, and as far away as the Corlett area, east of what we know today as 93rd Street, beyond Broadway Avenue, often trudging through mud as paved streets were years away from being built. To accommodate the large number of people coming from Corlett, a mission church attached to Sacred Heart was established in the area (later to become Our Lady of Czestochowa Church).



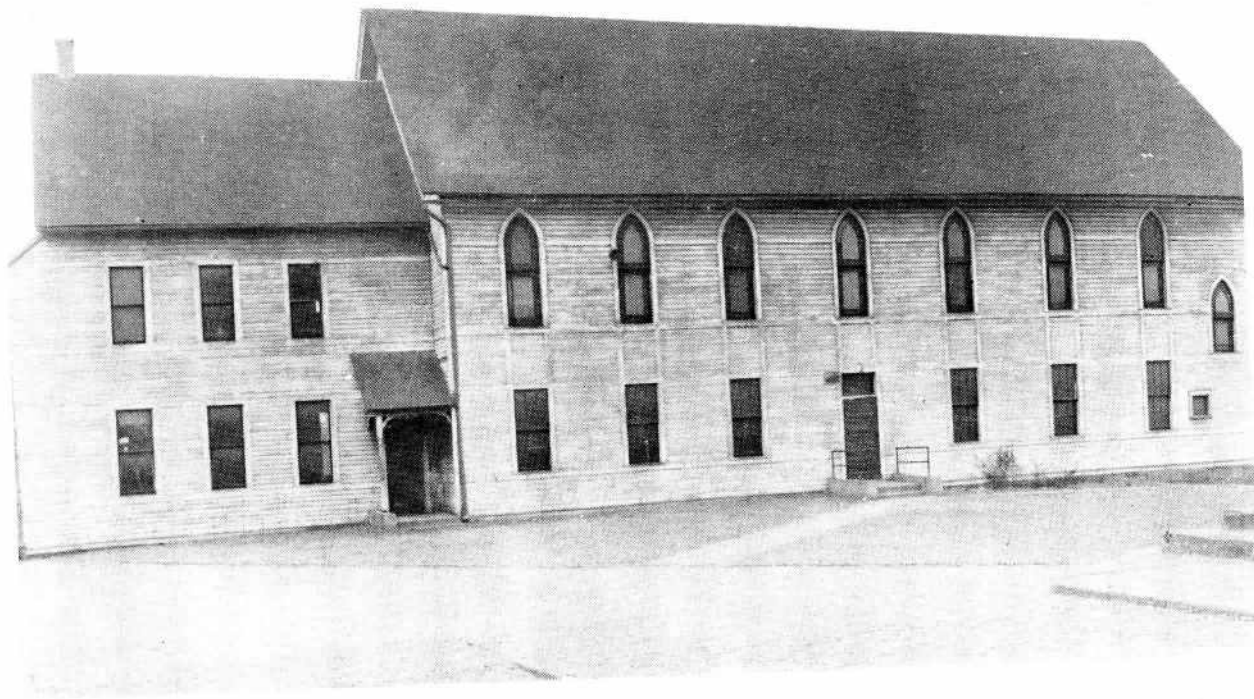
ZEWNETRZNY WIDOK "BASEMENTU"  
 POD PRZYSZLY KOŚCIÓŁ NAJSŁODSZEGO SERCA JEZUS W KTÓRYM OBECNIE ODPRAWIAJĄ SIĘ NABOŻENSTWA

*The lower church pre 1949 from the corner of E 71st Street and Kazimier Avenue. School and bell tower are towards the right. Larger roofed building in background was the original church building which became a social hall. Parishioners entered the church down steps where the bunting is shown to the basement church.*

Father Szyrocki soon occupied himself with the building of a new larger church, and the south orchard was cut down and the basement dug in the year 1908. The new church would be 82 feet wide by 155 feet long. We can only imagine as horse drawn carts and mud sleds were used to deliver the large sandstone blocks, dug from nearby quarries, and how stonemasons would further cut and shape the stone, pushing the large heavy pieces along wooden planks into place with the use of block and tackle and the strength of horses or the many hands and muscle of parish volunteers who lent their help.

Building was stopped fourteen feet from the top of the ground. Alas, further construction was halted by a lack of funds, and a temporary roof was put into place with the hope of resuming construction soon after. But this "basement" church did allow for services to be conducted and the parish community to continue operations. The second floor of the old building was now remodeled into a parish hall.

Efforts began anew in the years to follow to fund the completion of the church, but new divisions surfaced among the patronage, with



*First church structure built of wood on the corner of what we know today as the corner of Krakow and E. 71st St. That first building stood where the school stands today.*

some parishioners demanding the building of a new school and others asking for completion of the church, or more imperative, the repair or replacement of the temporary roof. With opposing views stifling any further progress, much to his disappointment, Father Szyrocki left the parish in July of 1916.

The fifth pastor, Reverend John Czyzak arrived amid the turmoil whereupon it was finally decided to build the school. The old two-story wooden structure was dug out, raised up, and moved in its entirety to where the convent stands today. The entire building was most probably

moved along the way by rolling it along over the top of timber logs. It continued to be used as a gathering hall for church and social events through the 1940's.

In its vacated space a beautiful red brick school building in the form of a "T" was built. And none too soon as school records would soon show a 1919 enrollment of 850 students, reaching a high of 1,013 by 1926. Again the parishioners began to save for completion of their church.

But the church was burdened by debt in the amount of \$109,879.53 at the end of 1917 due in large part by giving the school builder a free



hand in working without a drawn contract and his purchasing of substandard materials. This necessitated a fair amount of reconstruction in the immediate years that followed, and resulted in the church looking to secure loans from banks and parishioners alike to offset the loss.

Derision soon arose again among the faithful, and the bishop was quick to replace a discouraged Father Czyzak with a new pastor, Reverend John Mlotkowski in 1922.

A comparatively young priest, Father Mlotkowski arrived and unlike his predecessors, quickly instituted a series of ideas and programs that would include social interests outside the church. By implementing a series of bazaars, raffles, picnics, and other fundraising used to supplement offerings and collections, with patience

throughout his ten years as pastor, he was able to pay off most of the debt and begin thinking about completion of the church. Things looked rosy indeed for the parish of Sacred Heart.

The rise of breadlines and soup kitchens confirming the economic collapse of the country in the beginning of the Great Depression in 1929 put a stop to any such plans.

It was during this most difficult of times that the Reverend Joseph Kocinski took over pastoral duties on May 18, 1932. And difficult they were, as Father Joseph arrived to find growing distrust, suspicions, complaints, accusations, and grief over the many years of hardship and disappointment at the delay in building the church, unending school expenses, and stunted growth of the parish. Unable to overcome such adversity, he would leave



*Founding members of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish pose in this 1915 photo from the corner of Kazimier Av looking north down 71st St. Immediately behind the group is the basement church entrance, bell tower and first church and school building. Pictured from left (unknown), Martin Grucza, A Szelminski and John Kalinowski.*



*1948 Picture of E. 71st St. looking south towards Cuyahoga Hts. War Avenue was the streetcar turnaround. Streetcars pulled down War Avenue before backing out and heading back toward town on the opposite track. Parked cars at curbside often left no room and made it impossible for other cars to pass the streetcars they were following.*

*Church service in the basement church.*



*A play performance on the second floor of that first wooden structure most probably after it was moved to where the convent/rectory stands today*

to be replaced just five years later by the Reverend Stanislaus Rybacki in 1937.

Father Rybacki took charge, bringing along an unshakeable trust that the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Who is the Divine namesake of the parish, would protect and provide for His people. He immediately visited every member of his parish, leaving out no one, successfully sowing the seeds of peace, love, and unity and bringing the membership together again in harmony to work for the church.

God's divine providence to His church would become evident soon after this, when in 1938

the Union Property Corporation, having taken over the bankrupt Union Trust Bank, called for immediate payment on a loan of \$21,000.00. The notice was given so suddenly and the time allowed so short that a new loan or line of credit could not be established. Union Property was preparing to sell the church property and filed suit in court. In this most critical of times, the parish turned to Our Sorrowful Mother. It would become the first novena conducted in the Polish language to Our Lady in the United States.

During the week that followed the announcement of a novena, through the insistent urging of a



*Left aisle side altar of St. Anthony.*

*Today the hall bathrooms are found where the alcove stood before.*

parishioner, the doubtful pastor returned to specifically visit a Mr. H.R. Templeton, vice president of the Cleveland Trust Bank where he had applied for a loan previously. Though not within Mr. Templeton's department and without procedure, miraculously, a loan was nonetheless immediately secured at less than the going rate, without written agreement, on just a handshake alone. But the diocese refused to believe the word of Father Rybacki and intercede on his behalf before the trial date.

On the day before the hearing, the pastor received a confidential memorandum testifying to the

granting of the loan. It was handed personally to the bishop, who for unexplained reasons had remained in his office working after hours that day, and who without formality signed permission to proceed. The parish was thus saved from the lawsuit and any public scandal that was sure to follow. A most grateful pastor and parishioners continued on with the novena and in a short time the loan was paid in full. With profound joy the parish now commemorated its fifty year anniversary starting with a Pre-Golden Jubilee on Sunday, April 28, 1940, celebrating throughout the year with an ending program a year later on June 8, 1941.





*Right aisle side altar of Our Lady of Sorrows in the basement Church.  
Confessional can be seen at right. Today the hall kitchen sits in this alcove.*

The Works Program Administration had begun the task of building streets. Side streets built of red paving bricks were finished. Streetcars now ran on main streets similarly paved. No longer were smudge pots necessary to warn drivers of treacherous ruts or work in progress. America was recovering from the economic distress it had faced for many years previously. Life was good for the people of Sacred Heart. Their attentions could now be focused on completion of the church.

World War II would delay their intentions.

In spite of the hardships and inconvenience through the years of the Great Depression and those of World War II, one thing remained the same: parishioners remained somewhat consistent in supporting their church financially and through volunteer efforts. Through a series of socials and fundraisers along with a cost-saving program of maintenance, repair, and renovation through volunteer help, with patience through the war years, Father Rybacki and the parishioners of Sacred Heart were finally able to realize the dream of finishing construction



*Main altar and sanctuary of the basement church with statues of St. Barbara and the Madonna on either side. The stained glass window of the Sacred Heart was used as a backdrop to the main altar tabernacle.*

of the church. Ladies of the sodalities can remember selling raffle tickets for a chance at a new car in front of Taylor's Department Store on Public Square. Men can remember giving their time to paving the schoolyard with brick. Funding for the church was realized.

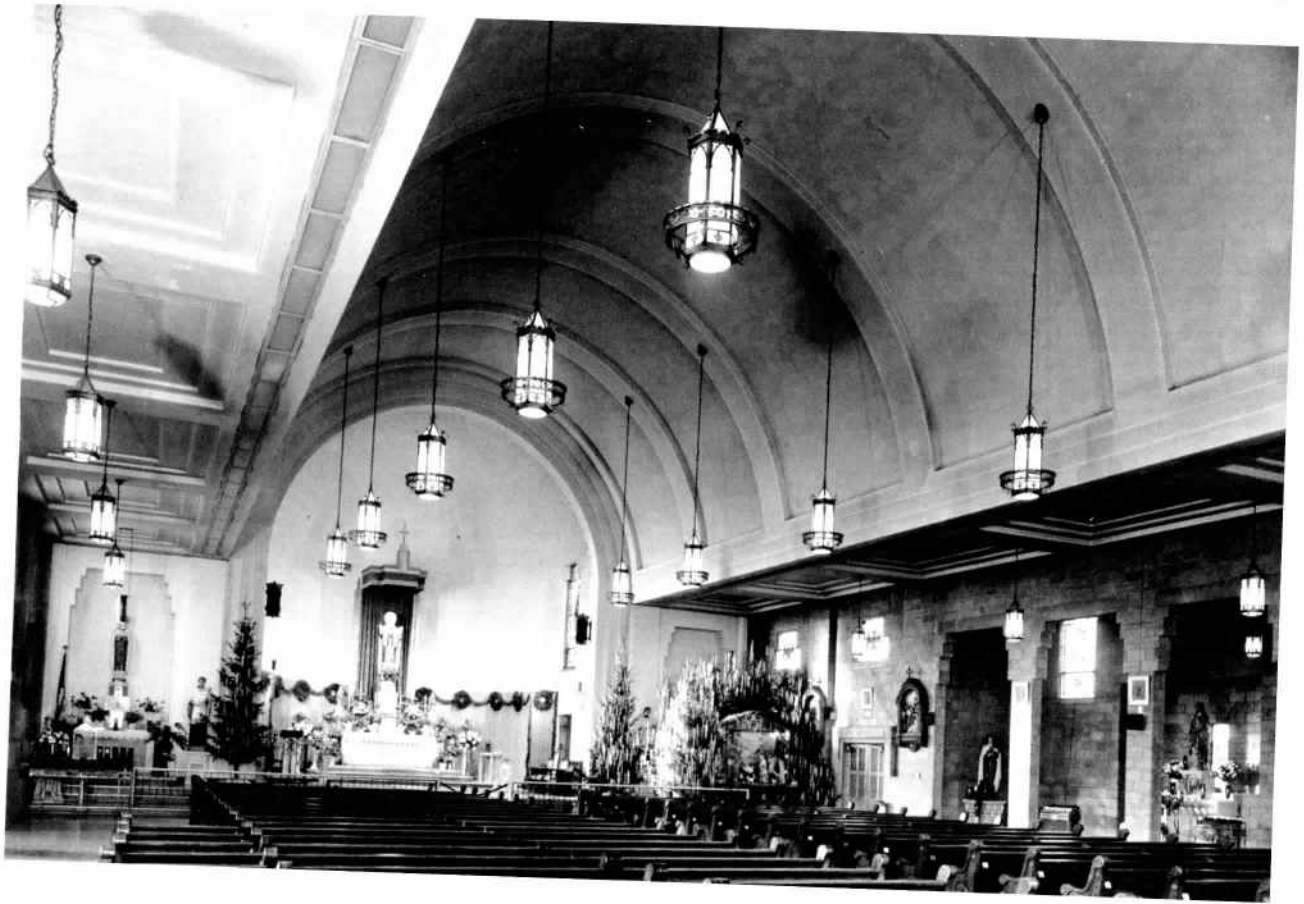
And in 1949, the cornerstone was blessed, and laid for the construction of the upper church as we know it today. Not much is documented about its construction. There are no written records and no verbal accounts of its completion available to us. Too many memories of how it was built have long been forgotten.

A now nearly exhausted Father Rybacki had seen it through, and whether by choice or unfair reappointment, was assigned to another parish.

Following the departure of Father Rybacki, the Reverend Francis Szczepanski assumed the pastorate in October of 1954 where he would remain for twenty-one years until his forced retirement in 1975. His accomplishments included a major renovation of the school, establishment of the Mother's Club, completion of the church interior including new lighting and demolition of the old hall/wooden school building. A new brick convent was built on the vacated



1954 Picture most probably of the installation of Rev. Francis Szczepanski as pastor of Sacred Heart. Of note is the absence of paint on the cinder block side walls of the church. There are also no center aisle lanterns or dome spotlights at the time, but track lighting, later removed, can be seen in the aisle ceiling just below the bottom lip of the dome. The teakwood screen behind the Christ statue on the main altar had not been built yet and the statues of Christ, Mary and Joseph have halos that were later removed for reasons of maintenance. St. Aloysius and St. Stanislaus guard the side altars, but would be later moved in favor of statues of the Infant of Prague and Our Lady of Fatima standing on plinths in the walls above.



*1958 Picture celebrating the installation of the center aisle dome lanterns obviously near Christmas time. Artificial trees would later replace the live trees that were the norm for both churches and homes up until the 1970's, but the same creche and Nativity scene would remain a constant fixture at yuletide in the church until its closing. Off in the right aisle alcove St. Theresa shares space with Our Lady of Sorrows. Not seen in the alcove in the far right corner is one of the church's two confessionals. At this same time, extensions to pews toward the rear of the church were added, as seen at bottom left.*

site for the Franciscan Sisters who would serve the parish for almost sixty years. Through the efforts of Father Rybacki and Father Szczepanski, the parish of Sacred Heart could now stand financially sound.

The Reverend Raymond Bartnikowski would follow as the tenth pastor of the parish. He

immediately began the work of bringing the parish in line with the modern guidelines set by the Second Vatican Council, which included a renovation of the church interior whereby the altar was turned to face the people and masses were said in English.





## Pastors of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church

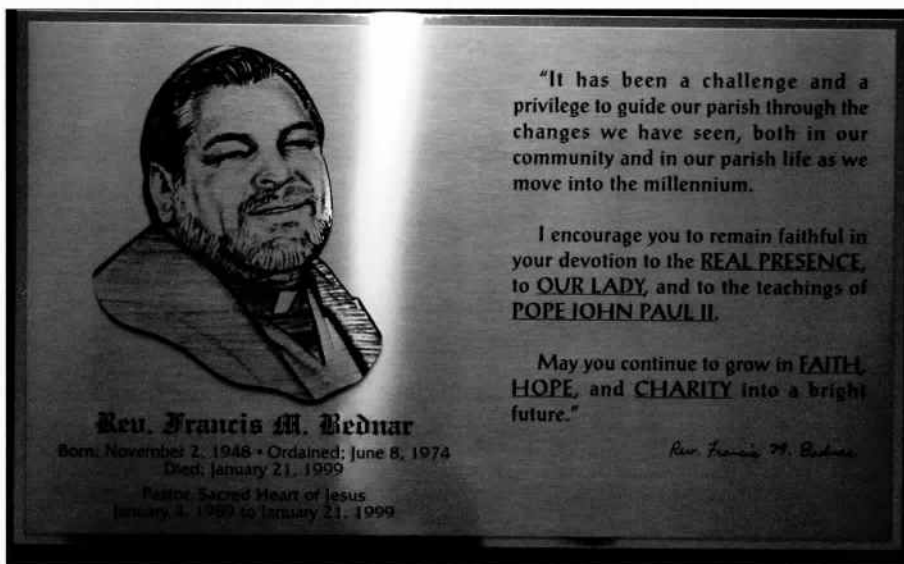
Rev. Felix Orzechowski	1891 – 1893	Rev. Joseph Kocincki	1932 – 1937
Rev. James Kula	1893 – 1895	Rev. Stanislaus Rybacki	1937 – 1954
Rev. Paul Cwiakala	1895 – 1899	Rev. Francis Szczepanski	1954 – 1975
Rev. Francis Wegrzynowski	1899 – 1900	Rev. Raymond Bartnikowski	1975 – 1988
Rev. Victor Szyrocki	1900 – 1916	Rev. Francis Bednar	1989 – 1999
Rev. John Czyzak	1916 – 1922	Rev. Joseph Mecir	1999 – 2010
Msgr. John Mlotkowski	1922 – 1932		

## Assistant Pastors

Rev. John Pokorny	1915 – 1916	Rev. Stanislaus Ciolek	1939 – 1948
Rev. John Zeglen	1917 – 1919	Rev. Thaddeus Michalski	1948 – 1951
Rev. John Minkinski	1919 – 1920	Rev. Anthony Gawlik	1951 – 1956
Rev. Stanislaus Jedruszczak	1920 – 1921	Rev. Walter Golembieski	1956 – 1964
Rev. Joseph Kopeznski	1921 – 1922	Rev. John Deka	1964 – 1964
Rev. J. Kubacki	1922 – 1923	Rev. Walter Dobosz	1964 – 1967
Rev. Stanislaus Rybacki	1922 – 1923	Rev. Francis Duda	1967 – 1968
Rev. Adolph Bernas	1924 – 1927	Rev. Edward Lajack	1968 – 1968
Rev. Leo A. Rygwalski	1927 – 1929	Rev. Leo Telesz	1968 – 1970
Rev. Max Krajdzieski	1929 – 1931	Rev. Edward Slosarz	1970–1975
Rev. Thaddeus A. Herudaj	1931 – 1932	Rev. Francis Karwoski	1975 – 1979
Rev. Alphonse A. Konarski	1932 – 1939	Rev. Robert Sanson	1979 – 1985

## Ordained Priests From the Parish

Rev. David Kosky, O. F. M.  
 Rev. Norbert Zgrabik, O. F. M.  
 Rev. Alojzy Dombrowski  
 Rev. Edmund Kuczarski  
 Rev. John Deka  
 Rev. Girard Cupple



## Reverend Francis Michael Bednar

Born: November 2, 1948

Died: January 21, 1999

Francis Michael Bednar was ordained as a priest on June 8, 1974. On January 4, 1989, Bishop James P. Lyke installed Father Bednar as the eleventh pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church.

For the next ten years, Father Bednar saw the parish through changes in the community as well as in the church, including the merger of the school with that of Immaculate Heart of Mary, initiated in the years shortly before his arrival. The nun's convent was now converted to a rectory providing living accommodations, meeting rooms, and office space. The former rectory was demolished to provide for additional parking. Under his direction, the parish was able to begin saving for the future.

Father Bednar loved being a priest. He will be remembered for his devotion to the Blessed Mother, instituting a celebration service every year on her birthday complete with cake and candles, and again for Jesus at what became the traditional Children's Mass on Christmas Eve. He served as Chaplain of the Blue Army. Father Francis visited Fatima and Portugal and encouraged Marian devotions and daily recitation of the rosary. He also encouraged devotion to the "Real Presence" and subscription to the teachings of Pope John Paul II. He loved history, studied

the lives of the Saints, and had plans to author his own book one day.

Beyond being called to priesthood, Father Bednar was blessed in his assignment as Pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church. He genuinely believed that this service was a privilege. Sacred Heart of Jesus truly became his home, the parishioners his family. He often stated that he never wanted to be re-assigned. He never was. On January 21, 1999, on the feast of St. Agnes, for whom his mother was named, Father Bednar was called to his eternal home. He must have known, as that previous Christmas Father Bednar wrote a letter to his parishioners in which he stated, "I want you to know that your friendship, support, generosity, and especially, your prayers are sincerely appreciated very much." This remains true today.

— *The Family of Father Francis Bednar*

Deeply saddened by the sudden death of Father Bednar, parishioners held on to one another and were guided in transition by Fr. William R. Dickinson, the newly named administrator. He showed the people of Sacred Heart a new way to grieve for Fr. Francis, reminding us to become more aware of what our parish community was made of and what we meant to each other as a congregation. Father Bill, as he was called, was only here at Sacred Heart for the month of February, but kept everyone close as they awaited a new pastor.



## Reverend Joseph S. Mecir

In March of 2000, Rev. Joseph S. Mecir became the twelfth pastor, quickly earning the hearts of the SHJ parishioners.

Although he faced many challenges, especially from the start, he graciously and personally managed to find the appropriate answers or solutions for many of the problems he faced. Father Joe made changes easy for parishioners to accept. With boundless energy, he led by example, and you would always find him painting, cleaning, cooking, doing yard work, and even washing his car. He was always helpful with many of the social clubs and activities, quickly pitching in wherever needed. He was an all around person, liked by all, as was his constant four-legged companion, Juliette.

Spiritually, he enhanced the beauty of this beloved church through restoration of the statues and stained glass windows. Organ repairs were completed and once again it sounded like new. His personality just added to the charisma of the church.

Through Father Joe's leadership, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church would exhibit a vibrancy

and togetherness that defined what a church community should be and that many a church envied. It was a church on solid financial and spiritual standing, succeeding with less to work with as compared to other larger churches that continue to fail with far more resources.

But it was a success that would doom the church, taken away by a cold-hearted bishop, who, against committee recommendation, began selling off such prized assets in an attempt to stave off mounting Diocesan expenses, without regard for any business or common sense and more importantly, with indifference to the spiritual well being of so many who were brought up to believe in and worked so hard for their church and faith.

And on May 2, 2010, following a noon closing Mass, after 122 years of community service to past and present parishioners, their families and friends, and the Orchard Area neighborhood of Slavic Village at large, the doors closed, and the bells of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, on the corner of E. 71st Street and Kazimier Avenue in Cleveland, Ohio, would ring no more...

## A Day in the Neighborhood

Glass bottles of milk delivered by an early morning milkman from a dairyman's truck sit on side or back door stoops, some with the separated cream at the top long since sipped off by an early rising eager youngster when no one was looking. The bread truck might drive by later with cookies, cakes, or pies. A Charles' Chips man might deliver salted chips or pretzel snacks in one pound cans later in the week.

The bang of a wooden screen door against the frame would signal yet another child running out to play. They headed out to such places as Sonny's, Skinny's, or Pickle Pond or simply said they were going down "the dump." There were swimming holes, railroad trestles, and plenty of adventure in just exploring. A few may have snuck some whole potatoes from the basement vegetable bin for later roasting in shallow fire pits dug into the ground.

Behind a windblown maze of bed sheets and pillow cases hung by wooden clothespins across lines propped up with poles, housewives could be found talking to one another over back yard fences. Clothes were sometimes boiled in pots over small basement burners or the water squeezed out by hand, cranked through the soft rollers of a wringer washer.

The soft click-click-click of a two-wheeled reel push mower might be heard from the front yard as someone cut grass.

A truck from the Thomas Coal Co. might back up in a driveway where the home's owner stood with shovel in hand. Delivery of the soft black bituminous pieces would slide out onto the driveway through a flapping end gate as the

truck bed rose up into the air. The coal was then shoveled through a small square door in the side of the house down into the basement coal bin where it would be shoveled out again as needed during the colder months into furnaces that heated the home.

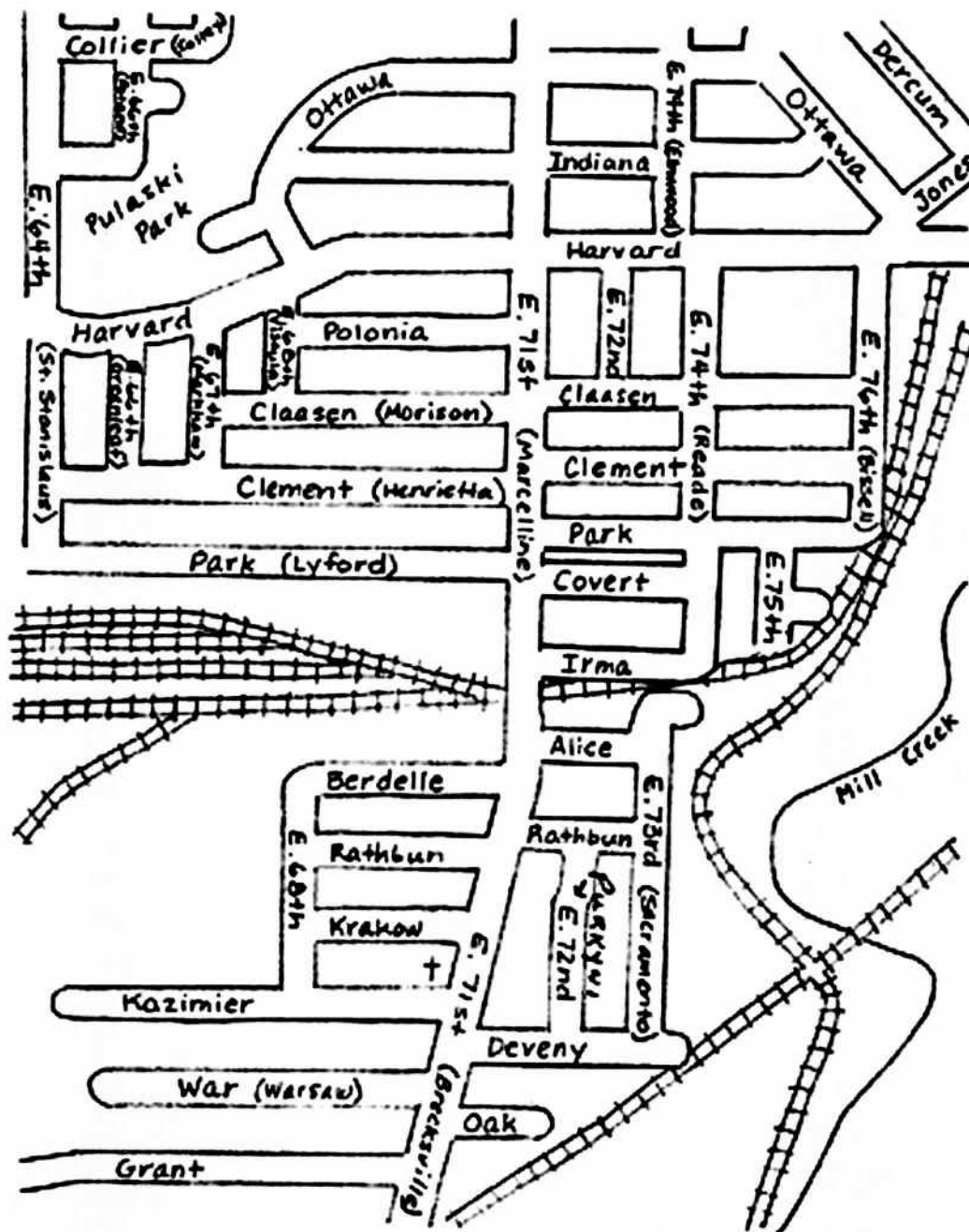
Girls played hopscotch, jumped rope, ran through lawn sprinklers, and rode bikes. Boys also rode their bikes, built balsa wood models, raced slot cars, or played "army." Many with baseball gloves and bats in hand headed for the playing fields down by the orchards. They might have passed a large, sad looking tired horse lumbering up the red brick paved street pulling a heavy wooden wagon driven by the "paper rags" man who announced his coming by singing out the same. A recycling man long before the environmental concerns of today, he accepted bundled newspaper, boxed junk metals or glass jars, and bags of rags among other items.

Not much went to waste in any household of the time as further evidenced by the pig's knuckles, pig's feet, cow's ears, neck bones, gizzards, liver, and tongue that might appear on the dinner table, and Lord only knew what was hand pressed into those sausage casings.

You walked up the corner to the butcher, baker, or store of choice, whose shop was usually identified by name on a soft green canvas awning hung over the front sidewalk wound down in place by a long black twist-handled pole by the proprietor before the morning opening, who would then broom sweep the sidewalk in front before greeting the first of his customers. Stores usually closed a half-day on Wednesday afternoons and never sold on Sundays. Women



# KRAKOWA



The neighborhood in its earliest years

It wasn't until 1906 that Cleveland city streets running North-South were renamed as "numbered streets" (Marcelline Street became E. 71st Street et al) Marcelline Street extended down through Cuyahoga Heights and across the canal and Cuyahoga River up into Independence becoming Route 21 – Brecksville Road. In its earliest days it was said that you could drive on Route 21 straight to its end in Miami, Florida, with children often sitting out on 71st Street on Sunday nights counting out of town license plates on cars leaving the city. E. 71st Street's direct connection with Independence would end when the Willow Freeway and Cloverleaf was completed in 1940, with E. 71st St then ending at Canal Road.

and men wore hats, a gentleman always tipping his to acknowledge a lady.

The bane of every unlucky boy forced to accompany his mother was Barbash Department Store. (Hey, the "department" was just one large storefront showroom!) More importantly, while children tried on clothes, mothers could look at the latest in dress and fashions for the upcoming church bunco and card party that upcoming Sunday.

On your way to the store you might get passed by a couple of altar boys from that morning's funeral, on their way to a store to spend their "two bits" serving tip on ice cream cones, all day sundaes, or the best tasting banana popsicles, and creamsicles that waited in coolers with sliding-back glass tops. Empty glass pop bottles could be returned to the store for coin credit and fill your pockets further with penny candy such as jawbreakers, sour balls, root beer barrels, licorice whips, Mary Janes, or a pack of Beeman's.

The church bells would ring the noon angelus reminding everyone of time for lunch. Taverns or cafes could be found on every block, usually all built with that one same drunken footed nightmare, a stone stoop corner entrance. Some might have a small black and white picture, three channel, antenna TV hung up above the bar in a ceiling corner, and some lucky kids might accompany their fathers for a Saturday afternoon of a bottle of pop, small bag of chips, watching Gorgeous George wrestle on the small screen. Many also served food. Always delicious fish fries, like those at Casey's Tavern or Hillside Restaurant were a favorite, as some families religiously observed meatless Fridays year round.

Next door to the bar, in the delicatessen, other kids spun wire-framed magazine carousels looking for a favorite comic book, waiting for the Cleveland Press truck to arrive and kick out bundles of the afternoon newspaper for delivery on their routes.

Evening cookouts with neighbors were done on crooked three-legged charcoal grills, coals hopefully evenly drenched in lighter fluid and lit with a quick fireball whoosh from a lighted match carefully thrown into the briquettes. A game of nickel pinochle or canasta might break out, the day's thirst quenched by bottles of beer with names like Rolling Rock, Carling Black Label, Pabst Blue Ribbon, Iron City, or Genesee.

As the sun set, people sat talking to one another on lawn chairs or cushioned metal gliders on front porches. A few sat on steps with a garden hose in hand, a sweeping spray watering down the front lawn. Laughing kids played tag, hide or seek, ran from the boogeyman, or caught lightning bugs in jars during the deepening twilight, while fishermen walked the yards pulling at the ground with flashlights in hand looking for earthworms as the next day's bait. One by one, neighbors would say their goodnights, calling it a night, and retire inside to their homes.

It was a busy day in the neighborhood, and would be once again tomorrow.



# Map of Neighborhood Businesses

## Circa 1930's - 1970's

From the bridge to Harvard Ave

Grant Ave to the Newburgh Southshore Bridge

HARVARD AVE	Bar Harvard Jewelers Sarnecki's Supermarket (Gold's Supermarket) Fruit & Vegetable Shop Bank Sunrise Cafe
POLONIA AVE	Nighthawk's Cafe CLAASEN AVE
CLAASEN AVE	Komorowski Funeral Home Aetna Sewing Machines People's Shoe Shop (Slezak's) Various Shops Dr. Stang D.D.S. Dr. Turner D.D.S. (Dentists) Krakow Pharmacy (Miskiewicz)
CLEMENT AVE	CLEMENT AVE The Golden Mule Lounge The Polonaise Lounge The Clover Café
PARK AVE	PARK AVE Various Named Delicatessens Tom's Barbershop
PARK AVE	Park Av. Cafe (Numerous Other Names)
PARK AVE	John Wasniak's Grocery & Meat Market The Ice House Voting Shanty On Election Days)
PARK AVE	COVERT AVE Sunoco Service Station Jim's Fleet Wing Service Station
PARK AVE	IRMA AVE

BERDELLE AVE	Jakubowski's Confectionary Hilinski's Candy & Confectionary ALICE AVE Bars (Variously Named) Shoemaker Shop Mioduszewski's Meats- Poultry - Groceries Marcelline Food Market Bartkowski's Butcher Shop Lawson's Joe Wacko's Sohio Gas Station
RATHBUN AVE	RATHBUN AVE Sacred Heart Nun's Convent Rathbun Playground Steve's TV Shoemaker Shop T&L Dry Cleaners Kate "The Bootlegger" Jaszkievicz Ice Cream - Candy- Confectionary Michalik Heating
KRAKOW AVE	Babiak's Zaremba's Casey's (Wozniak) Tavern DEVENY AVE Beer Joint Jaskiewicz TV
KAZIMIER AVE	KAZIMIER AVE Zasucha's Gadomski's Paradise Meats Samosky's Bakery Gus And Min Krajewski's Butcher Shop War Ave Playground George Hyatt's Stop Over Café
WAR AVE	WAR AVE (Various Bar Names Including) Hattie's Derbin's
GRANT AVE	GRANT AVE Kaminski's Tavern Benjamin Moore Paints

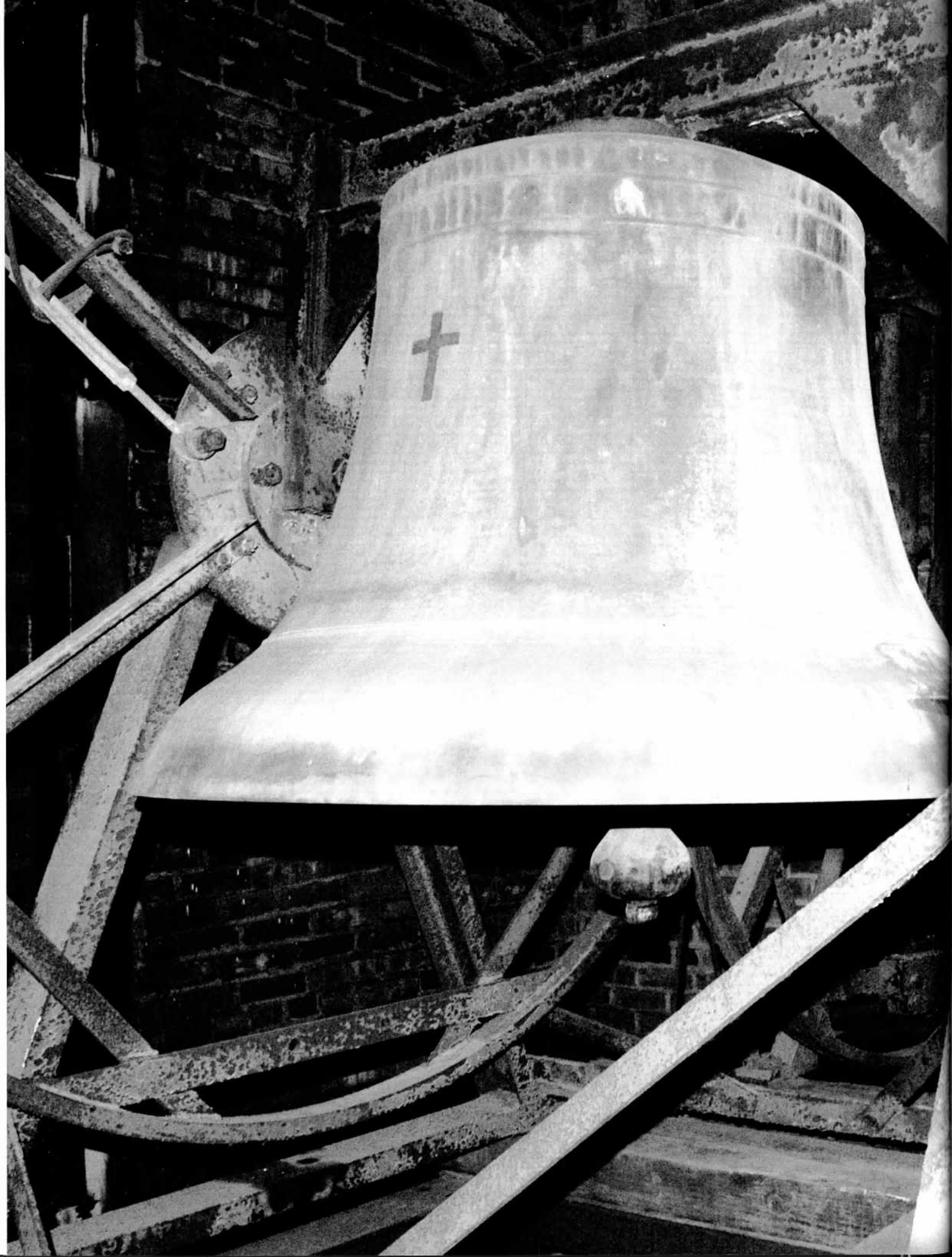
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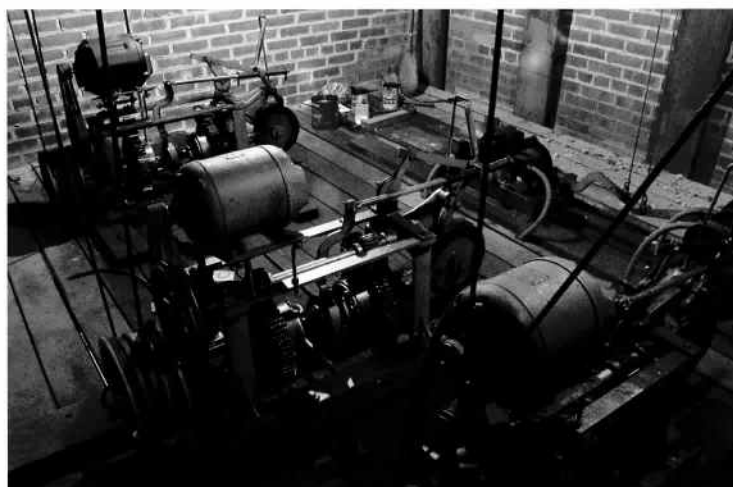
E. 71ST ST





## Chapter Two

# MOTORS, BELLS, & BENCHES



**U**nlike many modern-day churches with electric or digitally sounded chimes, Sacred Heart's belfry houses three different sized real brass bells. Four various sized motors and pulleys work off two clock timers in various combinations to sound the distinctive peals heard for the angelus, funerals, services, and start of Mass.

Originally, the bells were located in a small wooden structure at the schoolyard entrance where they were rung with a pull rope by hand for church times and the start of school.

More than one person tells the story of himself or watching someone else bouncing up off the ground as they hung from the rope with each turn of the bell. These same bells were moved to the uppermost floor of the bell tower during construction of the upper church and remain in use today.

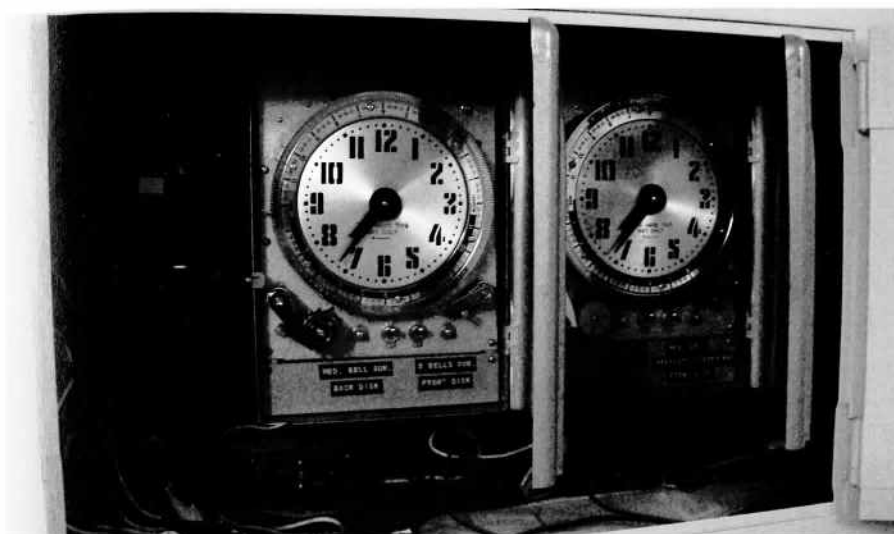
Running along the length of the side aisles and across of the top of the ceiling dome just under the wooden roof of the church are wooden plank catwalks. The catwalks are used to service spotlights in the dome and for general maintenance of the ceilings, eaves, and clay tile roof. They are accessed through little doors found on either side of the choir loft.



*Unknown to many and unseen to but a few...*



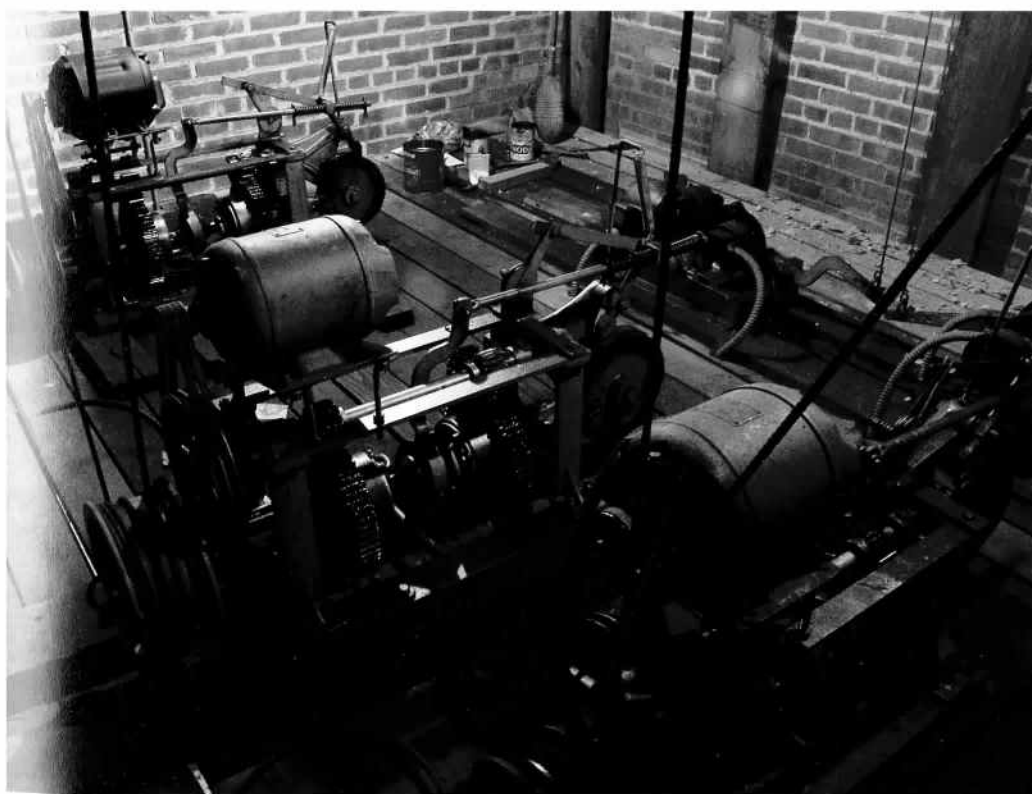
Catwalks used to service lighting and maintenance run the length of the side aisles and top of the dome just above the ceiling but under the roof. They were entered by hatchway doors found on either side off of the choir loft.



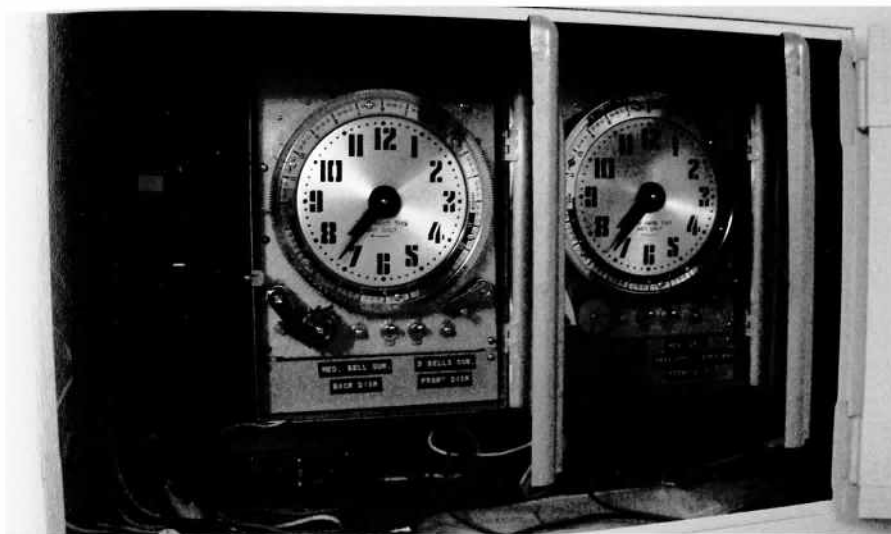
Hidden behind doors in the sacristy wall are the two time clocks controlling the ringing of the church bells. Incremental grooves on the edge of clock dials could be pinned for any minute of the day to activate the bell motors. One clock controlled Saturday and Sunday Mass times, the other weekdays and the Angelus.



Two of the three bells of the Church



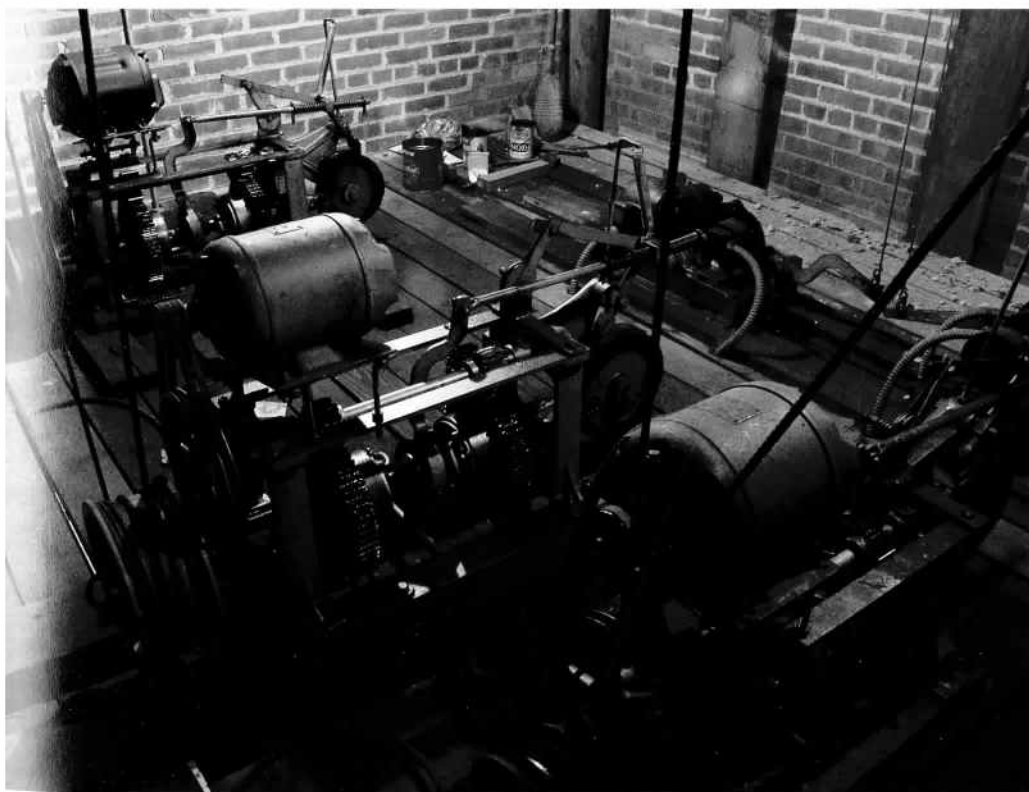
The four motors that control the three bells found in the landing above. Varying the speed and combinations of the motors, and consequently the pulley belts reaching up through small holes in the ceiling to the bells above, allow for the different identifying tolls.



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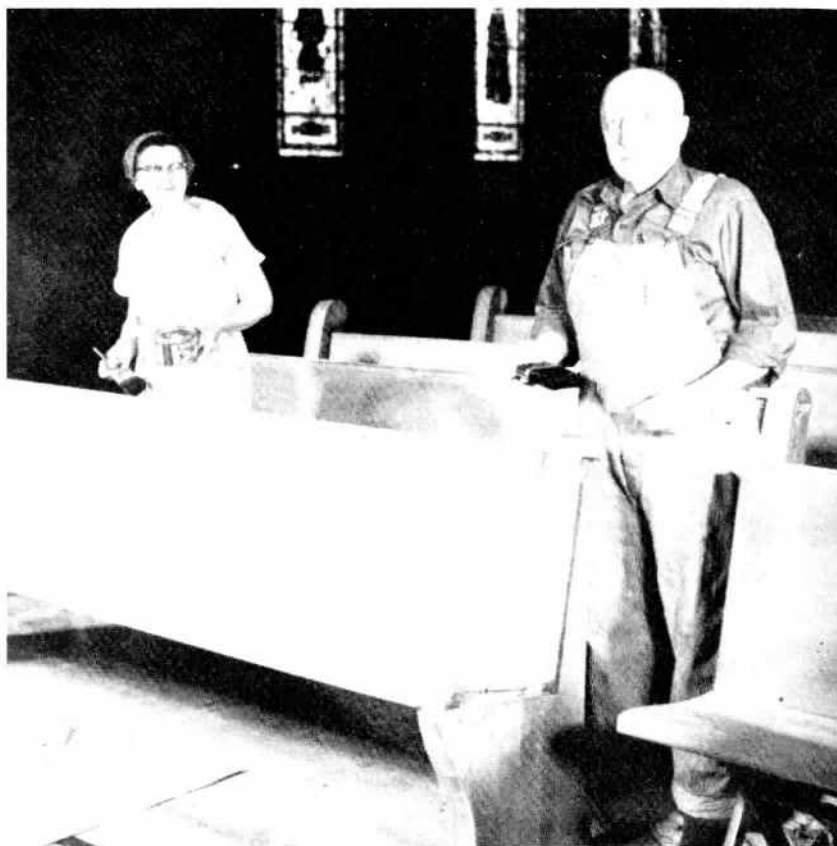
Two of the three bells of the Church



The four motors that control the three bells found in the landing above. Varying the speed and combinations of the motors, and consequently the pulley belts reaching up through small holes in the ceiling to the bells above, allow for the different identifying tolls.



Karol Wicinski and wife Helen work to complete the refinishing of the church benches in 1961 as part of a total renovation of the interior of the church. 73 years of use had dirtied and darkened the benches until the refinishing was completed, giving the benches the lighter colored tone that we know today.



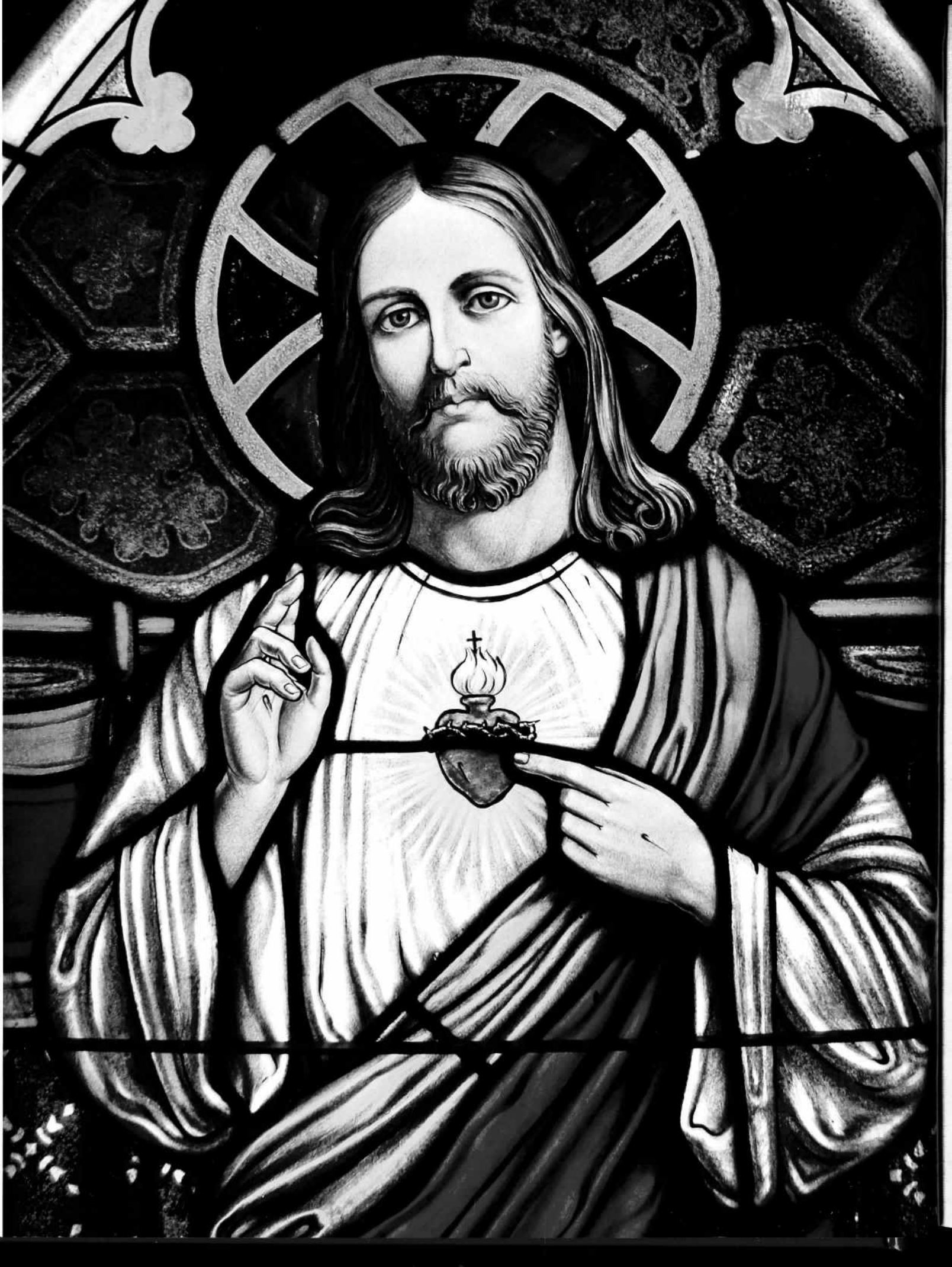
A close up of the wooden scrollwork adorning the outside of each pew. Many a child's finger lazily traced the grooves during a much too long sermon or service.



The pews and interior of the church looking back at the rear entrance.



The last two rear benches on the middle right side reserved for ushers of the day



## Chapter Three

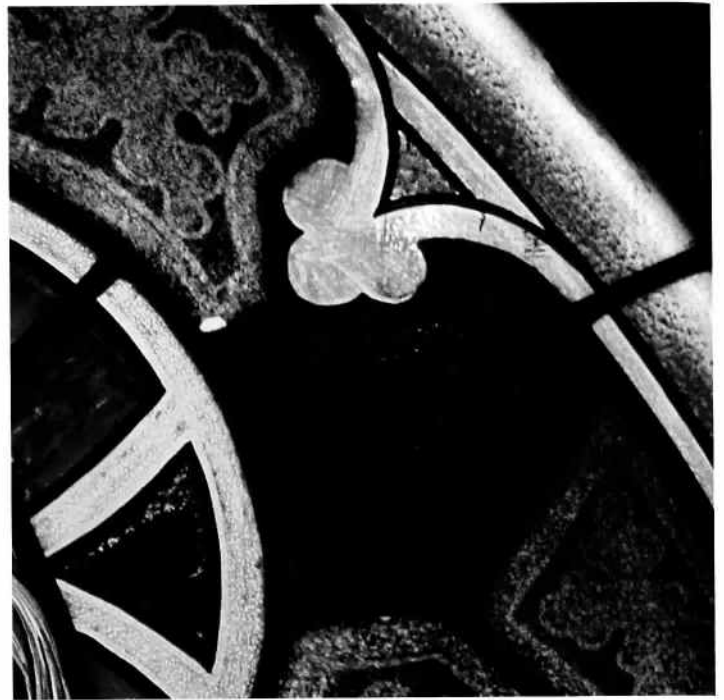
# THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS



**A**t one time or another in our lives, who hasn't sat staring in wonderment, mesmerized by the completed jigsaw puzzles that are the stained glass windows of Sacred Heart Church? What child in us hasn't tried to count the number of colored pieces that have been collectively orchestrated in bringing forth these works of art before us?

Stained glass windows go back as far as medieval times and were almost exclusively associated with churches and religious buildings. The over two dozen various sized stained glass windows of Sacred Heart were carefully chosen and represent some of Poland's greatest saints. Because of costs and architectural design, their selection, scope, and size may never again be repeated in a local church, and therefore they will remain truly exclusive and identifiable to our beloved church.





## THE STORY OF THE SACRED HEART STAINED GLASS WINDOW

Hidden away, passed over, and moved between back rooms and under stairwells, a century-old wooden crate containing an object long forgotten, if not completely unknown to most parishioners of Sacred Heart Church, remained undiscovered for decades.

Father Joe Mecir found the crate shortly after assuming the duties of pastor. Upon opening the crate, he discovered it to contain a most beautiful

stained glass rendition of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ, the namesake of the church.

Further research revealed the stained glass window was ordered from Germany in 1888, the year the parish was founded, and was to be eventually placed in the dome when the new church was built. When it arrived, it was first used as a freestanding backdrop to the altar and tabernacle in the temporary church which was

the second floor of the four-room wooden school building on what today is the corner of East 71st and Krakow Avenue, and again later on in the basement church.

The wooden structure that was serving as church and school was moved in its entirety to where the present-day rectory offices sit to allow for building of the new church which began in 1908. The basement was soon constructed only to find out that the church had run out of money for further construction. But the completion of the basement did allow the church to move out from the second-floor school building.

The parishioners once again began saving money to complete construction of their church, but the school was now running out of room for the increasing number of students it was accommodating. It was reported that as many as 850 students were attending, and the parishioners petitioned the diocese to build a new school with the money on hand. Permission was granted, and the brick and stone school that we know today was built and opened in 1917.

Once again the parishioners of Sacred Heart Church began saving to complete the upper portion of the church, and construction was finally completed thirty-two years later, in 1949. But construction of the dome had been completed without the stained glass window.

It seems the contractor misunderstood the plans to include two other rectangular windows in the

dome and not the stained glass on hand, and the window was never put in place. Today, if you look up you can see two square edgings where the windows would have been cut into the dome. We can only imagine how beautiful the church sanctuary might have looked with the rays of a setting sun in the western sky shining down through the colored glass at twilight time.

Not wanting such a treasure to go unappreciated and to give it the honor and respect it deserved, Father Joe commissioned Blashford Glass to restore it for exposition in the church. Mr. Blashford began his work in earnest only to immediately succumb to respiratory problems including a collapsed lung. He recovered only to fall ill once again with the same malady in a second attempt to complete the restoration work. "It was as if the devil himself was trying to prevent its completion," he was said to comment. Amid continued respiratory distress it would be a year and a half later until work was completed and the window installed, coincidentally, just days before the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

Today the beauty of the stained glass window can be seen backlit and built into the wall of the daily chapel behind the main altar of the church. The church was not billed for the cost of the restoration from Blashford Glass. And although Sacred Heart may have gotten the better of the deal, Mr. Blashford may have finally gotten the better of the devil.



St. Casimirus  
(St. Casimir)



St. Casimir was a Polish-Lithuanian prince who became a patron saint of Poland, Lithuania, and youth. Born into a long line of royalty with family members who at one time would rule Poland, Austria, Bohemia, Hungary, and the Holy Roman Empire, he was offered the throne of Hungary as part of a coup, at the age of thirteen, by other accounts age fifteen, only to fail in his undertaking by his conscientious objection of war and reluctance to take the sovereignty by force.

From an early age Casimir was taught and realized there was only one true king, and throughout his life stood by this loyalty to God, forsaking

the riches and ordinary comforts afforded him by sleeping on the floor and wearing the plainest of clothes, while remaining defiantly celibate, keeping in prayer, continually studying, and helping the poor.

The heir apparent to the throne of Poland, he got a second chance at monarchy when his father King Casimir IV (of Poland) went to Lithuania for five years, leaving his son to rule. During that time Casimir reigned with great dignity and prudence, possessing great charm and humility, and becoming a favorite of the Polish people. Several miracles were ascribed to him.

## Our Lady of Czestochowa



Known as the “Black Madonna” and “The Queen and Protector of Poland,” it is a holy icon of the Virgin Mary, one of Poland’s holiest relics and one of that country’s national symbols. The Czestochowa Shrine remains one of Poland’s most popular shrines today with Poles and others making a pilgrimage once a year and traditionally receiving provisions from people lined up along the road to those who have walked the entire day.

Its origin remains unknown, although one legend has it that St. Luke painted it on a tabletop from the house of the Holy Family.

Story has it, Hussites, who were Christian extremists in the Holy Wars of the time, stormed and pillaged the monastery sanctuary where it first hung, taking the painting as part of their spoils. But once the painting was put in the robber’s wagon, the horses refused to move. Throwing the painting down to the ground, one of the plunderers drew his sword and thrust two deep strikes into the cheek of the Blessed Mother. In the attempt at a third strike, the robber fell to the ground, squirming in agony to his death. Another story has it, the painting began to bleed, and in a panic the Hussites left it behind.

Later on, the presence of the painting in a Polish church and the devout veneration to the Blessed Mother it received while there were thought to have saved the church from being destroyed by fire but not before the flesh-tone pigments were darkened.

Artists and painters remain unsuccessful in any attempt to correct either the scars or darkening on what must certainly be an image protected by heaven.



## St. Stanislaus (Kostka)



Throughout his life, Stanislaus Kostka was known and remembered for his fervent belief and singular devotion to God, working to achieve a total religious perfection.

His devotion to spiritual things was so complete that at times he would become unconscious or would be found in a euphoric state. His brother Paul often mistreated him and would beat him because of this piety.

One time while gravely ill, but not allowed to call for a priest, he prayed for his personal patron St. Barbara, who appeared to him in a vision along with two angels, administering Communion. He was cured by the Blessed Mother who told him to become a Jesuit although it was against his family's wishes. Stanislaus is often pictured with a baby in his arms because Our Lady put the Infant Savior upon his bed during his cure.

His desire to be in heaven on the Feast of Her Assumption was so strong that his prayers were answered. He became seriously ill once again on August 9th, at which time it was revealed to him that his wish would be granted. And on August 15th, the day of Her feast, his soul ascended to join his Heavenly Mother. He died at the age of eighteen, and his tomb became the site of many miraculous cures.

St. Stanislaus is a popular saint of Poland, his name invoked for palpitations of the heart, and he is also known as the patron for protection against broken bones.



St John Cantius  
(St. John of Kanty)



Brilliant student, priest, and professor of theology at the University of Cracow (Krakow) in Poland.

A serious, humble man, overly generous to the poor, working with little sleep and eating no meat and little of anything else throughout life, John Cantius, at first terrified at the prospect, overcame doubts of himself as a parish priest when finally he won the hearts of his parishioners after several years as pastor of his church.

Later on he returned to Cracow and taught Scripture for the rest of his life, taking time off to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and hoping to be martyred. He then made other pilgrimages to Rome with nothing more than the luggage on his back.

At the time of his death, he was so well loved that his veneration began immediately, and he was declared a patron of Poland long before his canonization into sainthood.

## Sancta Hedviga (Jadwiga)



Monarch of Poland in the late thirteen hundreds, Jadwiga was officially deemed a “king” because Poland had no legal provision for declaring a queen. Following political maneuvering, she assumed the throne at age ten and was married by arrangement at age twelve to twenty-six-year-old Jogalia, Grand Duke of Lithuania.

As king, the young Jadwiga at age fourteen led two successful military, but peaceful, expeditions reclaiming lost territories of Poland. She was known to be a great philanthropist

with the wealth and riches of the nation, and numerous miracles were recounted, justifying her sainthood.

These miracles include “Jadwiga’s Cross,” a large black crucifix that hangs in the north aisle of the Wavel Cathedral from which Christ is said to have spoken to her. The cross is still there today and her relics buried beneath. Another is Jadwiga smuggling food from the castle to give to the poor, and when confronted by her suspicious husband, the food (which would have earned her a death sentence), miraculously turned into a garland of roses. To this day, she is always pictured wearing an apron of roses.

One day, Jadwiga was also known to have given a poor stonemason a piece of jewelry from her foot. But in leaving the stonemason’s workplace, the king noticed her footprint in the plaster floor, even though the plaster had hardened before their visit. Known as “Jadwiga’s Foot,” the supposed footprint can still be seen in one of Krakow’s churches.

Venerated by the church as Saint Hedwig and known as the patron saint of queens and a united Europe, it would be 1997 before she was accredited full canonization by the Pope.

## Sct. Andrea (Andrew) Bobola

Although born into nobility, Andrew Bobola entered the Jesuits and served as an advisor, preacher, and superior in various places throughout Lithuania. He distinguished himself through the wonderment of his preaching, conversions to the faith, and work during an epidemic of the plague. Later on while doing work as a country missionary in that region, he was captured by Cossacks, tortured, and killed.

No one knew where the body was buried until forty-four years later when Father Martin Godebski, rector of the College of the City of Pinsk, had a vision as to where the corpse could be found. It was recovered and brought back undecomposed, a sign of holiness reserved for sainthood.

St. Andrew Bobola is just one of the "Incorruptibles" recognized by the Catholic Church, and part of the Bobola family can still be found in Poland today.

### *The Incorruptibles*

The Incorruptibles are Catholic saints and other beatified individuals whose bodies remain without decay long after death, and therefore are thought to be under divine protection.

Recognized by the church as proof of holiness, it can lead the way for consideration for canonization, which is the process in which the Catholic Church by decree of the Pope formally declares a deceased person to be recognized as a saint.

Canonization follows a long process requiring extensive proof that person lived and died in an exemplary way worthy of sanctification. This can also include martyrdom for their Catholic faith and proven miracles attributed to their name.







## Chapter Four

# THE CHURCH TODAY





The statue of Mary standing on the right side altar.



Rectory chapel used for 24 hour adoration



For the last twenty two years during the months of Mary - May and October as well as Easter and Christmas the Mikolajski sisters, Pat (Witczak) and Gloria (Haver) decorated an altar in honor and adoration of the Blessed Virgin. The shrine greeted church visitors and stood in the left vestibule wing which originally served at the Baptistry before such ceremonies were moved to the church sanctuary.





The Church Sanctuary

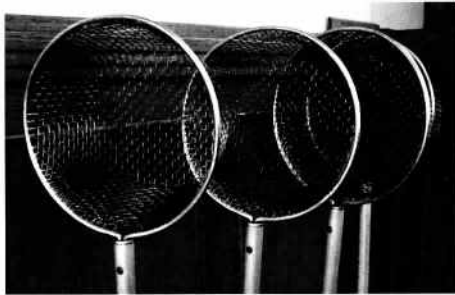


The daily Mass Chapel





The Mass Book



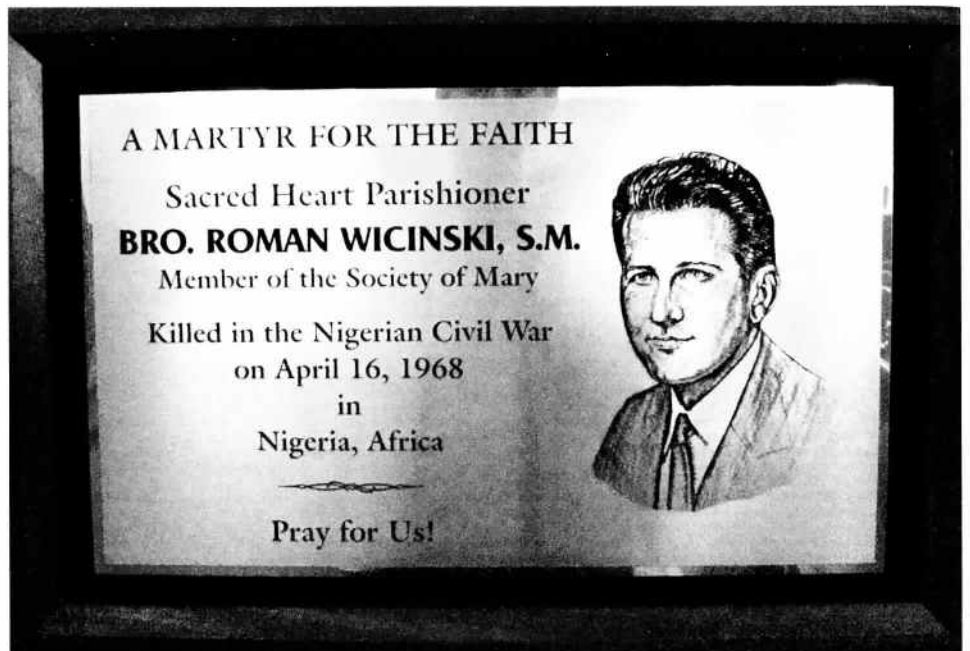
Collection baskets which replaced long handled weaved palm baskets used for years before.



Organ pipes reach up in the choir.



The Choir Organ



A son of the parish, Brother Roman Wicinski was an African missionary who gave up his life doing the work of his faith.



Ceiling lanterns in the church



Lilies were always a part of the sanctuary decorations at Easter time.



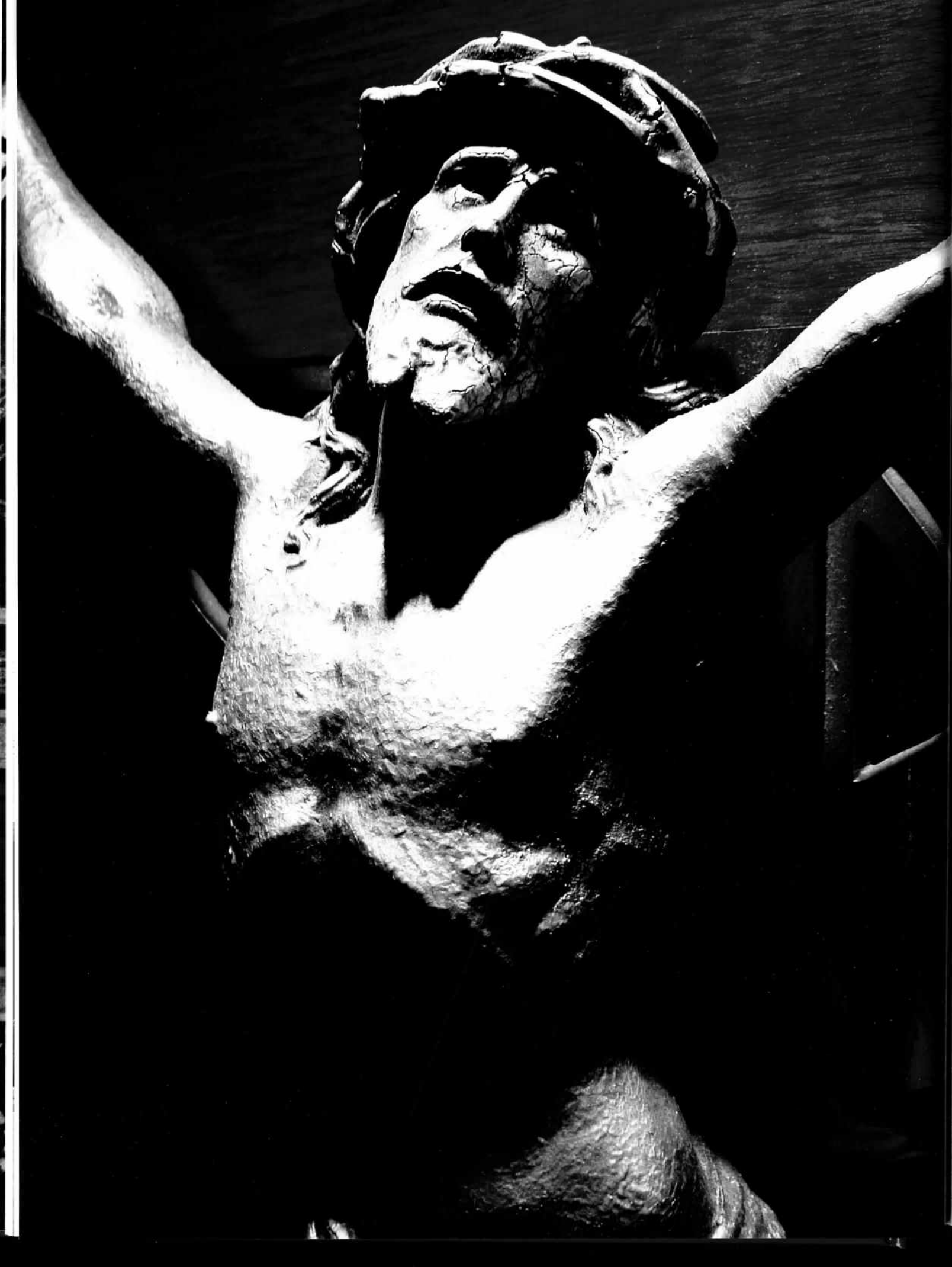
Christmas time decorations in the church.



The Christmas Manger



Banner celebrating 122 years of service to the community and the faith.



## Chapter Five

# THE STATUES



**T**hey stand tall, stoic, and silent. Never to speak, yet each tells a story by its mere presence. In corners, alcoves, or standing high on plinths, they represent saints who listen to our prayers, are invoked, and intercede on our behalf when asked. They are the statues found in Sacred Heart of Jesus Church.

Unlike many modern churches of today void of any statuary and with an overly simplistic if not sanitized look in design and décor, these marble, porcelain, and plaster likenesses of saints, angels, and the Holy Family will always be a memorable and recognizable part of Sacred Heart.

Statue makers of the saints often incorporated symbolic objects along with their statues. A lily refers to innocence. A cross represents piety and sacrifice. A skull refers to an early death or that without Christ there is only death. A rosary is symbolic of devotion to the Blessed Mother.



## St. Francis



Founder of the Franciscans, St. Francis is popularly known as the patron saint of animals, celebrated by many churches with a “blessing of animals” on his feast day of October 4th.

Francis is also well known for forsaking wealth, having been inspired by the Gospel to devote his life to one of poverty. Choosing not to be ordained a priest, his preaching and work netted him a following nonetheless, and with eleven of his closest disciples he made a journey to see the Pope where the group was granted permission to act as an order, becoming the Order of Franciscans.

His preaching was so powerful that it inspired Claire of Assisi to realize her calling and helped her to establish the Order of Poor Ladies, which

would become better known as the Poor Clares. Meantime, ever growing number of friars were divided into groups and sent across the European continent to spread the Word of God and convert sinners.

St. Francis was the first to celebrate Christmas by setting up a nativity manger. Legendary stories of his ability to gain control over wild beasts and his talks to seemingly attentive audiences of birds and other animals led to his depiction and association as their patron saint.

Over the years the Franciscan Order has been a source in providing priests and nuns to many churches and schools such as ours.

## St. Anthony



St. Anthony can always be remembered as having “the gift of gab.”

Born to a wealthy family as Fernando Martins de Bulhões, he would later take the name Antonio (Anthony) upon entering the Franciscan Order. He would join the order following the heroism he saw in five friars he befriended who were later martyred on their way to Morocco to preach the Gospel.

On a return trip to Portugal, his ship was set aground on the coast of Sicily. Near death he was sent to a hospice in Italy where he lived in a hermitage and was put to work in the kitchen.

One day on the occasion of an ordination of priests, a quandary arose between the attending groups of Franciscan and Dominican friars as to which of them would give the Gospel. The Dominicans had been known as great preachers, but it seems neither group had prepared a sermon. Suspecting his true talents, the head of the hermitage called upon St. Anthony, dissuading his fears by telling him to let the guidance of the Holy Spirit put words into his mouth.

His rich voice, eloquence, and the theme and substance of his sermon captivated his listeners, and he was quickly commissioned to preach the Gospel throughout the region. His renown became so great he was appointed to the Papal Court, under Pope Gregory IX, where his preaching was again lauded and he was instructed to write books of sermons for special occasions.

When St. Anthony died at age thirty-six, it was said the children cried in the streets and church bells rang on their own, rung by angels from heaven honoring his death. Today his tongue lies in state incorrupted, glistening as if still alive and moist.

## St. Aloysius (Gonzaga)



Even for such a short life, having died at the young age of twenty-three from the plague, St. Aloysius's work in theological studies to become a Jesuit priest and his devotion to caring for the sick following an outbreak of famine and pestilence distinguished him for sainthood.

During his life his vow of purity was so devout that with eyes downcast, he never looked at any woman including his mother. Owing to his manner of death, he was considered a patron saint of plague victims and for those suffering the ravages of AIDS today.

## Our Lady of Fatima



The best known story of modern religious time is that of Our Lady of Fatima in which the Blessed Virgin appeared six times to three shepherd children in the city of Fatima, Portugal, in the year 1917. Her appearance included the message to all mankind in which Heaven would grant peace to all the world if Her requests for prayer, reparation, and consecration were heard and obeyed. This request included the praying of the rosary on a daily basis and the devotion of reparation of the First Five Saturdays.

The Virgin also foretold the coming of World War II, showed the children visions of hell, and predicted the conversion of Russia. A third secret is thought yet to be revealed, hidden in the possession of the Pope.





St. Barbara just may be the hardest working saint of all. She is the patron saint of artillerymen, including gunsmiths, miners, armorers, military engineers, miners, and anyone who works with explosives. She is invoked against thunder and lightning as well as accidents or explosions from gunpowder. Today she is also the patron saint of astronauts and a large number of armies the world over who celebrate her feast day on December 4th with a myriad of parades, festivals, and celebrations. She is also venerated by Catholics who face the danger of sudden or violent death in the workplace.

Born the daughter of a rich pagan named Dioscorus, Barbara was guarded by her father and confined to a tower in an attempt to shield her from the outside world and its influences, but by then she had already secretly become a Christian. Leaving for a journey, her father had commanded workers to erect a bathhouse for her, but during his absence, Barbara, in an act of defiance, had three windows put in it as a symbol of the Holy Trinity, instead of the two demanded by her father.

Upon his return, Barbara confessed to her own Christianity, whereupon Dioscorus drew his sword to kill her, but her prayers were answered by an explosion which created an opening in the tower where she escaped, or was transported by

## St. Barbara



some accounts, to a nearby mountain gorge only to be betrayed back to her father by a shepherd, who in turn suffered God's vengeance as he was turned to stone and his flock into locusts.

Dioscorus dragged her before the magistrate of the province where she was cruelly tortured to renounce her faith. Each night the darkness of the prison would be bathed in light and new miracles would occur. Her wounds would heal by the next day, and torches to be used to burn her went out as soon as they neared her. Finally she was condemned to death by beheading. Her father, Dioscorus, carried out the sentence, but was killed by a lightning strike on his way home. Her tomb would become the site of many miracles.

The city of Santa Barbara, California, was named for her by the explorer Sebastian Vizcaino in gratitude for surviving a violent storm on December 3, 1602, the eve of her feast day. Many naval ships and fortresses have a statue of St. Barbara near gunpowder storage rooms to protect against explosions.

With the statue of St. Barbara, sword in hand, and a three-windowed tower at her feet, protecting the entrance to the church, there has never been an explosion or invading army of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church to this day.





## Infant of Prague

The original Infant of Prague is a famous statue of the Child Jesus found in the city of Prague whose story has inspired many Catholics and Christians alike. The original statue is made of wax and stands on a wooden dowel always dressed in ornate robes.

In the 1600s an attacking hoard of Swedes sacked the city of Prague, and the statue was taken from its place of honor where it was then thrown onto a trash heap behind the altar, its hands broken off. It would remain there for seven years until discovered by a priest who raised money for its repair.

Many miracles were associated with the statue, and answers to prayers addressed to Jesus as Infant soon followed. To this day, grateful petitioners continue to venerate the statue and present it with sets of lovely and elaborate gowns befitting Christ as King.





Marie-Françoise-Thérèse Martin was born in 1873 to Zélie and Louis Martin, one of nine children of whom only five daughters survived to adulthood. The death of her mother four years later would leave a devastating effect on Thérèse

as a child, as would the seclusion of her three older sisters from the family after becoming Carmelite nuns, especially that of her older sister Pauline, who had become her “second” mother for the five years that followed.

A sickly child, it was during one such near-death experience, Thérèse awoke to find her sisters praying for her recovery to a statue of the Blessed Virgin. She joined them in prayer only to have the statue smile back and suddenly find herself cured. This was the beginning of Thérèse’s realization of God.

At age fourteen, one Christmas Eve, she experienced a total conversion to God and immediately sought entrance to the convent, only to be denied for prejudicial reasons.

But upon a pilgrimage to Rome and a papal visit, she took advantage of throwing herself at the feet of the Pope, begging that he let her enter the Carmelites. Although she was immediately carried away by two of the guards, the Vicar General in attendance was so impressed that he granted her wish.

## St. Thérèse of Lisieux “The Little Flower of Jesus”

Upon entering the Carmelite convent at age fifteen, and a joyous reunion with her sisters, she was quick to give her whole life to God. Living a simple life of prayer, extreme sacrifice, and nothingness, she was rewarded with a profound closeness to God that seems reflected in the preference of people today to pray to her first among all the saints. Thérèse’s “little way” of trusting in Jesus to make her holy and relying on small daily sacrifices instead of great deeds appeals to the thousands of Catholics and others who continue to try to find holiness in ordinary everyday lives.

After a long struggle with tuberculosis, she died at the young age of twenty-four, finally realizing, in her words, “that elevator that would raise me to Jesus” that she had longed for, for so many years. Her notoriety would become so great that it became necessary for her sisters and remaining members of the Martin family to move.

St. Thérèse is often confused with St. Theresa of Avila. St. Thérèse’s relics in the Basilica of Lisieux, France, remain among the most venerated and visited among any saint, second only to pilgrimages to Lourdes. The popular relics have toured the world, even appearing in conjunction with soccer’s championship, “The World Cup” in 2010.

She is probably one of the first saints to be photographed.

The statue of the “Little Flower” sat in the left side church alcove. The importance of her life’s work, model living, and prayers answered is not lost on any nationality, especially here at Sacred Heart, where the statue of this French Carmelite saint was a favorite among this Polish congregation, and often the recipient of live roses in thanks for favors or help in intercessions to Our Lord.



## Chapter Six

# THE ICONS OF OUR CHURCH



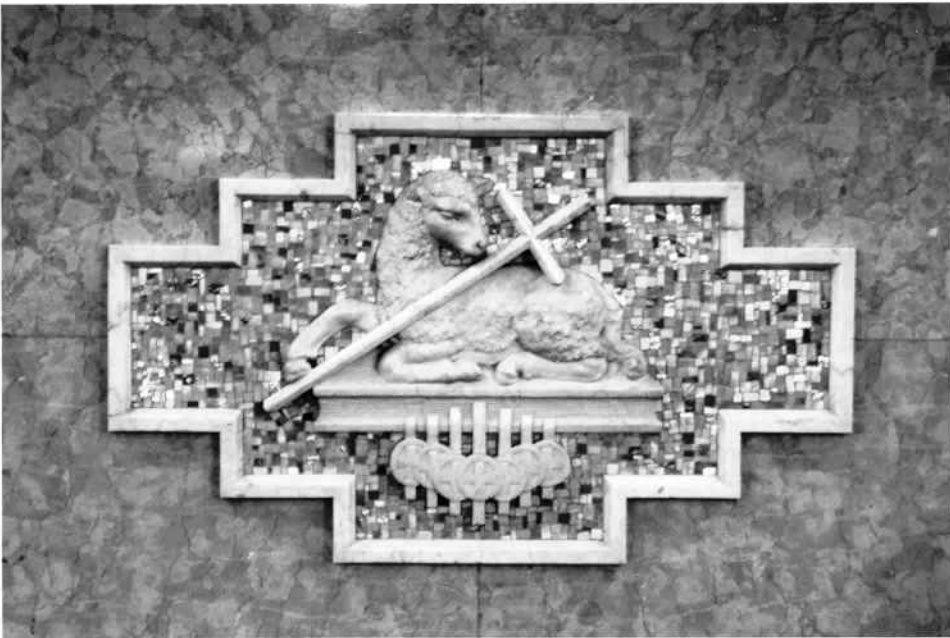
*ICON* noun 1. An image or likeness; in a Church or religion, a holy picture, object, mosaic, etc. Also spelled ikon. See synonyms under image.

**T**he icons of a church are like the silverware and place settings of a dinner table. They are items or pieces that can be just for show, polished and ornate, or truly functional, waiting in place for use and purpose in an important part of any religious observance or service.

Some are long gone, like the old communion rails communicants knelt before. Some go unnoticed, like the absolution bowl for the Eucharistic ministers used at Mass. Some are taken for granted, like the holy water hand fountains used upon every church visit. But many will be missed and recalled to memory only when you happen upon a different, yet somewhat similar one, in another place, at another time.

They may not give the church its character or set the mood for reverence as much as statues or stained glass windows do, but without these iconic treasures, your church would surely become just another building





The Pascal Lamb on front of the main altar



Holy water hand founts at entrances to the church

Four post procession canopy or "Balda" held over the priest when walking with the monstrance



Hand bells used at consecration time of the Mass



Absolution bowl used for finger purification at Communion.



The baptismal fount. The top lifts back to reveal a segregated basin for salt, water, and oils used in christenings



Monstrance used in procession and benediction



Wood carved sculpture of Madonna and child in daily chapel



Procession cross stands next to Gospel/Sermon pulpit



Sanctuary lamp acknowledges the presence of the Body of Christ in the tabernacle



Processional banners for the Holy Name Society and women's Rosary Society



Cruets of water and wine await Consecration



Hosts for attendees of daily morning Mass in the chapel





## Chapter Seven

# SPIRITUALISM



In 2004, I got divorced and went to see Father Joe. I felt like I was going to the principal's office. How wrong I was! Father Joe could not have been nicer. He reassured me that I was still part of the Sacred Heart of Jesus family, and I thank him for his compassion to me and my situation.

In 2007, a week before I was getting married, Marty, my fiancé, very quickly got sick. I called EMS, and as they were working on Marty, I was crying, I looked up and Father Joe was standing in my kitchen! As EMS stabilized Marty, they put him on the stretcher and were taking him to the ambulance. Father Joe, who knew we were getting married the next week, comforted me and walked next to Marty and told him, "I've heard of getting cold feet, but this is too much." We all laughed, even Marty and the EMS staff.

We were blessed to have Father Joe at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, and Marty and I hope that one day he gets his hot tub!

—Karen Widmar

The memory that really matters the most to me is the day I came to see Father Bednar, full of despair; I had truly lost my way and my faith. After hearing my confession, he took me in his arms and pointed me toward the kitchen (the Fish Frys were in full swing). The rest is history. Words cannot describe how thankful I am to all of you for allowing me to become a member of this very special family. I will miss you all dearly.

—Gail Bernas

March 23, 2001, was the day I became a part of a family like no other. I was volunteering at the Fish Fry and told Father Joe how I would love to become a permanent member of this parish family. Father went to the rectory and brought back registration forms to become a parishioner. I filled them out as I was frying fish, which I still do every Lenten season. I became part of a parish family that would get me through the most tragic times in my life.

On January 15, 2004, I lost my loving mother, and a week later on January 23, 2004, my husband, Cal, passed away. The caring, love, and prayers I got from my parish family got me through what I thought would be the darkest days I would ever have to face. I was wrong.

A little over a year later on November 13, 2005, my vibrant, beautiful and loving daughter Shelley was killed in a motorcycle accident. She left behind her six-week-old son Logan and her already broken-hearted mother. It was absolutely devastating.

If it were not for the prayers and help of Father Joe, family, and friends, I would have never made it through this. The friends I have made at Sacred Heart of Jesus will be a great part of my life wherever I go, and forever. Now the memory cycle is going to be complete as I get ready for our last, but best, Fish Fry ever, the place where it all began. Life will go on with new challenges, friends, and family, but life will never be the same without my Sacred Heart family.

—Dolores Minko





# Chapter Eight

## MEMORIES



I remember going to confession in Polish, and I really couldn't speak fluent Polish that well. I often wonder if the priest really understood what I was confessing. I remember the church was downstairs, with the choir and choir loft on the left back side of the basement. The singing was done in Polish as was the sermon.

I remember Easter when the grotto was placed on the front steps of the church. The flowers surrounding the grave of Jesus was and is a beautiful memory.

I remember the church bell tower that was between the church and school, and when the bell was rung we could hear it all the way home in Cuyahoga Heights.

My final memories—my mother's burial Mass and my husband Joe's Mass. What I had hoped was to have my final Mass to be said at Sacred Heart.

—Felicia Piasecki

Steve, the janitor, had a projection room down in the church hall where old movies could be seen, especially at Christmas time. Once, he had a movie about the Hershey Chocolate Company—yum, yum, good!

At the Sacred Heart Church picnic, my Uncle Harry and Aunt Sophie would let us peel the corn to be cooked in the kitchen.

The church (Holy Name Society) would have bus trips going to the Brown's football and Baron's, or Crusader's hockey team games. Then after the trip they would go to Casey's to eat, where the people would have a good time together.

—Paul Witkiewicz

When I attended school, we spoke the Polish language a lot, attending confession every First Friday and receiving Holy Communion by kneeling at the railing with our hands held under a white cloth.

The Sisters of Kunagunda were very good teachers.

—Gertrude Pruchnicki



Music was a big part of my life here at Sacred Heart. I sang in the choir since grade school—in the old basement church, the two-story wooden hall, and then the new 1951 upper church for over forty years. The sisters (Franciscans) gave us piano and organ lessons, and later I helped play the organ at various masses, May devotion, processions, benedictions, 40 Hours; in Latin and English, for over thirty years.

The Franciscans were here for over sixty years and lived in the old wooden house convent at East 71st and Rathbun (where the playground is now). Many times the sisters would be outside to ask the neighborhood children to run errands or take mail for them. Later the sisters moved to a newer brick convent on school grounds (it is the rectory now). The old school was in the two-story wooden house (where the rectory is now). The classes were downstairs; each grade had two classes, and the upstairs was used for dances, bazaars, etc. It had a stage where plays and musicals were performed and children danced. My grade danced the Krakowiak, and we wore Polish costumes.

The sisters taught the older children to read, write, and sing in Polish and English, and my age group learned some Polish Catechism and even learned to confess in Polish.

While the new church was being built on top of the basement church the classes were in the new school and some still in the old; then the hall was demolished and the brick convent was built.

There was a separate bell tower outside the side door of the basement church where men pulled the ropes to ring the bells. This was a special treat for the children who came to watch the bells rung.



I remember many joyful and beautiful customs and events here.

Easter 6:00 a.m. Resurrection Mass, with school children in procession carrying flowers, and all the organizations in the procession.

Corpus Christi Outdoor procession on East 71st Street and neighboring streets (four altars); different songs at each altar and the church bells ringing.

Christmas Midnight Masses and singing before Mass; the next day singing again at Polish Mass.

40 Hours (Three days) Friday, Saturday, and Sunday with

opening processions Friday and closing services on Sunday; with Latin vespers and lots of priests.

Evening Devotion Tuesdays and Fridays to sorrowful Mother and the Sacred Heart. (There were no evening Masses). May devotions were on Sundays.

Lent Fasting forty days; one main meal and eating blessed food Easter morning.

Advent Fasting and no meat on Christmas Eve (Wigilia).

Missions With visiting priests (Polish and English) Gorzkie Zale on Fridays. The old Latin Masses (we knew a lot of different ones) and "high" Mass on 10:00 Sunday (with benedictions), singing Polish, Latin, and English special seasonal songs.

One bad memory was the huge Dougherty Lumber Yard fire (on East 68th) that destroyed several homes, caused injuries, and endangered our new church building. We were all scared and we were evacuated. The area was surrounded by firemen and police. The pastor held prayer services in church. It took a while to contain the fire. (United Parcel Service is there now).

My parents went through a lot (depression, two major wars, deaths), and Sacred Heart of Jesus meant a lot to them and to us. It was a huge part of our faith and survival.

—Carol Gazda



Memories are funny things. Trying to pin down just a couple that might bring back a warm feeling to others, too, is hard. Here are a couple of minutes from long ago that warm my heart.

The belfry stood in the middle of what is now a parking lot. It was the place to meet before the start of school or services, and when I was very young it seemed to be a mysterious place.

The bells were rung manually by the custodian, Mr. Nejman, whose schedule included any and all duties that might happen on the grounds, but the bells were never late.

The wooden structure that occupied the land where the rectory now stands was already very old and had a peculiar odor, but was used for shows put on by the students and directed by the sisters. This amateur attempt at entertainment was always a challenge for the students. We had to learn dances, speak lines (most in Polish), sing, or recite. The building also was used to store the papers collected during the World War II years, which probably caused the weird smell. During the finishing of the new church, Mass was held in this same building, and during the summer months it was very hot, but the men wore suits and the ladies wore hats. Gone are the days.

Many other fond memories fill my head, and I will hold them close always.

—Patricia Witzcak

When my parents were married at Sacred Heart Church, there was only the basement. The people of the church were getting the money together to start to build the upper part of the church. I was born in 1933, and we still had just the basement. I was baptized and had my First Holy Communion there. All the boys and girls old enough for First Holy Communion would go together, the girls dressed in white dresses and boys in suits.

The upper part of the church was beautiful. On Holy Days we would walk up and down the street in celebration.

At Easter time, the statue of Jesus was brought out to the front steps and laid down. My mom would walk with me to the statue, we would kneel by the street and pray, then we would walk a little and Mom would kiss the feet of the statue and pray again. Then we would go into the church for Mass.

When I was married we moved to Geauga County where I taught school and had four children. I went to a church in Chesterland, but it wasn't as nice as Sacred Heart. My husband passed away fifteen years ago, and I moved back to Cuyahoga Heights. I love singing in the Sacred Heart choir and listening to Father Joe say Mass. My heart will break when the church closes, it is so much a part of my life.

—Phyllis Baumgardner

Our first Midnight Christmas Mass at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church was right at the corner of our street, Kazimier Avenue. There were approximately forty-six children on our street. Everyone was walking up to the Mass together. The church was decorated so beautifully. It was so crowded that folding chairs were set up in the middle aisle. I was used to hearing songs sung in English and Latin, but here the songs were sung in Polish. Near the end of the Mass, "Oplatki" was passed out by the ushers and was shared with those parishioners around you. During the singing I saw many of the nuns and the older people wiping their eyes. I was very touched by the fact that many of these people had left their country and came to the United States to build new lives. I thought of my own father and my grandparents who came from Ireland for freedom for their children.

—Eleanor Gallagher Drost , Midnight Mass,  
December 25, 1967

My first remembrance as a kid was the white wooden bell tower that stood next to the old church. Every day our janitor, Mr. John Nejman, rang the church bells three times a day manually. He was the grandfather of Barb, Artie, Sharon, and Gerard Nejman. He was a man of average build, and we were told sometimes the ropes pull him up off the ground.

Still attending Sacred Heart School, my memory was when our old church celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. Everything was in gold, even my small golden satin dress I wore in procession.

Then came the day as an adult when I saw our church resurrected to what it is today. I will always carry those memories in my heart.

—Patricia Smosarski

Sacred Heart represents an era that will leave me forever nostalgic. I grew up right on East 71st across from the church and school. The sound of the church bells came so natural, just like any of the other background sounds of the community. I enjoyed and looked forward to walking to church with my mom, sitting with her, and looking around at the beautiful statues and stained glass windows. One thing we still laugh about is when I was little I remember asking her what the little square box with the curtain to the left of the altar was. Instead of telling a four year old that it was a tabernacle, she said, "That's where they keep the body of Christ." For years after, I thought Jesus' actual bones were in the Sacred Heart tabernacle.

In first grade I was so excited about being allowed to read at the Friday morning student Masses led by Father Ray. First grade was also the year I was chosen to be the one to crown Mary with a crown of flowers that my mom made. Gym classes were held in the church hall.

Growing up in Slavic Village (and later in Garfield Heights) meant living in a strong Polish community. Subtle cultural reminders like Stations of the Cross in Polish in the church, or the Polish eagle painted on the side of buildings, all instilled a sense of pride in me, especially when many of the people around me had good long Polish last names just like me. It took me well into college to realize not everyone had at least some Polish in them! I would ponder my old college roommates' last names like Davis, Dunne, and Jackson and thought for sure their mother's maiden name must have been Polish.

Sacred Heart has not only built a solid Christian foundation for me, but it also has contributed to a childhood for which I will be forever grateful for—the kind of childhood I hope to give my own children one day.

—Lana Witkowski

Sacred Heart has been the center of my life since birth. I have many good memories of my school days. I especially liked helping the sisters and often stayed to duplicate the next day's work on the gelatin copier, which always fascinated me as I pressed the image into the gelatin and watched a purple image appear on the paper. Or just sweeping the classroom floor and the going around with the paraffin wax on the grater and watching it fall to the floor like snowflakes.

Doing the parish envelopes on the convent porch at the sister's home was such an honor, or helping decorate the altars for the holidays, and on weekends for weddings and other special occasions. The end of the year program was another thing I looked forward to.

Already in high school, I was a choir member and can remember singing for novenas, vespers, and 40 hours. I was also a member of what was called "The Young Ladies Sodality." We had religious commitments as well as an annual picnic. The highlight of the sodality was that when a young lady married, she received a rosary as a wedding gift, and that was something to cherish for a lifetime.

I continued my ministry by helping the nuns and/or sacristans by staying late hours before Christmas and making sure every tree had icicles placed on it just right under the tutelage of Fr. Deko. We were there until every tree was lit and every flower was properly angled, viewing it from the front of the church, the back, and the choir. Sharing the Christmas wafer after Midnight Mass was a beautiful tradition. This was carried into our present-day home.

After marriage, my happiest times were when we brought our sons, Keith, Timothy, and Brian to church to see the crib at Christmas and to kiss the crucified Christ on Good Friday. I remember them following in my footsteps and helping the sisters at school, being servers, and waking them up for the Easter sunrise Mass as well as the Midnight Mass and Corpus Christi procession later in their lives.

I remember belonging to the Mother's Club and sponsoring pizza parties, Christmas parties, and socials, graduation dinners at the end of the school year, and the picnics at Garfield Park and Geauga Lake.

The memories are never ending—the societies I was a member of, the activities and social events I attended. They are some things that will always remain, and for that I am grateful.

—Barbara Neiszczur



Being a member of the parish for over thirty years, my love for this parish will always keep these thoughts in my heart and on my mind for all time. There is something about this quaint little church that surrounds you with love and timeless devotion to Our Lord.

Belonging to the Mother's Club I've seen the work of the many moms who purchased pencil sharpeners, clocks, and encyclopedias, for every classroom as well as gym clothes for all the students and monthly luncheons. We were a small group, but we sure were mighty! Our incentive was the end of the school year bonus of going to Geauga Lake for our children as well as the club members. Ladies, let's not forget the time we went to see "Wayne Newton" in Akron and actually saw that Indian make it rain.

Our parish was always having some function that brought people to socialize. We had festivals, reverse raffles, rummage sales, bake sales, nut and candy sales, night at the races, etc. You name it, we tried it, all for the love of the parish. And let's not forget the many Mother's Day and Father's Day breakfasts!

Our biggest adventure was the Fish Fry Company, which did start with the members of the Mother's Club. It was brought back in 1982 and has ended after twenty-eight years being known as the "Almost World Famous Fish Fry of Sacred Heart."

It truly was a big part of our lives, especially to those who volunteered their time and talent to serve the community for the six weeks of Lent. We always felt a letdown when it was over, didn't we?

Sacred Heart of Jesus will forever be in our hearts, along with all the clergy who provided the spiritual guidance, and to the faithful congregation for being the loving and caring people that made Sacred Heart of Jesus that warm and charming place to worship.

— Donna J. Palacz

A lifetime of memories of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church  
(some good, some not so good)

The Bernas family has been a part of Sacred Heart since its conception in 1889. My parents Alexander and Catharina Bernas (nee Lusowski) were married on the 21st of January 1913. I was born on February 7, 1918, according to church records. Civil records show that I was born on the 6th of February when it was always celebrated. I am just one of eight children. My brothers, sisters, and I received all the sacraments at SHJ.

On the 21st day of November 1953, my wife, Emily Lesniewski, and I were married. We had five children, all of whom received the sacraments and attended school at SHJ. Our sons Brian and Michael served as altar boys along with me. I served until the age of eighty-five.

Our entire family revolved around SHJ Church. We enjoyed the outings, raffles, bingo, Harvestfest, Fish Frys, Midnight Mass, and Easter Vigil together as a family.

I also served on many committees throughout the years and belonged to many clubs, Golden Agers, and Holy Name Society, and sat on Parish Council. In addition I attended the monthly OCA meetings. Over the years many good friends were made and lost.

The not so good times I can remember were as a child going to school at SHJ. I can remember the sisters being very stern and not so kind. The whack of a yardstick across my hands is still a painful memory.

—Stanley Bernas, a.k.a. Mayor of Goosetown

# Sacred Heart of Jesus Church

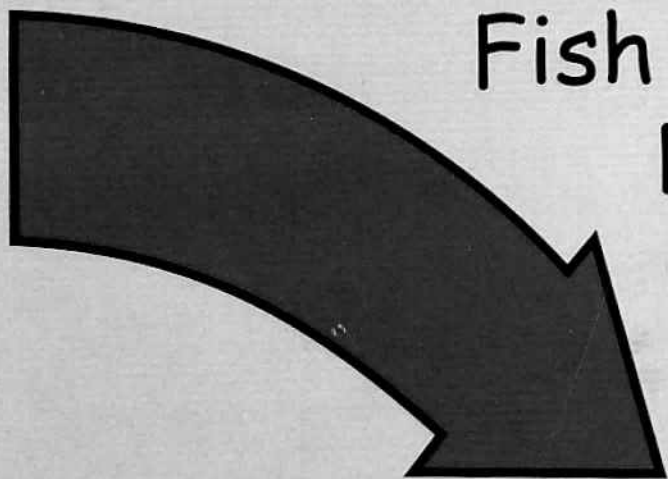
CLEVELAND, OH



**FISH FRY COMPANY** EST. 1982

"Almost" World Famous Fish Fries

Fish Fries and more  
**DOWNSTAIRS**



**ASH WEDNESDAY & FRIDAYS IN  
LENT EXCEPT FOR GOOD FRIDAY**

# Chapter Nine

## FISH FRIES AND PICNICS

**9 PRIZES — GIVEN AWAY — Total \$400.00**  
**At Sacred Heart Church — ANNUAL BAZAAR**  
 Cor. E. 71st & Krakow Ave.

Sunday Nov. 26 1944	}	1st \$25.00 — 2nd \$25.00 U. S. Bond
		3rd Prize 3 Tons of Poc Coal
Thurs. Nov. 30 1944	}	1st \$50.00 U. S. Bond — 2nd \$25.00 Cash
		3rd Prize 3 Tons of Poc. Coal Donated by Forman Coal Co.
Sunday Dec. 3rd	}	1st \$100.00 U. S. War Bond
		2nd \$50.00 each — 3rd \$25.00 cash

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 3680 East 63 Street

No. 14638

**DONATION  
25 CENTS**





Parishioners, their families and friends enjoy one of the church's picnics at Klima's Grove in Cuyahoga Hts.

## Church Picnic

Once a year, usually during the last weeks of summer, families and friends would gather more often than not at Chopek's Grove just over the bridge in Cuyahoga Heights for a day of food, fun, and games, and especially polkas at Sacred Heart Church's annual picnic.

You sat at picnic tables, on wooden church chairs stenciled with the Sacred Heart name or on webbed lawn chairs among the trees, listening to the intermittent clang of horseshoes hitting the pin sounding across the grass where you might find children's games, an egg toss, or pick up game of some other sport in play.

You could walk up to clapboard huts and feast off a menu that might include hot dogs, hamburgers, kielbasa sandwiches, stuffed cabbage rolls, or buttered corn on the cob. Refreshments might include Little Tom colas in bottles of different colors, lime green included, along with little bags of salted chips or pretzels. From another hut, adult beverages were mixed with Cotton Club ginger ale or soda poured out of glass quart bottles, which were carried in and stacked in

wooden pop cases standing behind the bar. The ladies sodality group was sure to have homemade baked goods for sale if you still had room for dessert.

Announcements of raffle winners boomed loudly from the microphone, competing with children's squeals of delight and laughter as they chased across the field to the swings or raced each other around the buildings, only to be drowned out as a too loud polka band started to play again in a too small hut with a too small dance floor.

In later years the trees would be gone, the grove renamed to Klima's Gardens and the concession and band huts replaced with one new larger brick pavilion with a kitchen, metal picnic tables, and still too small space for dancing. But everything else would remain the same: the polka band still played too loud, the kids still raced each other across the grass, the food was plentiful, and the people of Sacred Heart would enjoy yet another day at their church picnic.

## Fish Fries

The Fish Fries started out innocently enough. What they turned out to be was beyond anyone's expectations, but they went a long way to be identified with and define the spirit of the hard-working people that was the Sacred Heart community.

Started by the Mother's Club under the leadership of Joan Kalisewski in the late 70's, it was a small fundraising effort serving families and friend of the parish, complete at first with club mothers even waitressing the tables.

Donna Palacz would take over in 1982 and with a dedicated crew of volunteers led by the hard work of the seemingly indefatigable Tillie Tekien and Dolores Minko, help improve and refine operations with business growing so exponentially, the Fry served as many as 1,200 dinners on the best of Fridays. The close confines and long hours of the serving day had the volunteers on each other's nerves by the end of the seven weeks, and tempers became short, yet each of the volunteers would return the following year expecting to resume their place once again at "theirs and nobody else's station." The people of Sacred Heart were a close-knit bunch indeed.

By the year 2010, careful tallying documented that well over a quarter of a million orders had been served, attracting returning customers week after Lenten week, even some occasionally from across the country, confirming its status as the "Almost" World Famous Fish Fries.

## Festivals, Reverse Raffles, & more

Yearly festivals were commonplace at Sacred Heart Church. From those in the earliest years that included penny raffles and prizes of live ducks, chickens, or maybe coal, to modern-day three-day weekend affairs featuring thousand-dollar raffles, a dinner, polka music, and booths with spinning bazaar wheels and other games of chance, festivals were the highlight of any year.

As with the fish fries, Sacred Heart's Poor Man's Reverse Raffle found enormous success, evolving from a sleepy little split pot raffle with a sandwich to a nonstop night of big money raffles, games, giveaways, and contests along with a complete dinner. Its popularity became so great, tickets were fought for and hardly ever advertised.

Other weekends might find card parties, pot lucks, bake sales, breakfasts, dinners, or in earlier years, dances sponsored by any one of the number of church societies or sodalities.

Along with these social gatherings and fundraisers, other religious and non-religious groups shared the hospitality and vibrancy exhibited by Sacred Heart and its people. Fraternal, group, and other member organizations were all an important part in the make up of the church community.

The calendar was always full for the people of Sacred Heart Church.



The jumping whale rug welcomes hungry guests arriving for dinner at the "Almost" World Famous Fish Fries. Along with the jumping whale, the pan fish icon could be found on everything from stationery, parking permits, magnets and a line of clothing.



## *Ojcze Nasz*

*Ojcze nasz, któryś jest w niebie  
święć się imię Twoje;  
przyjdź królestwo Twoje;  
bądź wola Twoja jako w niebie tak i na ziemi;  
chleba naszego powszedniego daj nam dzisiaj;  
i odpuść nam nasze winy, jako i my  
odpuszczamy naszym winowajcom;  
i nie wódź nas na pokuszenie;  
ale nas zbaw od złego. Amen.*

*A. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.*

*R. Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

## Chapter Ten

# STATIONS OF THE CROSS



*Zdrowaś Maryjo*

*Zdrowaś Maryjo, łaski pełna*

*Pan z Tobą,*

*ślógosławionaś Ty między niewiastami*

*ślógosławiony owoc żywota Twojego, Jezus.*

*Święta Maryjo, Matko Boża,*

*módl się za nami grzesznymi*

*teraz i w godzinę śmierci naszej. Amen.*





1. Jesus is Condemned to Death



2. Jesus Carries His Cross



3. Jesus Falls the First Time



4. Jesus Meets his Mother



Szymon Pomaga Jezusowi

5. Symon of Cyrene Helps Jesus to Carry His Cross



Veronika Ociera Twarz Jezusowi

6. Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus



Jezus Upada Drugi Raz

7. Jesus Falls the Second Time



Jezus Dociesza Niewiasty

8. Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem



9. Jesus Falls a Third Time



10. Jesus is Stripped of His Garments



11. Jesus is Nailed to the Cross



12. Jesus Dies on the Cross



13. Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross



14. Jesus is Laid in The Tomb

## Prayer to Jesus Christ Crucified

My good and dear Jesus, I kneel before you,  
 asking you most earnestly to engrave upon my heart  
 a deep and lively faith, hope, and charity  
 with a true repentance for my sins,  
 and a firm resolve to make amends.

As I reflect upon your five wounds,  
 and dwell upon them with deep compassion and grief,  
 I recall, good Jesus, the words the Prophet David spoke  
 long ago concerning yourself:  
 "They have pierced My hands and My feet;  
 they have numbered all My bones."





## *Serdecna Matko*

*Serdeczna matko, opiekunko ludzi,  
Niech Cię płacz sierot do litości wzbudzi!  
Wygańcy Ewy, do Ciebie wołamy:  
Złituj się, złituj, niech się nie tułamy.*

*Do kogóż mamy wzdychać, nędzne dziatki?  
Tylko do Ciebie, ukochanej Matki,  
U której serce otwarte każdemu,  
A osobliwie nędzą strapionemu.*

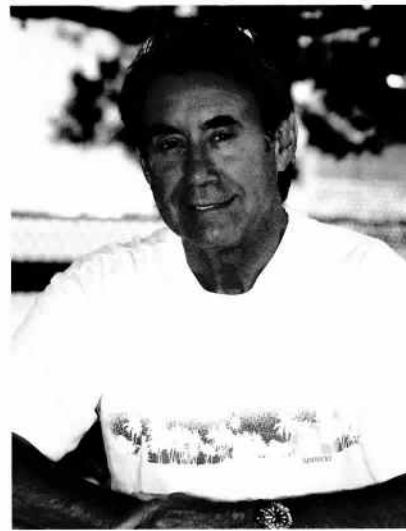
*Beloved Mother, guardian of our nation,  
O hearken to our supplication!  
Your loyal children kneeling to beseech you:  
Grant us the graces to be loyal to you.*

*Where shall we seek our solace in distress?  
Where shall we turn, whom guilt and sin oppress?  
Thine open heart, our refuge e'er shall be.  
When trials assail us on life's stormy sea.*



### *Author*

David Allan Wicinski was born in Cleveland, Ohio and was a lifelong and third generation parishioner of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church. When he should be writing he can be found more often than not playing shortstop on a softball field or as a competition volleyball player somewhere in Northern Ohio or on the preferred white sands of Daytona Beach, Florida. This book marks his first complete credit as an author. He can be reached at [dancinproductions@core.com](mailto:dancinproductions@core.com)



*Janet Werner*

### *Photography*

Raymond James "Jim" Stracensky is a lifelong resident of Cleveland, Ohio. His career as an award winning professional photographer began over 20 years ago. This is Jim's 4th book. His first "Healing Images Healing Words" was published in 2005. His photography is exhibited in galleries in Ohio and Pennsylvania. You can find out more Jim and his work at [www.stargazerphotography.com](http://www.stargazerphotography.com)

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Virginia Maxwell

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For additional copies or questions about the book please visit [www.sacredheartofjesuschurch.info](http://www.sacredheartofjesuschurch.info)



The sunlight of an Easter morning casts what many recognize to be an image of the Blessed Virgin in prayer over the tabernacle. (Picture courtesy of Jack and Carole Zanath)





*Idź z Bogiem*