

ST. ADALBERT'S CHURCH



**PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND
1902 — 1977**

ST. ADALBERT'S CHURCH

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

75th
ANNIVERSARY

1902

1977



3339 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

January 3, 1977

Dear Father Slota:

On the joyous occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of the Parish of St. Adalbert, Providence, Rhode Island, it gives me great pleasure to inform you that our most Holy Father, Pope Paul VI, graciously bestows his Apostolic Benediction upon you, the clergy and religious associated with you, upon the lay teachers and parishioners and all who join in observing this happy event, April 24, 1977.

Much has been accomplished for the honor and glory of God during these past seventy-five years; for this reason there is joy and deep gratitude in the hearts of all who have been associated with St. Adalbert Parish.

In the years to come may the priests and the people of the parish continue to grow as a faith community, centered in Our Lord, Jesus Christ, Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. To this Blessing of the Holy Father, I wish to add my personal greetings and prayerful good wishes.

With sentiments of esteem and renewed felicitations, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Jean Jadot

Apostolic Delegate

Reverend Frederick V. Slota
Pastor: St. Adalbert Parish
Providence, Rhode Island



Most Holy
Father,

The Priest, Sisters and Parishioners
of Saint Adalbert Church, Providence, Rhode Island,
on the occasion of the

Diamond Jubilee
of its foundation
humbly beg a special

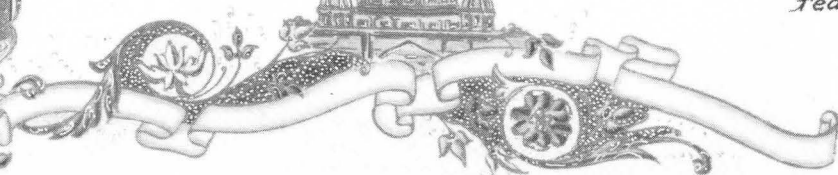
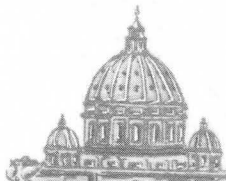
Apostolic Blessing
as a pledge of divine graces and favors

*Adm. Dominus apostolicam Benedictionem concedit.
Ex Aedibus Tadicanis, die 19 Januarii 1977.*

+ *Antonus W. Crain*
Inslup, R.I. 02915



Founded - February 7, 1902
Joyful Observance - April 24, 1977
Feast of St. Adalbert

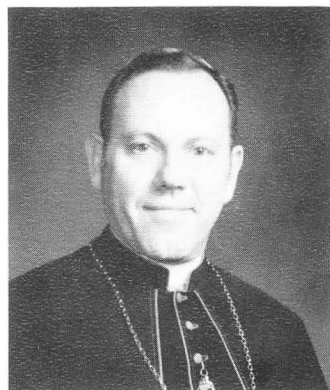


OFFICE OF
THE BISHOP



DIOCESE OF PROVIDENCE

CATHEDRAL SQUARE
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND
02903



April 1977

To the People of God of St. Adalbert
Parish, Providence, Rhode Island

My dear brothers and sisters in the Lord:

The 75 years of existence of St. Adalbert Parish means 75 years of special graces from Almighty God. It is impossible to imagine the blessings that have been enjoyed by so many people as a result of the community which has been identified during this time as your parish family.

I am truly proud to be able to join you in thanking God for His goodness to the parish. Indeed, we would be remiss if we did not observe this anniversary through many acts of recognition and gratitude to Him Who is the source of all goodness.

It would be proper to recognize in a particular way all who have contributed to the life of the parish over these years. The leadership of the clergy, and the service rendered, the devotion and deep influence of the religious sisters, and the cooperation and spirit of faith of so many lay people have made the parish what it has been and is today. To all of these faithful people, both living and dead, I extend deepest sentiments of esteem and regard, and assurance of my grateful prayers.

In remembering the blessings of the past, we ask God to continue to favor us with His graces now and in the future. May we learn by the example of faith that was given to us by those who have gone before us, and live that faith, and extend it to those who will come after us.

With sincerest congratulations and prayerful good wishes to all, I remain

Devotedly in Christ,

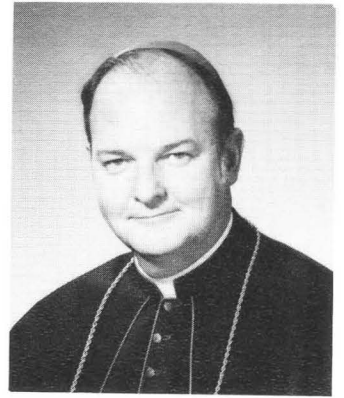
James E. Dolan
Bishop of Providence



DIOCESE OF PROVIDENCE

CATHEDRAL SQUARE
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND
02903

January 3, 1977



OFFICE OF THE
AUXILIARY BISHOP

My dear Friends,

I extend to the priests, the religious sisters and the parishioners of Saint Adalbert's Parish my most sincere congratulations on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the first Polish-American parish officially established in the Diocese of Providence.

In response to the leadership of the Reverend Adalbert Duczmal, the first Pastor, the Polish-Americans who settled in the area formed a dedicated community of the People of God. The people of Saint Adalbert's Church, from that time to the present, have shown a staunch faith and a willingness to make sacrifices for the spread of the Kingdom of God within the Diocese of Providence.

I pay special tribute to the priests, both the pastors and their associates, who have been Christlike men committed to the care and service of their people. These priests, from Father Duczmal to the present Pastor, Father Slota, have contributed immeasurably to the growth and well being of this outstanding parish.

I also congratulate the religious sisters who have served this parish with distinction. There are so many people who have come closer to Christ because of the unselfishness of these holy women who have given so much of themselves during these past years.

Finally, congratulations are especially due to you, the parishioners, for all you have accomplished over these many years. You are the People of God who form the community of Saint Adalbert's Parish. You have lived your faith to the fullest and have been examples to all who belong to the Diocese of Providence.

I promise to pray for you in the years ahead that God might continue to bless you with eternal benedictions. I pray, too, that you might continue to grow into a Holy People of God.

May Saint Adalbert continue to guide and direct you and through his intercession, may the blessings of Almighty God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you and remain with you forever.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Francis A. Angell
Auxiliary Bishop of Providence

St. Adalbert's Rectory

866 ATWELLS AVENUE PROVIDENCE, R. I. 02909

Telephone: 351-9306



February 7, 1977

My dear Parishioners and Friends,

Time has turned some pages! God is just in judgment, wonderful in power and majesty. Everything we see proclaims His goodness. He is kind and compassionate and never fails those who put their trust in Him. As we embark on this Diamond Jubilee Year of our parish, shall we not continue to entreat Almighty God to help us to come to the aid of the afflicted, to raise up the fallen, to show His face to the needy, to heal the sick, to convert the wayward and to feed the hungry?

So much has been accomplished for the honor and glory of God during these past seventy-five years! So much charity and love extended to the members of our parish family and community! Yes, fond recollections of joy and deep gratitude fill the hearts of all who have been associated with St. Adalbert's parish in any way. May the Lord purify us by His truth and guide our footsteps that by walking in holiness and justice and simplicity of heart we may continue to do what is good and pleasing in His sight.

I express my personal thanks to all those who through their fervent and humble prayers, kind and unparalleled generosity, admirable dedication, time and unselfish effort made this celebration the historic and happy success that it is in the annals of our parish.

May the Lord let the light of His face shine upon us so that we may enjoy His blessings in peace and concord; even as He gave it to our ancestors when they devoutly called upon Him in Faith and Truth as they ventured into a world of a new culture and different life style.

As we jubilantly celebrate these memorable and blessed years of joy and toil, hardships and prosperity, how appropriately may we exclaim in the words of Isaiah the prophet: "let us sing praise to the Lord for His glorious achievement, let this be known throughout all the earth."

Frederick V. Slota
Rev. Frederick V. Slota, Pastor

History of St. Adalberts Church

The record of the first Poles in Rhode Island extends back to the Revolutionary War years of our country. Polish officers, serving in the French army, took part in the first recorded Roman Catholic Masses in Rhode Island which were held in Newport. A number of Polish exiles made their way to Rhode Island during the following century but it was not until the latter part of the 19th century that the Polish people began to immigrate to Rhode Island in sizable numbers.

By the 1890's a growing colony of Poles had been established in the Olneyville section of Providence and a second settlement was located at the lower end of Chalkstone Avenue near Charles Street. The Poles settled here near the factories in which they found employment namely, the textile concerns of Fletcher Manufacturing, Atlantic Mills, and the Silver Spring Bleachery as well as in the machine tool operations of Brown & Sharpe and the R.I. Locomotive Works. Initially the first Polish immigrants to Providence were from the Prussian and Austrian partitions of Poland. Gradually immigrants from the Russian dominated area of Poland began to constitute the majority of the Polish population in Providence.

The non-English speaking Catholics in the diocese of Providence were blessed with a Bishop who understood the problems faced by immigrants in a new land. The Most Reverend Matthew J. Harkins realized the necessity for various ethnic groups to have priests who could guide and spiritually minister to the immigrants in their own language. He also realized that it would be important for them to establish their own places of worship where they would feel comfortable and also be able to perpetuate their distinctive customs and traditions.

So it was with the Polish people. In 1900, Bishop Harkins allowed the basement of the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul to be used by the Poles for services conducted by a Polish priest. In 1901, the Bishop conducted a census of the Providence Poles and found that there were 140 families living in the Olneyville section and 50 families in the Randall Square area. With Polish immigration constantly growing, because of socio-economic pressures in the partitioned coun-

try, the Bishop realized that soon a more centrally located place of worship would be needed by the Polish people.

On November 5, 1901, the Bishop purchased three lots on Ridge Street, in the Federal Hill area, from the heirs of Arthur M. Smith. He planned to set this land aside for a Polish parish. In 1902, the Bishop appointed Reverend Adalbert Duczmal, a twenty-five year old priest from the Prussian sector of Poland, to be the pastor of the Polish parish.

A wooden structure, formerly the church of the Holy Ghost, was acquired. It was removed from its location and set up on a new foundation on the Ridge Street property. Work was completed, and the church was ready for occupancy by January 23, 1902. The



Rev. Adalbert Duczmal

parish was incorporated on February 7, 1902 under the patronage of St. Adalbert, Bishop and Martyr. John Chmielewski and Louis Balczun were to serve as the first trustees of the new parish corporation. Thus, St. Adalbert's, the first parish in the Providence Diocese for Polish-speaking Catholics and the mother church of the six Polish Roman Catholic Churches, became a reality.

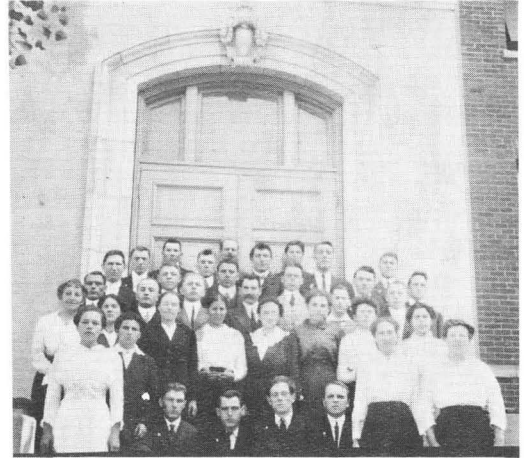
Our first pastor, Father Duczmal, was born in Poland in 1877. He received both his

primary and university education there. Later, on application to study for Holy Orders, he was sent to Louvain, Belgium. After completing his course of study at the Seminary there he was ordained on July 15, 1900. Returning to his native land, he took up his priestly duties but within a few months, along with many other young Polish priests, he responded to the call of the Catholic Bishops in America to care for the spiritual needs of the constantly increasing number of Polish immigrants who were coming to the United States.

With fervent enthusiasm Father Duczmal proceeded to administer to the needs of the fledgling parish. In 1903 he obtained permission to construct a rectory on the Ridge Street Property. As the number of souls in the parish continuously grew because of increased immigration, the need for a larger church to replace the small wooden structure became apparent. A school also became a necessity due to the ever-growing number of children in the parish. Therefore, a fund drive for a new combination church and school building commenced. Those early years of the parish were extremely difficult ones financially for many families of the parish. They had to work long hours for low wages while supporting large families. Many of them often sent their hard earned dollars back to the "old country" to aid loved ones who were left behind. However, the early pioneers would let nothing deter them when sacrifices were needed for their church. As a result, a brick edifice was constructed on the remaining Ridge Street land. The dedication of the new church on March 15, 1909 merited front page coverage in the *Providence Journal*.

The new building was a two-story combination church and school built of brick. The lower floor was intended to be finished later and to be used for classrooms. The upper portion was to be used for religious services and had an approximate seating capacity of 900. From most accounts it was a handsome structure of red face brick with trimmings of gray terra cotta. It was 184 feet long and 68 feet wide.

According to the Providence Journal there were 2,000 people at the dedication ceremonies. The Most Reverend Matthew J. Harkins, Bishop of Providence, dedicated the new building and in speaking to the congregation thanked them for adding "another jewel to the crown of the diocese". The



St. Adalbert's Society Polish Roman Catholic Union (1910)

Bishop further commented on the generosity of the people and stated how the parish of St. Adalbert "has a special significance for the Polish people of Providence as it binds them to the country of their birth and to the seat of the Roman Catholic Church."

The first Mass was celebrated in the new church immediately after the dedication ceremonies. It was a Pontifical Solemn High Mass with the Reverend Domenico Belliotti, Pastor of Holy Ghost Church as the celebrant; Reverend Dr. Michael Dutkiewicz of Quidnick as Deacon and Reverend Peter Switala of St. Casimir's of Warren as sub-Deacon. Father Duczmal acted as Master of Ceremonies while Bishop Harkins was attended by Reverend Thomas J. Morys of St. Stanislaus Church of Woonsocket and Reverend Francis Klugier of St. Joseph's of Central Falls.

Members of St. Adalbert's Society occupied the first pews and its officers acted as ushers. St. Adalbert's Society along with the St. Joseph's military society from Warren, headed by Captain Andrew Jeworek, formed the guard of honor for the Bishop. The Journal records that Polish and Lithuanian people from all parts of the state came to take part in the ceremonies.

Reverend Thomas Grochowski, a Redemptorist priest from New York City was the homilist. His homily in Polish lasted a full hour as he explained the circumstances that led to the immigration of Poles and Lithuanians to this country. Father Grochowski then recalled to the congregation how the customs of old Poland coordinated

with the dedication of this Church. He asked them if they were ready to go through the marriage ceremony, the spiritual marriage of the congregation to the church.

Immediately the entire congregation arose then knelt and Father Grochowski received their affirmative oath of fidelity to the church.

March 15, 1909 can be recorded in the annals of St. Adalbert's as a truly glorious day. The next eleven years however were to find the young parish beset with a number of problems.

One difficulty which plagued Father Duczmal began in 1905 and climaxed during the years of World War I. It involved the agitation by some parishioners from the Lithuanian region of the former Kingdom of Poland to organize their own parish. Lithuania had been united in a federation with Poland from 1385 until the 18th century partitions. Then a great portion of northeastern Poland was

placed under Russian domination. The majority of the Lithuanian immigrants spoke Polish and, ethnically, had many identical customs both religious and historic. Initially, a small faction of Lithuanian parishioners desired to form a separate church here in Providence. These feelings were heightened simultaneously as independence movements stirred in Eastern Europe at the time. Gradually, more Lithuanian parishioners wished to have their own church and finally with the Bishop's permission they established St. Casimir's parish on Smith Street.

Another difficulty which developed as the parish grew older was the location of the church on Ridge Street. The city of Providence had two Polish "colonies". Although the church was closer to the Olneyville section, its location was in effect inconvenient for both Polish settlements, especially for the families living in the North End of the city. With the Bishop's approval,



Choir of St. Adalbert's Church (1916)

St. Hedwig's parish was established on August 19, 1916 and Reverend Dr. Michael Dutkiewicz was appointed its first pastor. On January 7, 1917 the parish church was dedicated on North Main Street. This parish served the North End area Poles until June 11, 1961 when it had to be liquidated to make way for the Lippitt Hill Redevelopment Project. The parishioners were dispersed to other parishes and a number returned to their original parish, St. Adalbert's. It should be noted that there were two vocations to the Priesthood from St. Hedwig's: Reverend Walter J. Rozpad and Reverend Matthew J. Strumski.

By 1918, therefore, St. Adalbert's had its ranks diminished by the founding of these two parishes in the city. Also, with the independence of Poland in 1918, immigration from that country became momentarily stabilized.

A number of misunderstandings steadily arose between Father Duczmal and his parishioners. One of the most prominent was the fact that, because of financial difficulties, the school had not yet become a reality. In addition, the pastor's health began to deteriorate. As a result on August 5, 1920, Father Duczmal offered his resignation to Bishop William Hickey. The Bishop accepted it and transferred him to the pastorate of St. Stanislaus Kostka in Woonsocket which was a smaller parish.



Rev. Peter Switala

Reverend Peter J. Switala was then transferred from St. Stanislaus Kostka to St. Adalbert's to serve as the new pastor. Father Switala was born in Jaskolski Poland and received his elementary education there. He attended high school in Ostrowo. He began his philosophical studies at the Petit Seminary in Belgium and completed his theological studies in the American College of Louvain. He was ordained to the priesthood on July 8, 1908. Immediately after ordination he came to America and began his priestly duties in Warren, Rhode Island and later in Central Falls and Woonsocket. Being an intellectual man, he was capable of speaking fluent Polish, French, German and eventually English.

One of the first things Father Switala realized was that the Federal Hill location was a real inconvenience for the vast majority of parishioners living in the Olneyville-Manton Avenue area. By 1922, it was decided to sell the Ridge Street property and to purchase a site in the center of the Polish community. In August of 1922, the entire property of St. Adalbert's consisting of the church building with the still unfinished school, the old wooden church, which had been used as a hall and the rectory were sold to the parish of the Holy Ghost. (The original church building was used as a school by that parish but was demolished a few years ago for new construction). The site of our present church at 860 Atwells Avenue was purchased from Thomas J. McGrath also in 1922. This purchase included the present rectory as well as the annex hall.

Father Switala hoped to build a brick church with a seating capacity of 500 and a connected six-room school building. A building fund committee was established with the following workers: Adalbert Boron, Kazimierz Lozowski, Leon Fidrych, Peter Lagonowicz, Jan Piekarski, Ladislaus Zygunia, Antoni Balkun, Aleksander Bukrym, Jan Gracki, Stanislaw Urbanowicz, Leopold Chrostowski, Wincenty Radziewicz and Julian Siwicki.

After leaving their former church on Ridge Street and while awaiting completion of their new church the parishioners of St. Adalbert's used the Odd Fellows Hall on Academy Avenue for church services.

Because the fund drive progressed slowly, due to difficult economic times, it was decided to build the church alone and hold

the erection of the school building in abeyance until a later date. Mr. Henry F. Ludorf, an architect from New Britain, Connecticut, was chosen to draw the plans for the church and the Famiglietti Brothers, a Providence firm, was given charge of construction. Ground was broken on Thursday, April 10, 1924 by Father Switala. On May 3, 1925, the feast of Our Lady Queen of Poland, the cornerstone was laid by Bishop Hickey.

After much hard work and dedication on the part of the pastor and the parishioners, the solemn dedication of the church of St. Adalbert, Bishop and Martyr, took place on September 26, 1926. Bishop Hickey blessed the structure and in his sermon praised "the steadfastness of the Polish people and commended them for their enduring loyalty to the faith and their practical Catholicity."

Our present church was built in the Romanesque style and presents a stately picture on Atwells Avenue. It is 130 feet long and 52 feet wide with a bell tower 93 feet high. It is constructed of red brick mixed with terra cotta and is in the shape of a cross, with transepts on each side and seats close to 500 people. The brick work for the front facade including the tower is laid in diamond pattern style with colored brick for cross inserts. The main entrance is highly ornamental polychrome terra cotta with marble columns supporting the arch over the main entrance. The roof is covered with Spanish tile.

The interior of the church has a barrel-vaulted ceiling with ornamental ribs and was finished in plain and ornamental plaster with the floors and interior trim of oak. The aisle windows are arranged harmoniously in connection with the Stations of the Cross as the feature.

Hard times fell upon the nation with the stock market crash of 1929 and the subsequent depression. The parishioners of St. Adalbert's, like most Americans, were hit hard financially as the mills and factories closed. Many often lost both their jobs and their homes. The parish debt remained stable during those lean years despite the goodwill of the loyal parishioners who were affected by unemployment. Numerous dissensions and misunderstandings grew among parishioners, many as a direct result of the depression.

On October 5, 1934, Father Switala, after fourteen years of service to the people of St. Adalbert's, was transferred to the pastorate of St. Joseph's, Central Falls. And, on that same



Rev. B. S. Rosiak

day, Rev. Bronislaus S. Rosiak, formerly the administrator of the church of Our Lady of Czestochowa, in the Quidnick section of Coventry, became the third pastor of St. Adalbert's.

Father Rosiak was a native of Plock, Poland and came to the United States with his parents at the age of five. He received his elementary education at the parish school in Baltimore, Maryland and his secondary education from a public high school there. He pursued his higher education at Loyola College and began his philosophical studies at the Louvain University in Belgium, later pursuing his theological studies in Rome and completing them at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore. He was ordained there on May 31, 1917.

Father Rosiak became pastor of St. Adalbert's while our country was still in the midst of the Depression. The parish had an enormous debt for the construction of the new church. The new pastor diligently strove to unite all parishioners and to liquidate the parish debt. Father Rosiak's concern for the youth of the parish climaxed with the

long-awaited creation of a parish school. Numerous athletic organizations as well as scouting activities for both boys and girls were established. The success of the youth of St. Adalbert's in various contests and competitions became known throughout the state.

With the advent of World War II scores of men and women from our parish enlisted in the armed forces. Special services of prayer for the servicemen were conducted. The annals of St. Adalbert's parish record the following brave young parishioners who gave their lives during World War II:

Adam Gajdowski
 Jozef Klepadlo
 Czeslaw Kulig
 Stanislaw Kurezap
 Jozef Kuzmicki
 Stanislaw Lawryniewicz
 Stanislaw Lozowski

Edward Mikielewicz
 Aleksander Muszynski
 Kazimierz Przestrzelski
 Wladyslaw Szczepanek
 Wladyslaw Warszewicz
 Leonard Wasilewski
 Edward Wojcik

Father Rosiak's patriotism for the United States and for Poland has been widely acknowledged. As the pastor was patriotic, so were the parishioners to the United States and to Poland the land of their forefathers. This fact is attested to by the great number of savings bonds purchased and sold by St. Adalbert parishioners for the purchasing of a

bomber in 1943 which was christened "Spirit of Polonia of Rhode Island". In addition, the parishioners supported numerous fund drives to aid the people of war-torn and occupied Poland. The people of St. Adalbert's and their pastor joined other Rhode Island churches in the state in contributing for food supplies, clothing and religious artifacts to be sent to Poland. It should be noted that St. Adalbert's parish continues to this day to support the Catholic League for Religious Assistance to Poland which helps the embattled church in that country to combat Communist oppression.

In preparation for the fiftieth anniversary of St. Adalbert's the interior of the church was redecorated and later additions to the church for side altars were constructed, thus enlarging the church. A very special feature of the redecoration of the church is the painting above the main altar. It was painted by Adam Styka, one of Poland's renowned religious painters. His works reveal a clarity and an insight into areas of human emotion and religious mysticism. Directly above the main altar we see the Blessed Virgin Mary as Queen of Poland surrounded by some of Poland's saints and blessed; namely, St. Adalbert; St. Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr;



Rev. B.S. Rosiak's 25th Anniversary of Ordination



Dedication of Pulaski Monument

St. Stanislaus Kostka; St. Andrew Bobola; St. Casimir; St. Hyacinth (Jacek); St. Hedwig (Jadwiga), St. John Kanty; Blessed Kunegunda, Blessed Bronislaw, Blessed Chester (Czeslaw), and Blessed Ladislaus of Gielniowa. The petition directly above the painting in Polish when translated reads: Queen of Poland Pray for Us—has a special significance for Polish Catholics who hold the Blessed Virgin in a special position of honor. Historically, Pope Innocent XI granted the request of King John Casimir in 1656 as he proclaimed the Blessed Mother as patroness of Poland. This heritage and devotion to Mary has had a special place in the religious life of St. Adalbert's parishioners regardless of ethnic heritage and continues to the present day.

A noteworthy community achievement on the part of the people of St. Adalbert's and Father Rosiak was the lead they took in the combined effort with other Polish Roman Catholic parishes in the state to erect a monument to Gen. Casimir Pulaski, the hero of Poland's fight against tyranny and America's War for Independence. This impressive monument in Roger Williams Park erected in

1953 is a source of pride for the entire Polonia of Rhode Island.

One of the last accomplishments of Father Rosiak's pastorate was the placing of the beautiful stained glass windows in the church. The beautification of the church, the establishment of a school, the manifestation of social, cultural, and patriotic activities, and most important and everlasting the spiritual guidance are the legacy of Father Rosiak's thirty three years at St. Adalbert's. His charity knew no bounds as attested to in one example, following World War II he helped many Poles settle in Providence. In March of 1965, due to ill health Father Rosiak retired.

During the latter years of Father Rosiak's pastorate St. Adalbert's parish was fortunate enough to have a young and dedicated assistant pastor. Rev. Frederick V. Slota came to St. Adalbert's in June of 1961. A Rhode Island native Father Slota was born in West Warwick January 2, 1926. He attended Our Lady of Czestochowa parish grammar school and graduated from West Warwick Senior high school. Father Slota received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1949 from St. Mary's College in Orchard Lake, Michigan

where he was very active in numerous college organizations. Father had been Secretary of the New England Chapter of the Alumni Association of St. Mary's College for ten years and presently is serving as National Director for New England. He completed his study of theology at Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary also at Orchard Lake, from which he received the Master of Divinity degree. He was ordained to the priesthood in Providence at Saints Peter & Paul Cathedral by Bishop McVinney on May 30, 1953. His first assignment was as assistant pastor of St. Joseph's, Central Falls, where he distinguished himself not only as a spiritual father but also as a teacher, organizer, and moderator of various church groups.

Father Slota's presence as a newly arrived assistant was enthusiastically felt by all parishioners, young and old. The parish received new life which would be transmitted to parishioners through all aspects of church life—spiritual, cultural, educational, and social. The youth of the parish quickly supported the Catholic Youth Organization which was one of the first of twelve church societies to be organized or rejuvenated by this zealous priest. The spiritual fulfillment and community interaction of the parish teenagers began. An Explorer Post for teenage boys was also a welcome addition of Father Slota's to the scouting activities of the parish. Father Slota's concern for teenagers of

the parish and the diocese can be seen in the fact that he has served as Regional C.Y.O. Director, as the Regional Scout Chaplain of the Providence North Region for five years and regional Vocation Director for two years.

On October 26, 1963, Father Slota was appointed administrator pro tem due to Father Rosiak's failing health and on March 18, 1965, Bishop McVinney appointed him administrator.

As administrator Father Slota began a thorough renovation of church property. The "annex" hall was completely renovated. Meetings and functions were now able to be held on both the lower and upper levels. The school hall on Capron St. was repainted and a tile floor was installed. Paved walks were also installed on the church grounds.

The Felician sisters' convent was small and inadequate and in need of many repairs. It was therefore necessary to either rent or build a new convent. A convent fund drive was soon implemented. After a period of time and with the permission of Bishop McVinney and the approval of the parish Board of Trustees, Father Slota met with contractors to discuss plans for the construction of a new convent. On August 15, 1968 ground breaking ceremonies took place. On November 30, 1969, Bishop McVinney officiated at the blessing and dedication of the new building. Today the parishioners can look with pride at the commodious building for the venerable



St. Adalbert's 50th Parish Jubilee

Felician Sisters who have worked with such zeal for the good of the parish and the school. Likewise, today, the people of St. Adalbert's can note with pride that in this Diamond Jubilee year the debt on the convent has been effaced as one result of a Three Point Program of the Jubilee Fund Appeal.

As we look back into the late 1960's when Father Slota was administrator we recall the renovation work completed on the interior and exterior of the church. The front of the church and the steeple underwent needed repair work.

In the interior of the church the sacristy was brought completely up to date. Also the sanctuary was completely remodeled to comply with the directives of Vatican II. The altar is now much simpler and clearly visible as the place of Sacrifice and the table for the sacramental meal. The eyes of the faithful may concentrate naturally on the liturgical action celebrating the death and resurrection of the Lord. The large crucifix above the tabernacle pivots the congregation's attention on the altar of sacrifice. All the statues in the church were completely cleaned and repainted by Mr. William Racewicz of the parish, who is also an accomplished artist. Near the lateral altars, Father Slota had two new shrines erected.

The first shrine near the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary is the site for the icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa which had been installed in the church by Father Rosiak. The May Crowning in honor of Our Lady Patroness of Poland and the United States continues to be an important day in the parish.

The second shrine near the altar dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, harbors the statue of St. Adalbert, patron of our parish. The life and virtues of our patron, a martyr for Christ, and Catholic Christianity serve as an important spiritual example for all.

St. Adalbert (Wojciech) was born in 956. In the year 983 he was consecrated Archbishop of Prague. Christianity was still in its early stages in Prague and Adalbert had to struggle against many pagan customs which were prevalent among the congregations in his diocese. After five years of turmoil he journeyed to Rome and received permission from Pope John IV to become a Benedictine monk. For two years he labored as a missionary in Hungary with many fruitful results.

In 955, Adalbert petitioned Boleslaw Chrobry, king of Poland, to preach the Gospel among the heathen Slavic tribes along Poland's Baltic coast. Permission was granted and soon Adalbert arrived in Poland. On his journey from Krakow to Gdansk on the Baltic, Adalbert influenced many by his saintly character and charitable nature. In Poland, particularly in the area of Gdansk, Adalbert won many souls for Christ. In the Gdansk area however he also encountered some fierce reactions on the part of one pagan tribe. As a result Adalbert was martyred for the faith on April 23, 997. King Boleslaw was able to obtain his remains and had them entombed in the cathedral at Gniezno. Adalbert was canonized in 999. Legend has it that he was the author of the first Polish religious hymn "Bogurodzica" (The Mother of God) in honor of Mary.

Father Slota has fittingly revived the observance of St. Adalbert's feast day, April 23, in the parish. Special services have been held marking the patron's feast day as a prominent date in the parish calendar. One especially memorable occasion commemorating the feast of St. Adalbert was held during the Holy Year Observance of 1975. The five Polish Roman Catholic churches in the diocese had been named Holy Year Stations by the most Reverend Bishop Louis E. Gelineau and pilgrimages were held to each parish on its patron's feast day. More than 700 people participated in the services on that Sunday afternoon in April for "renewal and reconciliation."

The history of our parish would not be complete without mention of its participation in the observance of the Millennium of Poland's Christianity in 1966. In preparation for the Millennium, St. Adalbert's was host to a replica of the painting of Our Lady of Czestochowa from Poland in the fall of 1962 during which special services were held. In 1966, the members of St. Adalbert's participated in a novena of Holy Hours held on the 30th of each month. The novena conducted by Father Slota prepared the parishioners for the final Diocesan Observance of the Millennium held at the solemn Pontifical Mass celebrated by Bishop McVinney on May 30, 1966. Father Slota and many members of the parish served on the Diocesan Committee for Rhode Island's Observance of Poland's Millennium which helped make the Cathedral Observance, the

Banquet at Rhodes, and the Souvenir Book, a great success for Polonia.

During Father Slota's administration during the years 1963-1967, he was assisted regularly by the Franciscan Fathers. For many years the Franciscan priests helped immensely in the parish. There was a need for a permanent assistant, but due to the shortage of priests that was impossible. However, in the winter of 1967 at the invitation from the late Reverend Bishop Russell J. McVinney, an order of priests, the Society of Christ, arrived in Rhode Island from Poland. The Society of Christ is a relatively new order founded in Poland by the late Cardinal August Hlond for the express purpose of ministering to the spiritual needs of Polish immigrants. The first priest of the Society to serve at St. Adalbert's was Rev. Zbigniew Olbrys who is now pastor of Our Lady of the Bright Mount in Los Angeles, Calif. The Society's priests who have been in our parish since that time have truly served the parish well in many ways. It is interesting to note that, from their humble start in the Providence Diocese, the Society now serves various portions of Polonia scattered throughout the United States.

On December 15, 1970 the entire membership of St. Adalbert's church was extremely contented and thankful to hear that Father Slota was appointed pastor of St. Adalbert's. To show their gratitude to the man who served St. Adalbert's for nine years so effectively, a testimonial was held for the new pastor. It should be noted that Father turned over all the proceeds of his surprise testimonial to the convent building fund. The dedication of our pastor knows no bounds. Father Slota can often be seen at many city block club meetings fighting for the rights of the people in the Olneyville—Manton neighborhood to get their share of city services and police protection. His Christian concern for all humanity is attested to by the fact that in spite of his busy schedule of priestly duties, he has the charity to lend his experience to the executive boards of many neighborhood organizations dealing with the problems of youth, the difficulties of the senior citizens, and the physical upkeep of the area. The people of the parish recognize Father's concern for all and act together as a true Christian family.

Father Slota's sincerity and devotion to hard work for the good of souls has won him the hearts of all. St. Adalbert's young valued

his influence and followed him. The elderly and shut ins are constantly in the mind of Father Slota. He continuously visits the sick at home and in hospitals, bringing them the sacraments. In September of 1976 the sacrament for the anointing of the sick was administered at a special senior citizen service in church. Transportation for the elderly who have no means of getting to church on Sundays is now a reality.

Father Slota's pride in his Polish heritage and in his concern for problems of immigrants in a new land also blends in importantly in our parish history. While the problems of a bilingual parish can be taxing, Father competently brings all to exercise their full potential in worshipping the Lord. Everyone is recognized and the traditions of our revered ancestors are cultivated respectfully.

His concern for the cultural advancement of Polonia is manifested in the fact that he was one of the key founders of the Polonia Coordinating Committee of Rhode Island. A community organization which fosters Polonian activities and has set up a scholarship fund for college students. In addition Father is also chairman of the Polish—Ethnic Heritage Subcommittee of R.I. '76.

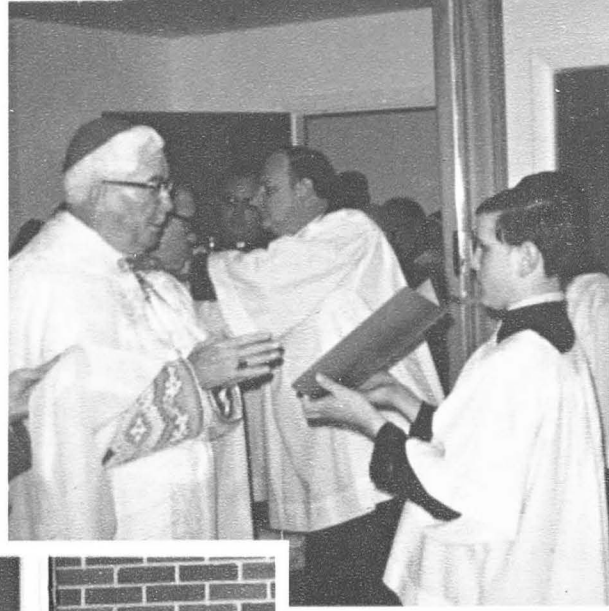
One of the most prominent of St. Adalbert's social and fund raising events is the annual Polish Picnic held on the parish grounds. It attracts people not only throughout Rhode Island, but also from neighboring states. A highlight of the picnic is the performance of Polish folk dances in authentic costumes by the school children.

The past seven years of Father Slota's pastorate which have led up to this 75th Jubilee year are filled with the same type of progress experienced by the parish in the late 1960's. With his dedicated guidance and the good will of the people the parish has grown and prospered in many ways. As presented in the statistics, the parish has actually increased in number in this Jubilee Year as compared to twenty five years ago. The physical aspects of our parish can be measured and the number of people can be counted, but true Christian living can only be experienced and felt. Here at St. Adalbert's, all bear witness to these Christian manifestations. All parishioners of St. Adalbert's take pride in the past and live in optimistic hope for the future.

By:

Joseph A. Chrostowski

PARISH ACTIVITIES



St. Adalbert School

From the earliest beginnings of St. Adalbert's parish, it had been a hope of pastor and parishioners to establish a parish school where the children could receive a good Catholic education and also study Polish, the language of their forefathers. The building which was constructed on Ridge Street was to serve as a combination church—school. When the church portion of St. Adalbert's was dedicated in 1909 the following plans for the school part of the edifice located on the lower floor, were reported in the *Providence Journal*.

"The schoolroom when completed will contain six classrooms, each 26 by 29 feet accommodating a total of 300 pupils. Arrangements have been made with the Felician Sisters of Buffalo to come to Providence and take charge of the new school." However, for reasons not entirely clear the school building on Ridge Street was never completed and classes never began.

Catechism classes were conducted in those early years by Father Duczmal three times during the week. In 1902 there were 50 children receiving such instruction and in 1909 the number increased to 108. It is appropriate to mention that, although not directly connected with the church itself, Mrs. Aleksandra Chmielewska, a dedicated teacher, conducted Polish classes for the children. From her small classroom many children from the parish gained a knowledge of reading and writing their parents' language.

With the coming of Father Switala, plans were again made to construct a school on the new Atwells Avenue location. The initial plans were to be for one building consisting of a church, assembly hall and six classrooms. These plans however fell through and it was decided to construct only a church and later on possibly a school and hall. A school would have been most appropriate for our parish at that time for according to the census of 1925 there were 570 children of ages 7 to 12 in St. Adalbert's.

When Father Rosiak was appointed pastor in 1934, he realized that one of the immediate shortcomings of St. Adalbert's was that the parish lacked a school. In those years of financial difficulty in the midst of the Depression, Father Rosiak boldly set forth to establish a school where the youth of the parish would

be able to develop strong Catholic characters and cultivate a firm love for their Polish traditions.

A parish dream became a reality when, in November 26, 1937, three Felician Sisters from Enfield, Conn. arrived at Father Rosiak's invitation to begin a mission school (Catechetical). A building on 138 Florence Street had been purchased and renovated to serve as the convent. The convent was blessed on November 28, 1937. A portion of the ground floor was set aside for classrooms. The first year 130 pupils registered for religion classes and for Polish language classes.

Such extracurricular instruction lasted for nine years. On June 21, 1946, plans were finalized for the establishment of a full time elementary school. During the summer months of 1946 the necessary renovations were made in the annex hall and the convent. In the convent first floor there were to be four grades divided into two classes and the annex was partitioned for the fifth and sixth grades and the kindergarten.

On September 9, 1946, St. Adalbert's elementary school began its first session. At first the school had an enrollment of only 52 pupils, but by the end of the year there were 69 children in kindergarten through grade 6. Plans were made to expand the school to grade 8 in the succeeding years. With the growth in the number of school children, permission was obtained to use three classrooms in the Academy Avenue public school in 1948. The following year, 1949, St. Adalbert's received permission to use classrooms in the Putnam Street School. On June 18, 1949 the first graduation was held at St. Adalbert's for a class of four. By that year there were already 105 pupils under the care of five Felician sisters. By 1952, the number of pupils rose to 167-79 boys and 88 girls.

In September of 1954, the former 6th precinct police station on 36 Chaffee Street became the new home of St. Adalbert's school. The interior of the building was completely renovated into five classrooms, a two room kindergarten, and a nurse's room. For the first time, the parish had a building where the entire student body could meet under one roof. The school year of September 1954 commenced with the enrollment of 230 pupils.

In addition to the school building the



Religious Sisters

parish obtained the large annex adjacent to the school on Capron Street. This annex was soon converted into a school hall. School plays were presented twice a year in this hall by the school children under the direction of the good sisters. Prior to obtaining that building the Polish National Home on Chaffee Street was used for the production of these plays. The Felician Sisters devoted much extra time in rehearsing the children for these performances which included recitations in Polish, singing of Polish songs, and folk dances.

During the years when Father Slota served as administrator, needed improvements on the interior and exterior of the school and hall were carried out. As pastor, Father Slota continued needed interior renovation of the school classrooms and replaced the old fire alarm system with a thoroughly efficient one.

Unfortunately with the decrease in the number of teaching sisters, the kindergarten had to be closed in June of 1965. The following year however, these two rooms used by the kindergarten were converted into a school library. On January 6, 1966, the library was dedicated and blessed by Father Slota and the children assisted in prayer.

On June 18, 1971 St. Adalbert's school merged with Blessed Sacrament parish to help that school out with their falling enrollment. On September 8, 1971, three Felician Sisters and 102 children from St. Adalbert's began classes at Blessed Sacrament. This experiment lasted for only one year and St. Adalbert's reopened on Chaffee St. the following fall of 1972 with 121 students. To date in this Diamond Jubilee Year of our parish it has an enrollment of 115 students with a teaching staff of four Felician Sisters, two lay teachers, the pastor Father Slota who teaches religion in grades seven and eight, and Father Drzal, the associate pastor, who teaches Polish. Physical Education classes are held at the Nickerson House Gym under the instruction of a third lay teacher.

The many achievements of the graduates of St. Adalbert's school speak for themselves. With a firm background in spiritual values and of academic excellence, the graduates of our school have been highly successful in the most demanding high schools. Many have gone on with honors to complete college and university studies while others have been successful in acquiring a needed trade. St. Adalbert's has a history of winners



Faculty

in various state wide competitions and continues to excel in winning such contests. Just the past school year 1975-1976, three out of the seven winners of the American Automobile Association's poster contest were from our school. In the area of science, seven received awards from the National Association of Science Teachers for their essays on early Rhode Island Industrialists. Those are only a few of many examples in which the children of our parish school have ranked in first place. In the school's history, three girls have won full four year scholarships to St. Xavier's Academy in Providence. Although the location of our school may not be that well known, many high school admissions officers or guidance counselors in the city have the highest words of praise when St. Adalbert's school is mentioned. On November 4, 1975, our school was honored when Bishop Gelineau paid a visit to it. The Reverend Bishop visited each classroom and stayed for almost three hours.

It is important to note that a unique characteristic of our Catholic school has been to acquaint the children with Polish customs and traditions which have formed a valuable part of St. Adalbert's religious and social life.

The traditional "Wigilia" at Christmas time and the sharing of "oplatek" held at the school prior to Christmas vacation, is eagerly anticipated by the eighth grade who take charge of the entire affair. The instruction of a foreign language has recently been reintroduced into the curriculum for all grades with the teaching of the Polish language. This program benefits those of Polish descent to better understand their heritage and those of non-Polish descent to acquire an understanding of Polish contributions to the pluralism of our American society.

It is appropriate to say that despite general difficulties in private education, St. Adalbert's parochial school, thanks to the efforts of the pastor Father Slota, whose leadership and dedication has brought the school through various hard times, and the efforts of the faithful Felician sisters, lay teachers, parent volunteers, P.T.A., and all parishioners, is thriving and continuing with its consistently high standards. Its program of education meets with the new currents and with enforcement of proven educational methods. The achievements of our students have shown St. Adalbert's school to be, by comparison, well above the average.

Krótki zarys historii parafii Św. Wojciecha w Providence, Rhode Island

Mężowie zaufania (trustyści i rewizorzy ksiąg parafialnych parafii)

Jan Chmielewski	1902-1922	Adolf Kulmacz	1929-1930
Ludwik Balczun	1902-1922	Paweł Damutz	1930-1966
Kazimierz Łozowski	1922-1928	Franciszek Czernicki	1967-1972
Wojciech Boroń	1922-1929	Józef Piekarski	1930 - obecny
Stanisław Pristawa			1973 - obecny

Pierwsza wzmianka o Polakach w stanie Rhode Island datuje się z okresu wojny rewolucyjnej naszego kraju. A mianowicie polscy oficerowie w służbie armii francuskiej brali udział we mszy świętej odprawianej po raz pierwszy w mieście Newport, Rhode Island. Również pewna liczba uchodźców polskich przybyła do naszego stanu w ubiegłym stuleciu. Jednak dopiero pod koniec XIX wieku Polacy w większej ilości przybyli do Rhode Island. Już w 1890 roku wzrastająca kolonia polska zamieszkiwała okolice Olneyville w Providence, a druga okolice dolnych ulic Chalkstone i Charles. Polacy ulokowali się w tych dzielnicach blisko fabryk, gdzie znajdowali pracę, a mianowicie w tekstylnych koncernach Fletcher Manufacturing, Atlantic Mills, Silver Spring Bleachery i w innych oraz w produkcji narzędzi w Brown & Sharpe i Locomotive Works. Pierwsi polscy imigranci naszego stanu pochodzili z okupowanej przez Prusy i Austrię Polski. Powoli jednak imigranci spod zaboru rosyjskiego, napływając w większej masie, utworzyli większość.

W tym okresie czasu w stanie Rhode Island katolicy nie rozumiejący języka angielskiego znaleźli zrozumienie miejscowego biskupa, ordynariusza, który pragnął zapewnić każdej narodowości duszpasterza z ich kraju i nabożeństwa w zrozumiałym języku. Tym biskupem był Jego Ekscelencja Matthew J. Harkins. Zdawał on sobie sprawę, że dla tych grup etnicznych konieczne było stworzenie osobnych parafii, gdzie nabożeństwa w języku danej grupy pogłębiałyby wiarę w Boga, umacniałyby moralność, a zachowanie tradycji i zwyczajów narodowych dawałyby radość i zadowolenie ludowi Bożemu. Tak było z ludem polskim. W 1900 roku ks. biskup Harkins dał pozwolenie, aby w sali pod katedrą Św. Piotra i Pawła były odprawiane nabożeństwa przez polskiego duszpasterza. Następnie ks. biskup zarządził spis Polaków w Providence. Wynik

spisu: około 140 rodzin mieszkających w okolicy Olneyville i 50 rodzin w okolicy Randall Square.

Zwiększająca się imigracja z powodu opłakanych warunków ekonomicznych w porzobiorowej Polsce skłoniła księdza biskupa do wyszukania bardziej odpowiedniego miejsca dla oddawania chwały Bożej ludu polskiego. Ks. biskup zakupił dnia 5 listopada 1901 roku trzy place na ulicy Ridge, w okolicy Federal Hill, od właściciela Arthura M. Smitha i tutaj zaplanował utworzenie parafii polskiej. W 1902 roku ks. biskup mianował księdza Wojciecha Duczmała, lat 25, pierwszym proboszczem parafii polskiej w stanie Rhode Island. Dawny, drewniany kościółek Świętego Ducha został przeniesiony na zakupiony plac. Wykończenie kościoła nastąpiło 23 stycznia 1902 roku, a parafia została urzędowo erygowana 17 lutego tego roku pod patronatem św. Wojciecha, Biskupa i Męczennika. Pierwszymi mężami zaufania nowo powstałej parafii zostali wybrani Jan Chmielewski i Ludwik Balczun. W taki sposób powstała parafia Św. Wojciecha w diecezji Providence dla katolików mówiących językiem polskim i stała się matką dla sześciu następnych polskich i rzymskokatolickich parafii.

Ks. Duczmał urodził się w Polsce w 1877 roku i tam otrzymał początkowe wykształcenie. Studia teologiczne ukończył w Louvain w Belgii, a święcenia kapłańskie otrzymał 15 lipca 1900 roku. Po powrocie do kraju pracował tylko kilka miesięcy, zgłosił się bowiem do pracy duszpasterskiej w Stanach Zjednoczonych na apel księży biskupów tego kraju. Z pełnym zapałem zabrał się ks. Duczmał do pracy w nowo powstałej parafii w Providence. W 1903 roku otrzymał pozwolenie na budowę plebanii na ulicy Ridge. Zwiększająca się liczba Polaków z powodu narastającej imigracji, wielu chrtów, młodych małżeństw prosiła o zbudowanie większej świątyni w połączeniu ze szkołą

parafialną. Z tego powodu rozpoczęto zbiórke pieniężną na ten cel. Były to lata bardzo trudne dla wielu parafian. Długie godziny pracy, małe zarobki niewystarczające na utrzymanie większej rodziny, a przy tym chęć pomocy dla swoich najbliższych w starym kraju. Pomimo to pierwsi pionierzy odejmowali sobie od ust kawałek chleba, aby zbudować godny przybytek Boży. Dzięki ich ofiarności postawiono murowany budynek kościelny na tej samej ulicy.

Pierwsza stronica gazety "Providence Journal" z 15 marca 1909 roku oznajmiała o poświęceniu nowego kościoła. Nowy budynek, dwupiętrowy, był kombinacją kościoła i szkoły. Pierwsze piętro miało być później wykończony i użyte na sale szkolne. Drugie piętro wykończony zostało i użyte jako świątynia o pojemności 900 miejsc siedzących. Był to ładny budynek z czerwonej cegły, ozdobiony popielatą terakotą szerokości 67 stóp, a długości 184. Według "Providence Journal" około 2000 ludzi brało udział w poświęceniu tej świątyni, której dokonał Jego Ekscelencja Matthew J. Harkins, biskup z Providence, dziękując parafianom za "nową perłę w koronie diecezji". Ks. biskup pochwalił ofiarności ludu Bożego i porównał parafię Św. Wojciecha do złotego łańcucha, łączącego lud polski z Providence z Krajem ich pochodzenia oraz ze stolicą Świętego Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego. Następnie została odprawiona pierwsza uroczysta msza św. Głównym celebrazem był ks. Dominico Belliotti, proboszcz parafii Świętego Ducha. Diakonem był ks. dr Michał Dutkiewicz, proboszcz Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej z Quidnick, subdiakonem ks. Piotr Światała, proboszcz Św. Kazimierza z Warren, a mistrzem ceremonii był miejscowy proboszcz, ks. Duczmal. Asystowali księdzu biskupowi Harkins: ks. Tomasz Morys, proboszcz Św. Stanisława Kostki w Woonsocket i ks. Franciszek Klugier, proboszcz Św. Józefa w Central Falls. Członkowie Towarzystwa Św. Wojciecha zajmowali pierwsze ławki, a ich urzędnicy pełnili funkcje porządkowych. To Towarzystwo obok Tow. Wojskowego Św. Józefa z Warren pod wodzą kapitana Andrzeja Jeworka tworzyło honorową gwardię księdza biskupa. Pismo "Journal" dodaje jeszcze, że katolicy polscy i litewscy brali udział w tych ceremoniach dedykacji. Ks. Tomasz Grochowski, kapłan z zakonu Redemptorystów z Nowego Jorku, głosił słowo Boże. Jego jednogodzinne kazanie w języku polskim przypomniało obecnym przyczyny ich opuszczenia własnego kraju w celu szukania chleba i wolności na ziemi Waszyngtona. Następnie kaznodzieja pięknie przeprowadził starodawny zwyczaj polski ślubowania parafian wierności dla wiary, na wzór przysięgi małżeńskiej. To ślubowanie odbyło się z wielkim namaszczeniem i

podniesieniem ducha. I tak 15 marca 1909 roku wspaniale zapisał się w rocznikach parafii Św. Wojciecha.

W następnych latach młoda parafia znalazła się w nieoczekiwanych trudnościach. Jednym z problemów, który prześladował ks. Duczmalą od roku 1905 aż do końca I wojny światowej — był rozdźwięk parafian polskich i litewskich, którzy pragnęli mieć swoją własną parafię. Historycznie Litwa była od 1385 roku złączona z Polską aż do rozbiorów. Olbrzymia część północno-wschodniej Polski przypadła pod zabór rosyjski. Większość imigrantów litewskich w stanie Rhode Island mówiła językiem polskim i etnicznie przechowywała te same zwyczaje i tradycje religijno-narodowe. Pewna grupa parafian litewskiego pochodzenia pragnęła osobnej parafii w Providence. Ta dążność była podsycana ruchem separatystycznym we wschodniej Europie przez carat rosyjski w celu pokłócenia Polaków z Litwinami. Ks. biskup zgodził się na słuszne żądania parafian litewskich i założenie parafii pod nazwą Św. Kazimierza przy ulicy Smith.

Innym problemem było ulokowanie parafii przy ulicy Ridge. Otóż dwie kolonie polskie znajdowały się w mieście Providence. Jedna w okolicach Olneyville, bliżej kościoła, druga, mieszkająca w północnym końcu miasta, i przy braku odpowiedniej komunikacji była narażona na wielkie niewygody. Toteż za zgodą księdza biskupa została utworzona 19 sierpnia 1916 roku nowa parafia pod wezwaniem Św. Jadwigi, której pierwszym proboszczem został ks. dr Michał Dutkiewicz. Dnia 7 stycznia 1917 roku kościół parafialny został dedykowany przy ulicy North Main. Ta parafia służyła polskim parafianom aż do 11 czerwca 1961 roku, to jest do zakupienia całego obiektu budynków przez miasto na Lippitt Hill Redevelopment Project. Byli parafianie Św. Jadwigi częściowo powrócili do dawnej parafii, a inni zapisali się do parafii terytorialnych. Należy podkreślić, że parafia Św. Jadwigi wydała dwóch kapłanów: ks. Władysława J. Rozpąda i ks. Mateusza J. Strumskiego.

Z uzyskaniem niepodległości Polski w 1918 roku imigracja z kraju została unormowana nowymi, surowymi prawami. Należałoby jeszcze zaznaczyć, że pewne nieporozumienia powstały pomiędzy księdzem Duczmalem i parafianami na skutek trudności finansowych utworzenia szkoły parafialnej. Z tego powodu na prośbę ks. Duczmalą ks. biskup przeniósł go na probostwo parafii Św. Stanisława Kostki w Woonsocket, a ks. Piotra Światałę z parafii Św. Stanisława Kostki do parafii Św. Wojciecha jako nowego proboszcza. Ks. Światała urodził się w Jaskółkach w Polsce. Wykształcenie podstawowe otrzymał w miejscu urodzenia, a gimnazjalne w Ostrowie

Wielkopolskim. Studia filozoficzne odbył w Małym Seminarium w Belgii, a teologiczne w amerykańskim College w Louvain. Po otrzymaniu święceń kapłańskich 8 lipca 1908 roku przybył do Rhode Island do pracy duszpasterskiej. Pracował początkowo w Warren, Central Falls i Woonsocket.

Będąc wykształconym kapłanem, płynnie mówił po polsku, francusku, niemiecku i angielsku. Ks. Światała zaraz na początku doszedł do przekonania, że lokalizacja kościoła na Federal Hill jest niewygodna dla większości parafian mieszkających w okolicy Olneyville i ulicy Manton. Dlatego zdecydowano sprzedać obiekty kościelne przy ulicy Ridge i zakupić bardziej odpowiednie miejsce bliżej centrum zamieszkania parafian. Sprzedaż została dokonana w 1922 roku. Wszystkie budynki parafialne zakupiła parafia Świętego Ducha. Obecna posiadłość kościelna przy ulicy 860 Atwells Avenue została zakupiona od Thomasa J. McGratha tego samego roku. W kupno był włączony budynek na plebanię i mała sala. Ks. Światała miał nadzieję zbudowania murowanego kościoła na 500 miejsc siedzących w połączeniu z 6 salami na szkołę parafialną. Został utworzony komitet budowy w celu zebrania odpowiednich funduszy, składający się z następujących osób: Wojciech Boroń, Kazimierz Łozowski, Leon Fidrych, Piotr Lagunowicz, Jan Piekarski, Władysław Zygunia, Antoni Balkun, Aleksander Bukrym, Jan Gracki, Stanisław Urbanowicz, Leopold Chrostowski, Wincenty Radziejewicz i Julian Siwicki.

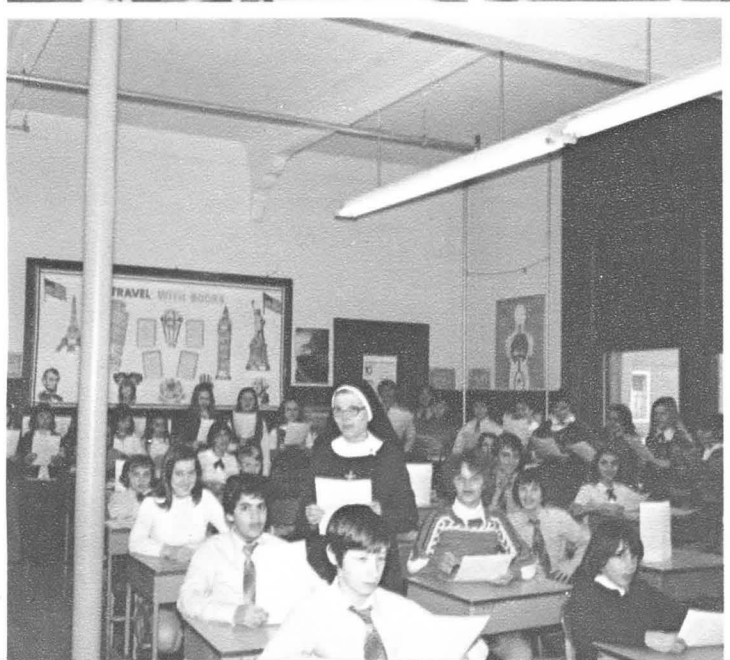
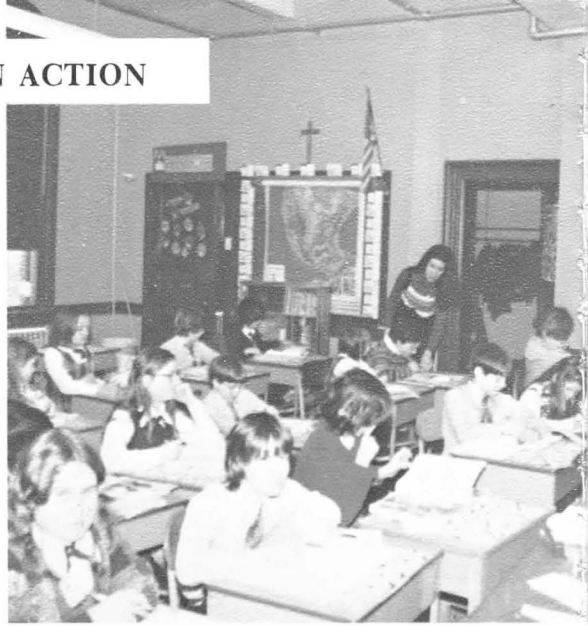
Po opuszczeniu starego kościoła i w oczekiwaniu na nowy parafianie Św. Wojciecha używali na nabożeństwa budynek Odd Fellows Hall przy ulicy Academy. Ponieważ zbiórka pieniężna postępowała powoli z powodu trudności ekonomicznych, postanowiono zbudować tylko kościół. Budynek szkolny miał być zbudowany w późniejszym czasie. Architekt Henry F. Ludorf z New Britain, Connecticut, został wybrany na sporządzenie planów kościoła, a firma Braci Famiglietti z Providence na budowę. W czwartek, 10 kwietnia 1924 roku, ks. Światała wrzucił szpadlem ziemię pod nowy kościół, a w uroczystość Matki Boskiej Królowej Polski, 3 maja 1925 roku, ks. biskup Hickey wmurował kamień węgielny. Dzięki staraniom i ofiarności zarówno parafian jak i proboszcza uroczysta dedykacja nowego kościoła pod nazwą Św. Wojciecha, Biskupa i Męczennika, nastąpiła 26 września 1926 roku. Ks. biskup Hickey poświęcił nowy kościół, a w swoim kazaniu pochwalił "wytrwałość ludu polskiego" i zachęcił do trwałej wierności dla wiary i praktyk chrześcijańskich. Obecny kościół, zbudowany w stylu romańskim, godnie przedstawia się od strony frontowej. Jest on 130 stóp długi, 52 stopy szeroki i 93 stopy wysoki. Zbudowany jest z

czerwonej cegły ozdobionej terakotą w formie krzyża i może pomieścić około 500 osób siedzących. Front kościoła jest ozdobiony piękną fasadą, połączoną z wysoką wieżą. Wnętrze kościoła jest ozdobione polichromią i ma beczkowe sklepienie wykonane różnymi artystycznymi zdobiami. Boczne okna są harmonijnie włączone w stacje drogi krzyżowej. Dach kościoła jest pokryty hiszpańską dachówką.

W tym okresie nastąpiły ciężkie czasy. Depresja w całym kraju. Parafianie Św. Wojciecha, jak i wszyscy Amerykanie, byli mocno dotknięci z powodu zamknięcia fabryk, a często utrata pracy powodowała stratę domów. Dług parafialny nie mógł być spłacany mimo dobrej woli parafian. Na tym tle powstało wiele nieporozumień, zażaleń; depresja dała się wszystkim we znaki. Ks. Światała po 14 latach duszpasterstwa w parafii Św. Wojciecha został przeniesiony dnia 5 października 1934 roku na probostwo do Św. Józefa w Central Falls. Tego samego dnia ks. Bronisław Rosiak, były administrator parafii M.B. Częstochowskiej w (Quidnick) Coventry, został wyznaczony przez władzę kościelną trzecim proboszczem parafii Św. Wojciecha.

Ks. Rosiak, urodzony w Płocku w Polsce, przybył do Stanów Zjednoczonych wraz z rodzicami jako pięcioletni chłopiec. Wykształcenie podstawowe zdobył w szkole parafialnej w Baltimore, Maryland, gimnazjalne — w publicznej szkole, następnie wyższe w Loyola College, filozoficzne studia w Louvain w Belgii, teologiczne w Rzymie i w St. Mary's Seminarium w Baltimore. Święcenia kapłańskie otrzymał 31 maja 1917 roku. Ks. Rosiak został proboszczem w parafii Św. Wojciecha w chwili, gdy jeszcze panowała depresja w całym kraju. Parafia miała wielkie długi. Nowy proboszcz z poświęceniem starał się o harmonijną współpracę wszystkich parafian, ożywienie życia religijnego w duchu miłości chrześcijańskiej i zlikwidowanie długu parafialnego. Na samym początku swego duszpasterstwa zakłada dawno oczekiwaną szkołę parafialną, gdzie do dnia dzisiejszego nauczycielkami są siostry felicjanki, pracujące z całym poświęceniem. Zainteresowanie ks. Rosiaka rozciągało się również na młodzież, którą organizuje w grupy sportowe, a dla dzieci drużyny harcerskie. Częste stanowe nagrody dla zespołów sportowych były bodźcem przynależności młodzieży do życia parafialnego. Z wybuchem II wojny światowej wielu mężczyzn i dziewcząt powołano do armii. Specjalne modlitwy za walczącą młodzież były stale prowadzone w parafii. W rocznikach parafii Św. Wojciecha możemy znaleźć wzmianki o bohaterskich żołnierzach, którzy oddali swoje życie za "wolność naszą i waszą". A

PARISH SCHOOL IN ACTION



JUBILEE OBSERVANCE—CHURCH



oto ich nazwiska: Adam Gajdowski, Józef Klepadło, Czesław Kulig, Edward Mikieliewicz, Aleksander Muszyński, Kazimierz Przestrzelski, Stanisław Kurczap, Józef Kuśmicki, Stanisław Lawrynowicz, Stanisław Łozowski, Władysław Szczepanek, Władysław Warszewicz, Leonard Wasilewski, Edward Wójcik. Patriotyzm ks. Rosiaka dla Stanów Zjednoczonych i dla Polski był szeroko znany. Jakim był proboszcz, takimi byli i parafianie dla przybranej ojczyzny i dla Polski, ojczyzny ich ojców. O tym świadczy wielka ilość kupionych bondów przez parafian Św. Wojciecha dla zakupienia bombowca w roku 1943, którego ochrzczono "Duch Polonii z Rhode Island". Ponadto parafianie współpracowali w wielokrotnych zbiórkach pieniężnych dla polskiej ludności rozdartej wojną i okupacją. Zaraz po wojnie ludność parafii Św. Wojciecha wraz z jej proboszczem w połączeniu z innymi kościołami w stanie Rhode Island zorganizowała zbiórkę żywności, ubrania i paramentów religijnych dla oswobodzonej ludności polskiej. Należałoby zaznaczyć, że parafia Św. Wojciecha nadal prowadzi akcję pomocy finansowej poprzez Ligę Katolicką dla ludności wycieńczonej wojną w Polsce.

W przygotowaniach do 50-lecia założenia parafii wewnątrz kościoła zostało odmalowane, udekorowane, a boczne ołtarze powiększone. W ozdobię świątyni brał czynny udział Adam Styka, światowej sławy religijny malarz polski. Jego prace uwydatniają wewnętrzne przeżycia ducha ludzkiego w połączeniu z mistycyzmem. Nad głównym ołtarzem widzimy Najświętszą Marię Pannę jako Królowę Polski w otoczeniu niektórych świętych i błogosławionych polskich, a mianowicie: św. Wojciecha, św. Stanisława, biskupa i męczennika, św. Stanisława Kostki, św. Andrzeja Boboli, św. Kazimierza, św. Jacka, św. Jadwigi, św. Jana Kantego, błogosławionej Kunegundy, bł. Bronisławy, bł. Czesława i bł. Władysława z Gielniowa. Pod tym obrazem napis: "Królowo Polsko, módl się za nas, miej w specjalnej pamięci polskich katolików, którzy Ciebie czczą".

Polska ma prawo nazywać Matkę Bożą Królową Polski, gdyż taki tytuł nadał papież Innocenty XI, na prośbę króla Jana Kazimierza, w roku 1656. Gorące nabożeństwo do Najświętszej Dziewicy nadal kwitnie w życiu parafian Św. Wojciecha bez względu na przynależność etniczną, aż do dnia dzisiejszego.

Jednym z przepięknych osiągnięć parafian Św. Wojciecha wespół z innymi polskimi parafianami pod kierownictwem ks. Rosiaka było wystawienie pomnika generałowi Kazimierzowi Pułaskiemu, bohaterowi dwóch światów, Polski i Ameryki, który oddał swoje życie w czasie wojny rewolucyjnej o niepodległość Stanów Zjednoczonych. Ten pomnik został postawiony w Roger Williams

Park w 1953 roku i może być źródłem dumy całej Polonii w Rhode Island.

Ostatnim duszpasterskim osiągnięciem księdza Rosiaka było ozdobienie okien kościoła witrażami. Upiększenie świątyni, założenie szkoły, manifestacja społecznych, kulturalnych i patriotycznych czynów, a przede wszystkim właściwe kierownictwo duchowe ks. Rosiaka przez 33 lata duszpasterstwa w parafii Św. Wojciecha zapisało się złotymi zgłoskami w pamięci parafian i przyszłych pokoleń. Jego akcja charytatywna nie miała granic, szczególnie w pomocy dla polskich ofiar wojny przybyłych do Providence. Na skutek pogarszającego się stanu zdrowia ks. Rosiak zmuszony był przejść na emeryturę w 1965 roku.

Parafia Św. Wojciecha była szczęśliwa, że w ostatnich latach duszpasterstwa księdza Rosiaka ksiądz Fryderyk W. Słota służył jej swoją pomocą jako stały asystent od czerwca 1961 roku. Ksiądz Słota urodził się w West Warwick, Rhode Island, 2 stycznia 1926 roku. Ukończył szkołę parafialną Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej, a potem gimnazjum państwowe w mieście urodzenia. Ks. Słota otrzymał stopień bakałarza sztuk w 1949 roku w Kolegium Matki Boskiej w Orchard Lake, Michigan, gdzie brał czynny udział w różnych kolegialnych organizacjach. Był również sekretarzem Okręgu Alumnów Nowej Anglii Kolegium Matki Boskiej przez szereg lat; nawet obecnie piastuje funkcję krajowego dyrektora tegoż Okręgu. Studia teologiczne ukończył w Seminarium Św. Cyryla i Metodego w Orchard Lake, otrzymując stopień magistra teologii, a święcenia kapłańskie otrzymał w katedrze Św. Piotra i Pawła w Providence z rąk przew. ks. biskupa Russella J. McVinney — 30 maja 1953 roku.

Pierwszą placówkę duszpasterską objął w parafii Św. Józefa w Central Falls, gdzie odznaczył się jako wzorowy ojciec duchowny i nauczyciel, organizator i moderator licznych grup kościelnych. Przeniesienie księdza Słoty do parafii Św. Wojciecha było przyjęte z entuzjazmem zarówno starszych jak młodszych parafian providenckich. Parafia otrzymała nowy zastrzyk życia poprzez różne dziedziny jego pracy duchowej, kulturalnej, wychowawczej i społecznej i młodzież szybko włączyła się w Organizację Młodzieży Katolickiej — CYO — i swoją żywotnością i gorliwością wyprzedziła inne parafie. Dzięki kierownictwu, zrozumieniu ducha młodzieży, cierpliwości i taktowi kapłańskiemu ks. Słoty młodzież parafialna poczuła, że ma w osobie młodego księdza najlepszego ojca, przyjaciela i starszego brata. Wspaniałe wyniki jego pracy wśród młodzieży zwróciły uwagę władz diecezjalnych, które powierzyły mu funkcję regionalnego dyrektora CYO, jak również

regionalnego kapelana Harcerstwa w północnym rejonie Providence, które piastował przez pięć lat, oraz regionalnego dyrektora Powołań przez dwa lata. Na skutek zapadania na zdrowiu księdza Rosiaka ks. biskup powierzył ks. Słocie czasową administrację parafii 26 października 1963 roku, a 18 marca 1965 roku — pełną.

Praca administratora obok duchowej to troska o dobro materialne parafii. Toteż ks. Słota według potrzeby odnawia i przerabia poszczególne budynki, a więc małą salę, tak zwaną "annex", dla zebrania parafialnych, szkolną salę na ulicy Capron i chodniki na gruntach parafialnych. Tymczasem klasztor siostr-nauczycielek felicjanek wymagał decyzji: wynajęcie nowego budynku lub zbudowanie nowego klasztoru. Parafianie zdecydowali wybudowanie nowego i zebrania odpowiedniego w tym celu funduszu. Ks. biskup McVinney zgodził się na ten projekt. I oto 15 sierpnia 1968 roku wruszono ziemię pod konwent, a 30 listopada 1969 roku ks. biskup poświęcił nowy piękny i wygodny budynek. Dzisiaj parafianie mogą z dumą spoglądać na godne mieszkanie dla czcigodnych sióstr felicjanek, które z pełną gorliwością pracowały i pracują dla dobra parafii i szkoły. Mogą również szczerzyć się, że w roku diamentowego jubileuszu parafii nie obciąża żaden dług związany z klasztorem. Spoglądając wstecz na lata sześćdziesiąte, wyniki rzetelnej pracy ks. Słoty rzucają się w oczy. Zewnętrzna i wewnętrzna restauracja kościoła, zakrystii i sanktuarium według wymagań II Soboru Watykańskiego, to wszystko podniosło świątynię Bożą na wysoki poziom estetyczny. Ołtarz ofiarny widoczny. Oczy wiernych zwrócone na akcję liturgiczną celebracji śmierci i Zmartwychwstania Pańskiego. Wielki rzeźbiony krzyż nad tabernakulum uzupełnia świadomość pełnienia Najświętszej Ofiary. Wszystkie statuy odnowione dzięki artystycznemu smakowi Williama Racewicza, parafianina. Obok bocznych ołtarzy ks. Słota umieścił dwa gustowne ołtarzyki. Jeden poświęcony Matce Bożej Częstochowskiej, zapoczątkowany za czasów poprzedniego proboszcza. Koronacja statuy Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej, patronki Polski i Stanów Zjednoczonych, w miesiącu maju zajmuje wybitne miejsce w życiu parafialnym. Drugi ołtarzyk poświęcono patronowi kościoła, świętemu Wojciechowi.

Jego życie, cnoty i śmierć męczeńska za wiarę wskazują wiernym prawdziwy cel ich życia. Św. Wojciech — w języku łacińskim zwany Adalbert — urodził się w roku 956 w Czechosłowacji, konsekrowany na biskupa Pragi w 983 r. Chryścijaństwo jeszcze nie zakorzeniło się głęboko w tym kraju, pogańskie obyczaje podtrzymywały władze państwowe. Po pięciu

latach nadludzkiego zmagania się w pracy duszpasterskiej arcybiskup Wojciech opuszcza Pragę i przybywa do Rzymu, otrzymawszy zwolnienie z obowiązków pasterza w Pradze. Wstępuje do zakonu Benedyktynów. Następnie jako misjonarz pracuje owocnie na Węgrzech. W tym czasie król Bolesław Chrobry zaprasza biskupa Wojciecha do nawracania pogan zamieszkałych na wybrzeżu Morza Bałtyckiego. Arcybiskup przyjmuje to zaproszenie i poprzez Kraków przebywa drogę aż pod Gdańsk, wszędzie głosząc słowo Boże, a świętym życiem nawracając wielu do Boga. Swoją misję apostolską skończył on męczeństwem z rąk pogan 23 kwietnia 997 roku. Król Bolesław Chrobry wykupił ciało męczennika i umieścił w katedrze w Gnieźnie. Kościół święty wyniósł św. Wojciecha na ołtarze już w 999 roku. Przypisuje się św. Wojciechowi ułożenie pieśni do Matki Boskiej "Bogurodzica", z którą na ustach rycerstwo szło do boju w obronie wiary i wolności.

Ks. Słota wprowadził uroczysty obchód patrona parafii w rocznicę jego śmierci. Szczególnym obchodem ku czci św. Wojciecha była celebracja "Odnowy i Przebaczenia" w Roku Świętym 1975, kiedy z pozostałymi czterech parafii polskich przybyli pielgrzymi dla okazania, że "Polonia semper fidelis" — "Polska zawsze wierna". Historia naszej parafii byłaby niekompletna, gdyby ominięto wzmiankę o obchodzie 1000-lecia Polski Chrześcijańskiej — tak zwane millennium, które wypadło w 1966 roku. W przygotowaniu do tego obchodu parafia gościła od 1962 roku obraz — kopię — Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej, przed którym odprawiano nabożeństwa. A w samym roku milenijnym odprawiano Godzinę Świętą każdego 30 dnia miesiąca. Ta nowenna przygotowała parafian do uroczystego diecezjalnego obchodu millennium chrześcijańskiej Polski, który zakończył się 30 maja pontyfikalną mszą świętą w katedrze z udziałem ks. biskupa McVinney. Głównym kaznodzieją i mówcą był ks. arcybiskup Król z Filadelfii, późniejszy kardynał. Ks. Słota brał czynny udział w komitetach przygotowujących ten obchód w katedrze i bankiet w Rhodes. Powodzenie tych uroczystości było duże.

W latach 1963-1967 księdzu Słocie pomagali dorywczo ojcowie franciszkanie. Ta pomoc była niewystarczająca i na prośbę ks. biskupa McVinney przybyli do Rhode Island kapłani z Towarzystwa Chrystusowego. To Towarzystwo było założone przez ks. kardynała Hlonda w celu prowadzenia opieki duszpasterskiej wśród Polonii zagranicznej. Pierwszym kapłanem z tego Towarzystwa, który objął stanowisko asystenta parafii św. Wojciecha, był ks. Zbigniew Olbryś, obecnie proboszcz parafii Matki Boskiej Jasnogórskiej w Los Angeles, California. Od tego czasu członkowie Tow.

Chrystusowego z wielkim pożytkiem pracują w parafii. Interesujące jest to, że Towarzystwo Chrystusowe, które rozpoczęło pracę duszpasterską w skromnym stanie Rhode Island, obecnie służy chlubnie Polonii w wielu stanach Ameryki.

15 grudnia 1970 roku ks. biskup McVinney w dowód uznania pracy duszpasterskiej nadał księdzu Słocie tytuł administratora na proboszcza. Parafianie uczcili to wyniesienie uroczystym bankietem, okazując w ten sposób swoją wdzięczność za 9 lat jego pracy w parafii. Należałoby dodać, że ofiarowane z tej okazji prezenty ks. Słota przekazał na fundusz budowy klasztoru. Poświęcenie jego dla sprawy Bożej i dobra ludu Bożego nie ma granic. Można widzieć ks. Słotę często w budynku magistrackim w mieście, upominającego się o prawa dla ludności mieszkającej w okolicach Olneyville i Manton i opiekę policyjną. Oprócz pastoralnych obowiązków chętnie oddaje swoje siły, czas i zdolności sąsiadującym organizacjom, a szczególnie młodzieżowym, i starszym obywatelom. Szczerze i rzetelna, ciężka praca dla dobra dusz sobie powierzonych zjednała księdzu Słocie serca wszystkich. Młodzież, starsi wiekiem, inwalidzi — oto szczególna troska młodego proboszcza. Śpieszy z wielkim poświęceniem do chorych i inwalidów, do domów i szpitali, aby udzielać sakramentów świętych. Organizuje bezpłatny przejazd do kościoła dla starszych parafian. Dumny jest ze swego pochodzenia polskiego i z zapałem podtrzymuje tradycje narodowe. Potrafił również rozwiązać dwujęzyczne duszpasterstwo, mając zawsze na uwadze dobro ludu Bożego.

Ks. Słota z troskliwą opieką w zachowaniu ducha i kultury polskiej zostaje głównym organizatorem Koordynacyjnego Komitetu Polonii w tym stanie, który ma na celu urządzanie polonijnych uroczystości i obchodów oraz udzielanie stypendiów dla studentów z kolegów. Poza tym jest przewodniczącym Polsko-Etnicznego Podkomitetu na stan Rhode Island w 1976 roku.

Jedną z głównych atrakcji to parafialny piknik, mający głównie na celu zebranie funduszy na potrzeby parafialne. Przyciąga on nie tylko ludzi z Rhode Island, ale również z sąsiednich stanów. Główną atrakcją to ludowy taniec w oryginalnych strojach ludowych w wykonaniu młodzieży szkolnej.

Ubiegłe siedem lat pracy duszpasterskiej ks. Słoty, które doprowadziły do obchodu 75-lecia założenia parafii, zaznaczyły się wielkim postępem. Dzięki wyteżonej pracy i poświęceniu ks. Słoty oraz przy współudziale parafian dobrej woli parafia św. Wojciecha wzbogaciła się na wielu polach. Według statystyki, liczba parafian powiększyła się w porównaniu z liczbą sprzed 25 lat. Duch Boży panujący w parafii mierzy się

powołaniami do stanu duchownego. A oto imiona tych, którzy z parafii św. Wojciecha poświęcili swoje życie dla sprawy Bożej, przyjmując święcenia kapłańskie: ks. Kazimierz Andruszkiewicz, ks. Władysław Żebrowski, ks. John Rainone i ks. Kenneth Suibielski. Nazwiska tych, którzy ślubowali służyć Bogu w Zgromadzeniach Zakonnych: 1) w Zgromadzeniu Braci Cjrześcijańskich: brat Piotr Lagunowicz; 2) w Zgromadzeniu Sióstr Felicjanek: siostry Joan Marie Swierzb, Mary Bernadette Mucha, Mary Edmund Dzienkowska i Mary Lawrence Łojko; 3) w Zgromadzeniu Sióstr Zmartwychwstańek: siostry Michaela Stokłosa i Bernadette Kruszyna; 4) w Zgromadzeniu Dominikanek: siostra Wirginia Mary Racewicz i 5) w Zgromadzeniu Sióstr Franciszkanek siostra Hedwig Pawluc. Fizyczne oblicze parafii może być zmierzone, liczba parafian obliczona, ale prawdziwe oblicze parafii to życie chrześcijańskie, to harmonijna współpraca, to wspólne dążenie do świętości.

Parafia św. Wojciecha może być przykładem tego prawdziwego oblicza. Dlatego wszyscy parafianie św. Wojciecha, dumni z dokonanych dzieł w przeszłości, z gorącą nadzieją spoglądają w świetlaną przyszłość.

SZKOŁA ŚWIĘTEGO WOJCIECHA

W amerykańskim systemie życia parafia rzymskokatolickiego Kościoła bez własnej szkoły nie jest w stanie wychować młodzieży w duchu prawdziwie religijnym. Jednorazowe udzielanie nauki religii nie zastąpi szkoły, w której nauczanie wszystkich przedmiotów jest owiane atmosferą religijną, gdzie znajduje się biblioteka obfita w książki religijne, gdzie ozdobienie sal szkolnych naprowadza młodzież do Boga, gdzie praktykowane są: modlitwa przed i po lekcjach, przyjmowanie Sakramentów świętych w pierwsze piątki miesiąca, odprawianie rekolekcji wielkanocnych, przygotowanie do Pierwszej Komunii Świętej. Toteż parafianie św. Wojciecha oraz dwaj jej pierwsi proboszczowie, ks. Wojciech Duczmal i ks. Piotr Światała, usiłowali od samego zarania powstania parafii założyć szkołę. Niestety, na skutek trudności finansowych to pragnienie było niemożliwe do zrealizowania. Dzieci w wieku szkolnym otrzymywały tylko jednogodzinną instrukcję religii, a dzięki pani Aleksandrze Chmielewskiej — naukę języka polskiego. Dopiero ks. Bronisławowi Rosiakowi udało się założenie szkoły, początkowo dla nauki religii i języka polskiego. Szkoła w takim stanie trwała od 28 listopada 1937 roku do 21 czerwca 1946 roku, a od tego roku do 1954 ze wszystkimi przedmiotami nauczania.

Nauczycielkami były wielebne siostry

felicjanki z prowincji Enfield, Connecticut. Szkoła ta mieściła się w trzech budynkach: w salce Annex, klasztorze i szkole publicznej na ulicy Putnam. Od 1954 roku cała szkoła już mieściła się w byłym budynku policyjnym przy ulicy Chaffee w liczbie 230 dzieci. Wielebne siostry felicjanki zabrały się do pracy z całym zapałem, aby szkołę postawić na wysokim poziomie nauczania. Wyniki ich pracy były wspaniałe. Wielu byłych studentów i studentek otrzymało stypendia, kończyło studia wyższe z odznaczeniem; a dzisiaj są księżmi, zakonnicami, doktorami, inżynierami, nauczycielami, oficerami i pielęgniarkami. Dzięki staraniom wielebnych siostr młodzież urządziła i urządza różne przedstawienia, szczególnie w okresie świąt.

W okresie administracji księdza Fryderyka Sloty dokonano wielu ulepszeń klas szkolnych i sali. Została założona piękna biblioteka, poświęcona 6 stycznia 1966 roku. Z powodu zmniejszonej liczby siostr felicjanek szkoła Św. Wojciecha została połączona ze szkołą Blessed Sacrament na jeden rok szkolny 1971/1972. Jednak to połączenie nie dało zadowalających rezultatów. Toteż w 1972 roku ponownie dzieci wróciły do dawnego budynku szkolnego, w

liczbie 121.

W roku diamentowego jubileuszu liczba dzieci szkolnych wynosi 118, a grono nauczycielskie stanowią cztery siostry felicjanki, trzech nauczycieli świeckich, dwóch księży: ks. Słota wykładający naukę religii w 7 i 8 stopniu i ks. Drzał uczący języka polskiego. Należałoby dodać, że szkoła Św. Wojciecha nadal zdobywa nagrody. W 1976 roku spośród 7 nagród stanu Rhode Island w konkursie na plakat dla Automobile Association 3 nagrody zdobyli nasi studenci. W dziedzinie wiedzy 7 studentów otrzymało nagrody National Association of Science Teachers za kompozycję: "Wczesne uprzemysłowienie stanu Rhode Island". Również 3 panienki zdobyły czteroletnie stypendium w St. Xavier's Academy w Providence. Aczkolwiek obecny budynek szkolny wydaje się być skromny, to jednak szkoła Św. Wojciecha jest znana w różnych wyższych szkołach z wysokiego poziomu nauczania i wzorowego wychowania młodzieży.

Trzeba podkreślić, że szkoła Św. Wojciecha, pielęgnując piękne polskie zwyczaje i obchody religijno-narodowe, przeschepia bogactwo kultury polskiej na wspaniałą ziemię Waszyngtona.



Commentators



Cub Scouts & Patrol Leaders



Jubilee Fund Appeal Committee

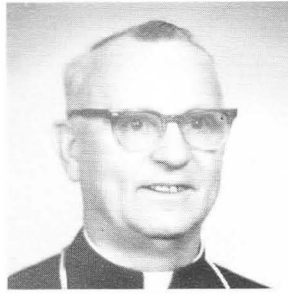


Jubilee Banquet Committee

ASSOCIATE PASTORS AND VOCATIONS



° Rev. Stanley Drzal, S. Chr.



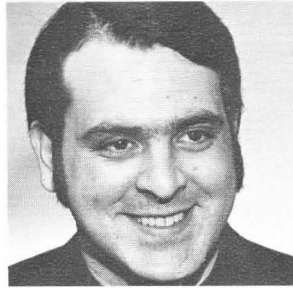
° Rev. Canon Bronislaus Szymanski



† Rev. Casimir D. Andruszkiewicz



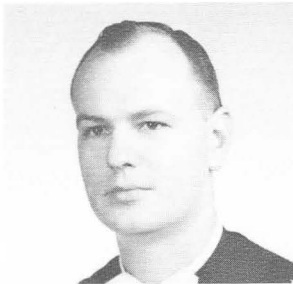
† Rev. Dr. Walter Zebrowski



† Rev. John Rainone



† Rev. Kenneth Suibielski



† Brother Peter Lagonowicz, F.S.C.



† Sr. M. Lawrence Lojko, C.S.S.F.



† Sr. M. Edmund Dziekowski, C.S.S.F.



† Sr. Joan Marie Swierzb, C.S.S.F.



† Sr. M. Bernardine Mucha, C.S.S.F.



† Sr. Michaela Stoklosa, C.R.



† Sr. Bernadette Kruszyna, C.R.



† Sr. Mary Hedwig Pawluc, F.M.M.



† Sr. Virginia Mary Racewicz, O.P.



HISTORY OF THE ROSARY SODALITY

Shortly after the founding of St. Adalbert's parish, the Rosary Sodality was founded in 1903 by Rev. Adalbert Duczmal. Mrs. Aleksandra Chmielewska was elected as the first president. The purpose of the Rosary Sodality was to help support the church and Catholic organizations and to benefit members both spiritually and through mutual aid.

During World War II, financial aid was sent to Poland. After the war, packages were sent to Poland to help the needy. The society has also raised funds for church and convent renovations. Numerous social functions are also held by the Rosary Sodality such as the Easter "swieconka," a Mother's Day breakfast, and bingos. The members also help in the preparation of food for the annual parish picnic and socials.

Meetings are held monthly following services in church. The Sodality also holds a "living rosary" in church in October in memory of deceased members.

ROSARY SOCIETY

Current membership is 85. It is interesting to note that a few of the older members have faithfully belonged to the Rosary Sodality for more than 60 years, including one member who has belonged for 70 years.

Present Officers: President—Mrs. Julia McFadden; Vice Pres.—Mrs. Genevieve Najarian; Secretary—Miss Stasia Domnarski; Treasurer—Miss Jan Przestrzelski.



HOLY NAME SOCIETY

The present Holy Name Society had its origins in the Sacred Heart Society founded in 1910 when Rev. Adalbert Duczmal was pastor. The first president was John Piekarski. This society disbanded in 1920 but a year later junior and senior Holy Name Societies were organized. The fundamental objectives of the Society are to instill in its members the importance of frequent Holy Communion and devotion and reverence for the Holy Name of God.

The first president of the Junior Holy Name Society was John Klimaszewski and one of its important goals was to keep the young men active in parish activities. The society was reorganized again in 1925 as a Benefit Society also. In that year there were 64 men in the Senior division and 82 men in the Junior division.

In 1967 the society ceased to be a benefit organization and became affiliated with the National Holy Name Society. Its purpose is to promote the spiritual welfare of the men of the parish, to help them maintain a more intimate participation in the life of the church, to cooperate with the Diocesan Union of Holy Name Societies, and to perform special works assigned to it by the Pastor. Andrew Zajac served the Society as the longest serving president, 17 yrs. Current membership is 75. Present officers: President—William C. Lukasiewicz, Vice President—James Lepre, Secretary—Albert Vallesse, Treasurer—William Calise, Moderator—Rev. Frederick V. Slota.



ST. ADALBERT'S SCHOOL BOARD

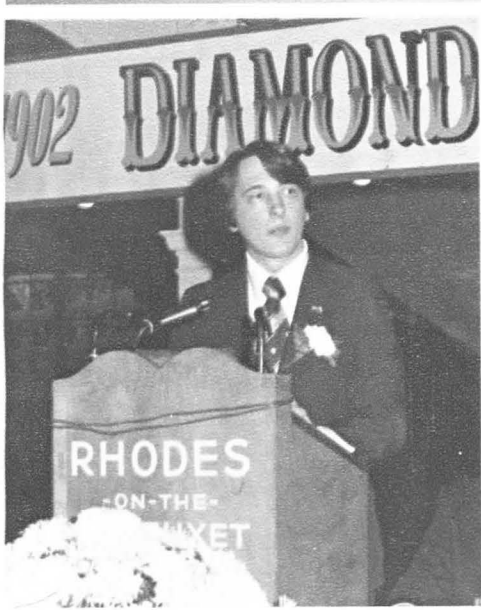
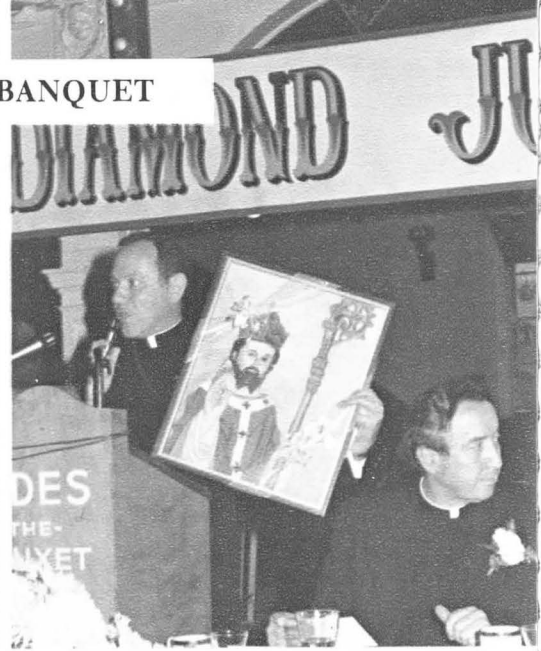
In 1965, a parish school board was set up by Father Slota. The purpose of this group is to coordinate with the pastor and principal the maintenance of standards of education set by law in the interest of our students and faculty. The present members are Mrs. Regina Miga, chairperson, Mrs. Diane Van Dale, Mr. & Mrs. Steven Chrabaszcz, Mr. David Stepka, Rev. Frederick V. Slota, and Sister M. Jeannette, C.S.S.F., principal.



ST. VINCENT de PAUL SOCIETY

Established in St. Adalbert's Parish on December 12, 1965 by the Reverend Frederick V. Slota. The objective of this Society is to provide aid to the needy and poor in the parish. The Society members also furnish spiritual assistance and engage in special works on the parish level. Presently there are 12 members in the Society. The first officers were: President Walter Andruchuk; Vice-President—Aloysius Szocki; Secretary—Stanley Zamoida; Treasurer—Louis Rainone, Sr. Present Officers are: President—Alexander Ulbin; Vice-President—Louis Rainone; Secretary—William Lukasiewicz; Treasurer—Joseph Gumula.

JUBILEE OBSERVANCE—BANQUET





THIRD ORDER OF ST. FRANCIS FRATERNITY

The Third Order of St. Francis was established in St. Adalbert's on July 22, 1933 by the Reverend Peter Switala. The Reverend Sebastian Dzielski, O.F.M.—Provincial Commissary presided. The Third Order is a community of men and women in the world who seek to pattern their lives after the ideals of St. Francis of Assisi. They are called Tertiaries or Lay Franciscans. The members believe that as human beings and as Christians they have a very noble vocation. They wish to unite with others to form a community or fraternity that will help them in their spiritual formation. Like St. Francis, they have a special love for Sacred Scripture, especially the Gospel which is their rule of life. The first Officers were: Prefect—Aniela Bielska; Vice-Prefect—Helena Czech; Secretary and Treasurer—Stefania Andrukiewicz. Present Officers: Prefect—Mary DeMeo; Vice-Prefect—Anna Rainone; Secretary—Margharite Connors; Treasurer—Mildred Kelly.



ST. ADALBERT'S PARISH COUNCIL

St. Adalbert's Parish Council originated in January of 1971 through the initiative of the Reverend Frederick V. Slota. The Parish Council is a representative group of parishioners, priests and religious who work with the pastor regarding ideas, desires and needs of the parish and community. Its members are elected by the parishioners. The Council plans effective and practical ways of meeting the spiritual and temporal needs of the parish. It also encourages cooperation among all parish organizations and community groups in working out programs to fulfill their mission. There are 19 members in the Parish Council. The first officers of the Parish Council were: President—Walter Andruchuk, Sr.; Vice President—Vincent Balkun; Secretary—Irene Nieratko; Treasurer—Alexander Ulbin. The present officers are: President—Stanley Balkun; Vice-President—Aloysius Szocki; Secretary—Helen Pietruszka; Treasurer—Stanley Pristawa. The Parish Planning Coordinators are: William Lukaszewicz and Irene Nieratko.



CATHOLIC YOUTH ORGANIZATION

The Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) was organized and established in St. Adalbert's Parish on August 17, 1961 by the Reverend Frederick V. Slota. The CYO offers a varied program of spiritual, cultural, social, athletic and social action activities for the youth in the parish. Parochial and inter-parish activities are frequent and most advantageous to the members. The first officers of St. Adalbert's CYO were: President—Joseph Doboszynski; Vice-President—Janice Karoll; Secretary—Angela Kaskiewicz; Treasurer—Edward Bogdan. The Present Officers are: President—Charles Bagley; Vice-President—Henry Kozlowski; Secretary—Kathy Bouchard; Treasurer—James Palumbo.



SAINT ADALBERT'S CHOIR

St. Adalbert's choir was formed early in the history of the parish. From the time when St. Adalbert's was organized until the advent of the Felician Sisters in 1937, the position of organist was held by various parishioners. From approximately 1937 until the late 1960's, various Felicians Sisters served as organists and directed the choir. Presently the chief organist is Mr. John O. Przybylowicz assisted by Mr. Henry Kozlowski and Miss Judy Owens. The choir has 40 members. It has distinguished itself not only during masses and devotions at St. Adalbert's with beautiful renditions of Polish and English hymns, but also in state wide events with other choirs representing Polonia.



PARENT TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

St. Adalbert's P.T.A. has its origins in the Mother's Club founded in 1947 by Father Rosiak. Later it developed into the Ladies Guild and remained functional under that name until 1966. In September of 1967 it became the Parent Teacher's Association of St. Adalbert's Church.

The main objectives of the P.T.A. are to coordinate the spiritual and educational forces of the home and school in a program of Catholic child training and to assist the school in supplying books, classroom necessities, and school improvements.

The P.T.A. has had a long line of officers over the years. The first President was Mrs. Germaine Miklosz.

Currently the officers are:

- Mrs. Fran (Czernicki) Martin—President
- Mrs. Stefanie (Jarosz) Notarianni—Vice Pres.
- Mrs. Dorothy (Polubinski) Pristawa—Secretary
- Mrs. Maureen (Sweeney) Saroka—Treasurer



POLISH ROMAN CATHOLIC UNION ST. ADALBERT SOCIETY GROUP 232

St. Adalbert's Society, one of the oldest in the parish, was organized on January 1, 1904. The first president was Wincenty Jarocki and the first secretary was Wincenty Balkun. The society is part of the Polish Roman Catholic Union which is the oldest Polish fraternal benefit society in the United States. The main purpose of the society was to defend the Catholic faith and foster cultural advancement among Poles; as well as, providing its members with insurance benefits. On the local level, the Society conducts various cultural and social events in connection with various Polish religious and national holidays.

The society meets every second Sunday of the month and it has a membership of 100.

- Edward Zych—President
- Jozef Ekstowicz—Vice President
- Alojzy Szocki—Treasurer
- Jan Zych—Secretary
- Chaplain: Rev. Frederick V. Slota
- Auditors:
Stanislaw Kozlowski
Feliks Zyskowski



ST. ADALBERT'S SENIOR CITIZENS CLUB

Father Slota's concern for the senior members of the parish led to the organization of the parish's Senior Citizens Club on March 10, 1974. The first president was Miss Geraldine Kruszyna. She was very instrumental in obtaining the charter and securing many new members. The club meets monthly at the parish hall where guest speakers inform the members of the various benefits to which they are entitled to from local and federal government and the means to secure such benefits. Also various social activities are conducted at these meetings and trips and excursions planned. The members also meet weekly for sewing and crafts which are sold at the parish picnic. This organization received its charter in September of 1975. The current membership is 54.

Present officers are:

- President—Alexander Ulbin
- Vice President—Mrs. Rose Brelsford
- Treasurer—Mildred Kelly
- Secretary—Laura Sowa
- Moderator—Rev. Frederick V. Slota
- Advisor—Sister Mary Cantalicia, C.S.S.F.



Jubilee Liturgical Committee



Ushers & Collectors

*Felician Sisters Currently Serving at
St. Adalbert's*

Sr. Mary Jeanette Piorkowski
(Principal and Superior)
Sr. Mary Agnes Gazda
Sr. Theresa Marie Grochowski
Sr. Mary Dolores Niwinski
Sr. Mary Cantalicia Filip
Sr. Mary Frances Polowniak
Sr. Mary Benvenuta Gusciora

Present Lay Faculty

Mr. Joseph A. Chrostowski
Mrs. Margaret Santos
Mr. John Moran

*Sisters Who Served In St. Adalbert Parish
Providence, R.I. from 1937 to 1976*

Superiors & Principals

Sister Ann Marie Ciulik
Sister Mary Carissima Ewanowski
Sister Mary Arcoline Jablonski
Sister Mary Monica Domurat
Sister Mary Terentia Winier
Sister Mary Dulcine Bartosiak
Sister Mary Carmeline Figura
Sister Mary Maximia Baron
Sister Mary Hyacinth Kotlarczyk
Sister Joan Marie Swierzb

Other Sisters

Sister Mary Fidelia Piowar
Sister Mary Alexander Mazur
Sister Mary Casilda Wilk
Sister Rosemary Zawada
Sister Mary De Paul Dubiel
Sister Mary Rose Kruszewski
Sister Mary Laureann Alexandrowicz
Sister Mary Norbertine Jaracz
Sister Theresa Mary Gondek
Sister Mary Sylvine Kotlarczyk
Sister Mary Floritta Biedron
Sister Mary Celestine Kaczor
Sister Mary Raymond Rutkowski
Sister Mary Flavia Walenciej
Sister Mary Zenobia Wisniewska
Sister Mary Eudoxia Surowiec
Sister Mary Benigna Kitryś
Sister Mary Liboria Starzec
Sister Mary Adolpha Wojtaszek
Sister Mary Irene Faszczka
Sister Mary Florence Pelczynski
Sister Sophia Wanda M. Stapor
Sister Mary Edward Cwiok
Sister Mary Aline Manski

Sister Mary Ryzeria Halat
Sister Mary Cyrilla Prokop
Sister Mary Berard Szetela
Sister Estelle Marie Gasciel
Sister Mary Clarence Strzepek
Sister Rose Julie M. Niemcewicz
Sister Mary Alcantara Wojtyto
Sister Mary Apollonia Niksa
Sister Mary Lauda Brozycka
Sister Mary Tarsilia Puchta
Sister Mary Lucilda Nowakowski
Sister Mary Gerard Rusek
Sister Anna Maria Swiniarski
Sister Mary Veronica Zacharczyk
Sister Mary Valerie Grabowska
Sister Mary Sylvestra Konicka
Sister Mary Barbara Twarog
Sister Mary Juliana Deptuch

Pastors

Rev. Adalbert Duczmal 1902-1920
Rev. Peter Switala 1920-1934
Rev. Bronislaus S. Rosiak 1934-1965
Rev. Frederick V. Slota 1970-present
Administrator pro tempore 1963-1965
Administrator 1965-1970

Assistants

Rev. Peter P. Dobek
Rev. Andrew Baj
Rev. Stanley Kowalski
Rev. Casimir Andruszkiewicz
Rev. Eugene Konopka
Rev. Bronislaw Szymanski
Rev. Frederick V. Slota
Franciscan Fathers, O.F.M.
Rev. Zbigniew Olbrys, S. Ch.
Rev. Francis Szczykutowicz, S. Ch.
Rev. Marian Ogorek, S. Ch.
Rev. Zygmunt Ostrowski, S. Ch.
Rev. Stanislaw Drzal, S. Ch.

Priestly Vocations from the Parish

Rev. Casimir D. Andruszkiewicz
Rev. Dr. Walter M. Zebrowski
Rev. John Rainone
Rev. Kenneth Suibielski

Religious Vocations from the Parish

Religious Order of Christian Brothers—
Peter Lagonowicz
Felician Sisters—
Sr. M. Lawrence Lojko Sr. M. Edmund
Dzienkowski
Sr. Joan Marie Swierzb
Sr. M. Bernardine Mucha

Sisters of the Resurrection—
 Sr. Michaela Stoklosa
 Sr. Bernadette Kruszyna (deceased)
 Franciscan Sisters of Mary—
 Sr. M. Hedwig Pawluc
 Dominican Sisters
 Sr. Virginia Mary Racewicz

St. Adalbert's Trustees

John Chmielewski	1902—1922
Louis Balczun	1902—1922
Kazmierz Lozowski	1922—1928
Adalbert Boron	1922—1929
Adolf Kulmacz	1929—1930
Paul Damutz	1930—1966
Francis A. Czernicki	1967—1972
Joseph Piekarski	1930—Present
Stanley Pristawa	1973—Present

Parish Statistics

1. 1902—founding year
 Number of parishioners: 1,100
 St. Adalbert
- Mission to Central Falls 570
 Missions to Woonsocket & Manville 300
 Missions to Natick 110
 Missions to Quidnick 400
 Baptisms—St. Adalbert's 87
 Confirmed—St. Adalbert's 168
 First Communion—St. Adalbert's 7
 Marriages—St. Adalbert's 49
2. 1909—year new church was dedicated on Ridge Street
 Number of parishioners 1,800
 Baptisms 137
 First Communion 14
 Marriages 48
3. 1927—25 jubilee year
 Number of parishioners 1,468
 (323 families)

School age children	
7 to 12	511
13 to 16	147
Baptisms	28
Confirmation	168
First Communion	51
Marriages	13
Societies:	
Holy Rosary (Mothers)	82
Holy Rosary (Girls)	71
Children of Mary	104
Sacred Heart (boys)	65
Senior Holy Name	36
Junior Holy Name	60

4. 1952 Golden Jubilee Year
 Souls 1042
 Adults 807
 Children 235
 Baptisms 33
 Marriages 14
 Funerals 18
 School Age Children Ages 7 to 12 177
 Societies:
 Senior Holy Name 58
 Junior Holy Name 69
 Holy Rosary 185
 Third Order 27
 Children of Mary 29
 St. Stanislaus 54
5. 1977 75th Jubilee
 Number of families 475
 Total number of parishioners 1,547
 Children under 18 340
 Adults 1,207
 Baptisms 14
 Marriages 2
 Funerals 27
 First Communion 15
 Confirmations 26



Jubilee Souvenir Book Committee



Altar Boys



Parish Picnic Committee

SPECIAL BENEFACTORS

In Loving Memory of my Husband, Julian Jaron
In Memory of my Parents, Feliks and Emilia Kloza
In Memory of Michael and Michalina Jaron
In Memory of Henry and Rose Brousseau
By: Jennie Jaron

In Memory of Mr. & Mrs. Louis & Anna Wasilewski & Son John
In Memory of Mr. & Mrs. Joseph & Adela Marciniak
By: Dr. & Mrs. Edward J. Wasilewski

A GIFT OF
ST. ADALBERT'S HOLY NAME SOCIETY

SPECIAL GIFTS

REVEREND FREDERICK V. SLOTA

REVEREND BRONISLAUS SZYMANSKI

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In Memory of Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Rainone and Mr. Alfred Tremblay

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