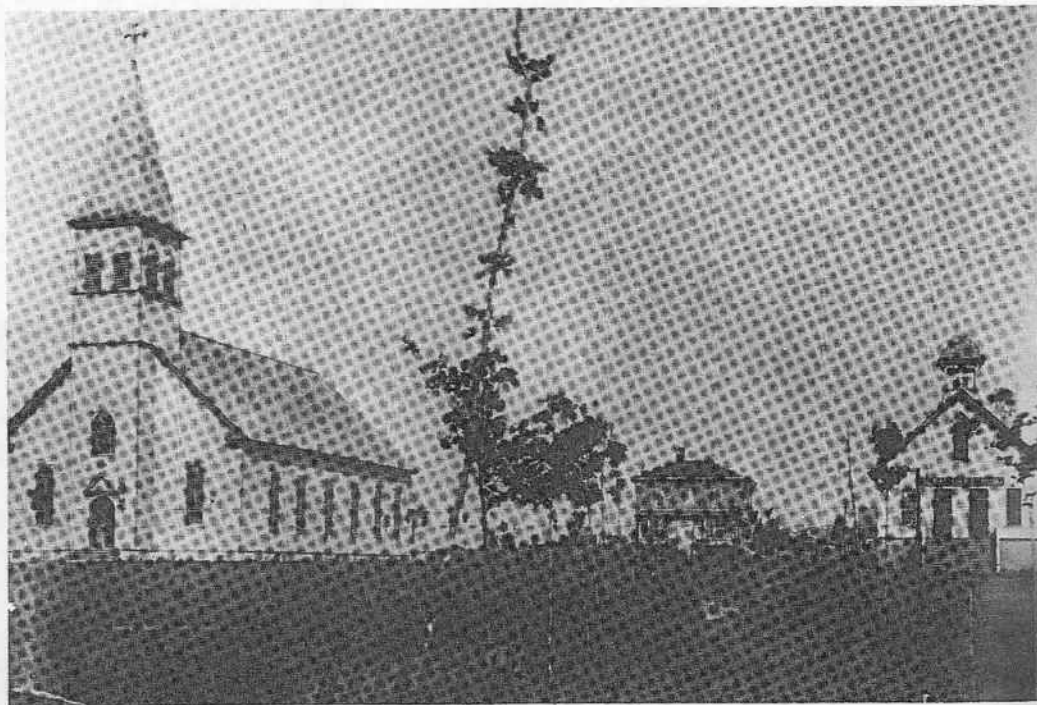




125 Years of Faith and Heritage
 Bogu Dzieki - Thanks be to God!

ST. CASIMIR'S Posen



Father F. Szulak, a Jesuit sent by Bishop Borgess in 1874, was the first priest to say Mass in the Posen area. He came to Rogers City by boat and walked the remaining miles to the little village where the first Mass was offered at the home of Valentine Losinski. It was also Father Szulak who suggested that the village be called "Posen".

In 1874 forty acres of land was donated to the church by Frederick D. Larke and a committee from the parish selected the highest point in the township as the church site. In the same year a log church was built by contractors, Lawrence Woloszyk and John Losinski. On clear days the church can be seen from the hills of both Alpena and Montmorency Counties.

On the first day of March, 1879, Father Anthony Bogacki was appointed the first pastor of the congregation. Soon after his arrival, Father Bogacki built a log cabin for his residence. Later the building was used as a school and still later as a home for the Sisters. In 1882 a new residence was built for the pastor. Brick for the building was hauled by ox carts a distance of twelve miles. The log church burned on January 28, 1883, and a temporary frame building was constructed the same year. The parishioners began making preparations for a new brick church in 1890 and upon its completion in 1891, the temporary structure was dismantled. In September of 1886, school was opened in the small log cabin which had been the pastor's residence and continued there until 1890 when a frame school building was constructed. In 1895 the Felician Sisters came to Posen and took charge of the school.

Father Bogacki was transferred to Bay City in 1896 and Father Jos. Lewandowski was in temporary charge of the parish until April, 1897. Later in the year Father Bogacki returned but resigned shortly after and from then until January, 1898, the

congregation was without a priest. Father M. Matkowski was appointed pastor in 1898 and served the parish for the next fifteen years. During his time a new brick school building was erected and many other improvements and additions were made to the grounds and building. Father Choldkiewicz, former Metz pastor, was moved to Posen where he served the parish for one year. Father C. T. Skowronski was sent to Posen during the six weeks of the inter-regnum when the Reverend Joseph Koss was installed as pastor. Father Koss remained to serve the church until 1933.

In 1919 the Felician Sisters relinquished the school and the Sisters of Mercy took over. The curriculum was reorganized to suit the requirements of the day; new conveniences were installed in the parish buildings, the grounds were landscaped, a Sisters' home was built and cement sidewalks laid down. High school classes were started for a time under Father Kwasigroch but it was not until the time of Father C. Szyper that a high school was fully operated. From December, 1931, to August 1935, Father Leonard Kwasigroch was appointed administrator of the parish and in August of that year Father C. Szyper was appointed pastor.

A Sisters Convent was erected in 1949, under the direction of the pastor without the aid of a contractor. In June of that year, Father Szyper was transferred from the Posen parish after 18 years of service. Father Stephen Kozak came from St. Charles and took over the leadership of the parish. In 1957, Father Kozak celebrated his Silver Jubilee to the Priesthood. Father Kozak served the parish until January, 1960, when Father Clarence Smolinski was installed. Father Smolinski was born in Metz and is the son of Stanislaus and Augustina Smolinski who were married in the church he now serves.



CURRENT ST. CASIMIR CHURCH SANCTUARY
Polish inscription reads "MY HOUSE IS A HOUSE OF PRAYER"



The Holy Father John Paul II
cordially imparts the requested
his Apostolic Blessing to
Fr. Stan Bereda, Pastor and
Parishioners
of St. Casimir Church,
Posen, Michigan
on the occasion of its
125th Anniversary of Foundation
1879 - 2004

Ex Audibus Vaticanis die 9.3.2004 *Oscar Rinnato*
Archiepiscopus
Elemosynarius Summi Pontificis





DIOCESE OF GAYLORD

611 WEST NORTH STREET
GAYLORD, MI 49735-8349
(989) 732-5147
FAX: (989) 705-3589

June, 2004

To Father Bereda and the Members of the Parish Family
of Saint Casimir Church at Posen,

I congratulate you and extend my best wishes to you as Saint Casimir Parish celebrates its 125th anniversary.

One hundred twenty-five years ago, a few pioneering people of faith came together in the name of the Lord to establish a community of believers in the area that has since become the village of Posen. It has been a long time since Father Francis Xavier Szulak came to celebrate Masses at the homes of Valentine Losinski and Lawrence Kowalski in 1874. In that humble and simple way, Saint Casimir Church was born. It has been nourished and sustained over all these years through the ministry of dedicated priests, religious and lay people, and has truly become a strong and vibrant people of God.

You are still a young family of faith in the perspective of the history of the Universal Church. You have taken your first steps on the journey of faith, and the journey will continue over many generations to come.

It is amazing to realize that since 1879 Catholics have been baptized, confirmed, received communion, married, anointed and buried in the parish. Such tremendous ministry, bringing the Risen Lord to all those people, certainly causes us to stop and take notice.

As you celebrate this 125 anniversary, may the blessings of God continue to remain with you.

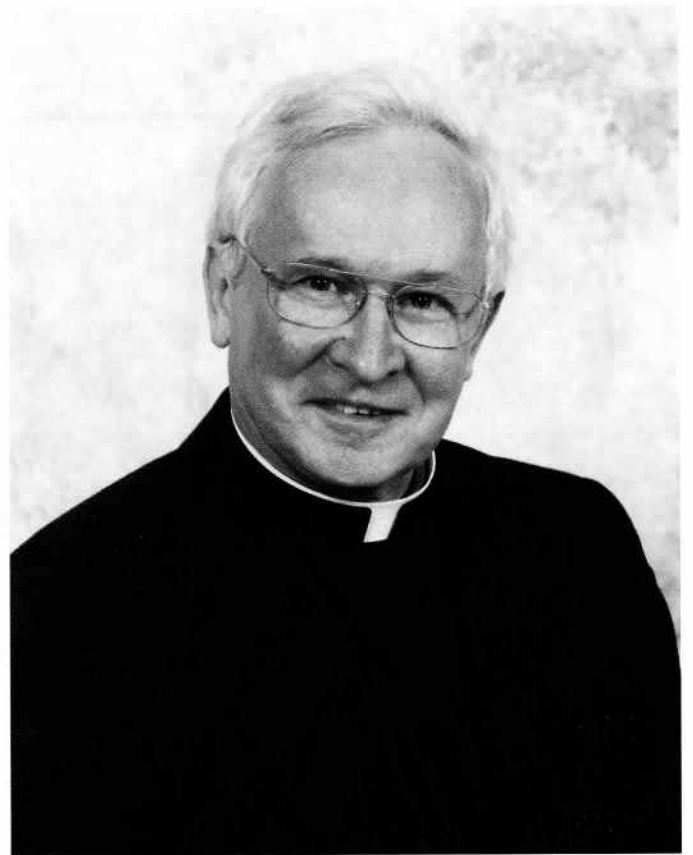


Sincerely yours,

Patrick R. Cooney

Patrick R. Cooney
Bishop of Gaylord

We lift up grateful hearts
to our loving God,
the giver of all life,
for all the blessings
bestowed upon us and
upon our ancestors
in the past 125 years.
May the strength of faith,
the courage and the sacrifices
of the first St. Casimir parishioners
be ours as we continue
to live our Catholic faith
in our 21st century world. AMEN.



Fr. Stan Bereda - Pastor



Staff: Genowefa Kurek, Fr. Stan Bereda, Ann Ramsay, Joan Chappa, Alex Ramsay, Ernest Romel.



St. Casimir Church

10075 M-65 N
PO Box 217
Posen, MI 49776-0217
[989]766-2660

June, 2004

Dear Friends,

In 1879, 125 years ago, our ancestors who had come to America from Poland in search of a better life for their families and a brighter future for their children, celebrated a momentous occasion –the establishment of the parish of St. Casimir in Posen, Michigan. Their strong Catholic faith, which was at the center of their lives, and the Catholic values that guided their lives, could now be nurtured in a parish of their own. Entrusted with this most important task was the first pastor of this new parish, Fr. Anthony Bogacki.

Throughout the past 125 years, many generations of faithful and devoted people, with a deep and constant faith and trust in God, have worked hard and sacrificed much to make St. Casimir Parish a vibrant faith community. It was this faith and trust in God that inspired many of its sons and daughters to dedicate their lives to God's service as priests, religious brothers and sisters. It was also this faith and trust in God that was the foundation of their family life, and which resulted in the sacrifices that were necessary to build and support a parish Catholic school.

As we celebrate the 125th anniversary of St. Casimir parish, may we look back into the past and be grateful for the example and inspiration of our Catholic Polish ancestors. And, may we look toward the future determined to continue to walk in the footsteps of our courageous and faith-filled forebearers. Our ancestors came here and settled in a harsh and hostile land. Today, we do not suffer from the harsh physical environment that they encountered; instead, we are called to live in a culture that is often hostile to the Catholic values which are our heritage from the first parishioners of St. Casimir Parish. May we persevere as they did, trusting that God walks with us, and that He will continue to bless our efforts to live as His beloved children.

This is my prayer for each one of you as we celebrate 125 years of parish life and look forward to many more years together in our St. Casimir Parish Family: "May the Lord bless and keep you; may His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; may He look upon you with kindness and give you His peace" [Nb 6:24-26].

Fr. Stan Bereda

Fr. Stan Bereda
Pastor



STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

JOHN D. CHERRY, JR.
LT. GOVERNOR

May 19, 2004

To my friends at St. Casimir's Catholic Church,

On behalf of the State of Michigan, I want to congratulate the families, pastors and staff of St. Casimir's Catholic Church in Posen on its 125th anniversary.

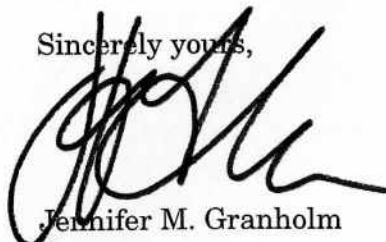
St. Casimir's Church has been home to the faithful in the Posen community since its inception as a humble place of worship in the form of a log cabin. Today's modern-day structure remains the place where the citizens of Posen come for comfort, worship, and renewal of their faith, just like they did from the very first Mass ever said there.

Like so many other parishes around our great state, St. Casimir's serves not only as a place of worship, but a place for your close-knit community to gather for fellowship and activities. St. Casimir's has many active parish groups and councils, and a Youth Ministry program that has served the young people of the community since 1992.

Since the 1870s, when Poles and Germans immigrated to the southeastern part of Presque Isle County, homesteading in the areas now known as the townships of Pulaski, Metz, Krakow and Posen, this community of faith has been served by dedicated pastors, many with Polish roots. In all, 12 pastors have served this congregation in the last 125 years, each leaving his mark on the church and community.

St. Casimir's has maintained its strong faith and moral values for eight generations. I salute your history and look forward to seeing this parish continue to flourish for many generations to come.

Sincerely yours,



Jennifer M. Granholm
Governor



KEEPING THE FAITH ALIVE

1879 – ST. CASIMIR CHURCH – 2004

The occasion of the 125th anniversary of the assignment of Father Anthony Bogacki as first pastor of the Polish parish in Posen prompts us to review and update the history of St. Casimir's, its pastors, its parishioners and its faith along with its sacrifices and accomplishments. In presenting this latest account, we wish to express a deep debt of gratitude to several men who have provided excellent information about our past. Writings of former pastors, Fr. C. T. Skowronski, Fr. Casimir Szyper and Fr. Gerald Micketti have provided much material. Publications *These Very Stones Cry Out* compiled by Fr. Patrick Crawley, *Where the Star Came To Rest* by Msgr. Gasper Ancona and *Gniezniki* by Harry Milostan, as well as materials from research by Bole Centala, have not only preserved the past but have provided a most valuable link to our ancestors.

In 1860, Presque Isle County, located on the northeastern shores of Lake Huron, was part of the Northwest Territory. The manner in which this part of Michigan was settled by immigrants from Europe has been colorfully portrayed by Fr.

Skowronski and warrants verbatim presentation: "In 1879, when white settlers finally arrived in numbers in Presque Isle County, they came with a rush and among them came many Catholics both Poles and Germans.

A number of historical events contributed to the rapid settlement of the territory which seems to have filled overnight as the years of history are counted.

The Poles left the Province of Poznan now under Prussian rule because of the intolerable *Kulturkampf* of Bismark.

On the other hand, the Germans of every kingdom and principality came because the Franco-Prussian and the Austrian wars were just over and they were tired of war. America promised liberty and freedom.

So they came in four and five masted schooners which made the trip from Hamburg to New York in about three months. Others, more fortunate or probably because they set out a few years later, came by steamboat and covered the distance in 15 to 20 days.



Immigrants of all ages, entering New York harbor in 1887, gaze at the new Statue of Liberty.

But what helped to settle Michigan and the middle west as well, was the Homestead Act passed by Congress in 1862. By virtue of this Act, a settler was given a grant of land, either 80 or 160 acres, to have and to hold as his very own, providing only that he remain on his homestead for a period of five years. Such bargains proved very attractive to the emigrants.

They were mostly men of the soil and hankered to step behind a plow on land that was their own, for many of them had been more or less indentured to the landed gentry of Europe.

As a result, the ports of entry were crowded with friends and relatives of those already here and the newcomers stopped but long enough in Buffalo, Detroit or Berea, Ohio, to earn a few dollars, then hurried north to choose the best land the county had to offer.

The *Marine City*, it is told, came up with its full quota of passengers on each trip, and Presque Isle became settled in the space of ten years, as well as all of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Thus sprang up the townships of Rogers, Posen, Krakow, Pulaski, Metz, Moltke and others.

Posen from the very outset became the rallying point of the Poles who brought their religion with them and made no delay in forming a Catholic center."

Another author explains, "By the 1870's, there was widespread discontent in Russian Poland. The landless masses were unable to find jobs. Revolts had failed and compromise with the regime was useless. About 1,300,000 people left Russian Poland for America between 1870 and 1914."

Again we read, "Two movements arose in the Galicia area: One was political seeking rights for all classes, the other sent some 1,100,000 people on ships across the Atlantic to the United States and Canada."

The Chicago Tribune characterized these early settlers as follows: "The Poles are a brave, chivalrous, patriotic, high-principled and self-sacrificing race. They are very proud and haughty and readily resent and punish any insult especially if offered to their women. The country-

men of Sobieski are as demonstrative as the Irishmen when they indulge too much but they seldom if ever fight and they always make up. Patriotism is the healing influence for whether born in Galicia, Lithuania or Poznan the Pole is a Pole as a Patriot. They marry young and have, as might be expected, large families."



Immigrants homesteading virgin forests

As idyllic as the above may seem these early emigrants were poor, had nothing, did not know the language and were forced to work initially in lumbering camps to make a living (a winter's work netted \$17). They had homes to build, virgin timbers to cut, and land to clear before a grain of seed could be put into the ground.

The hardships of the early settlers are well documented by Fr. Szyper who writes: "These folks trudged over the old State road, from there by paths and trails to the homestead they had selected. Each trail was the golden path to a plot they could call their own. Many were the trips to Rogers where they walked all the way and back following sections lines and often fording the swamps knee deep in water. Nightfall often found them in the woods where they spent the night. Later better roads were provided, though it took some time before the pocket book could provide the two-thirds down payment on a yoke of oxen as horses were scarce in those days."

The first Pole to arrive in Posen in 1870 was Lawrence Kowalski, the father of Anthony, who later became sheriff of Presque Isle County. Later in November of the same year, Mathias

Szymanski came along with many others, among whom were Andrew Wyrembelski, Frank Rozek, and Jakub Strzelecki. "On the first boat" also came Valentine Losinski, Frank Witucki, Lawrence Przybyla, Jakub Dojas and John Stosik.

Early on, a few Posen farmers petitioned Bishop Borgess to send a priest to minister to their spiritual needs. Father Francis Xavier Szulak, a Jesuit missionary from Chicago, received jurisdiction from Bishop Borgess for all of Michigan. Milostan writes: "The greatest priest of the Polish people in America was the Reverend Francis X. Szulak S.J. Szulak knew more Polish Americans than any other priest. He knew the Polish immigrants' attitude toward the hierarchy, knew how to organize and build missions and churches, and was not afraid of any bishop as only Szulak had an understanding of the immigrants' desire to make America their permanent home."



Mission services at Posen by Fr. Szulak, S.J.

Born in Moravia near the tiny village of Kremsier in 1825, Szulak was admitted into the Society of Jesus order in 1845 in the Galicia or southern region of Poland. After several years of teaching throughout Poland, Germany, Austria and France, Fr. Szulak was given permission to become a foreign missionary and arrived in New

York in 1869. From there he was sent to Missouri and soon after to Chicago. He was a gifted orator in German, French and Polish.

Fr. Szulak first came to Posen in June 1872 to a settlement of 40 families and thereafter made regular visits until 1878. It was Fr. Szulak who suggested naming the Polish colony "Posen," the German spelling for Poznan. He traveled extensively to Bay City, Alpena, Rogers, Posen, and Gaylord baptizing, witnessing marriages, schooling children, and conducting missions.

Traveling by boat to Rogers City, then walking the 15 miles to Posen, Fr. Szulak first celebrated Mass in the home of Valentine Losinski, and in the home of Lawrence Kowalski on his second visit.

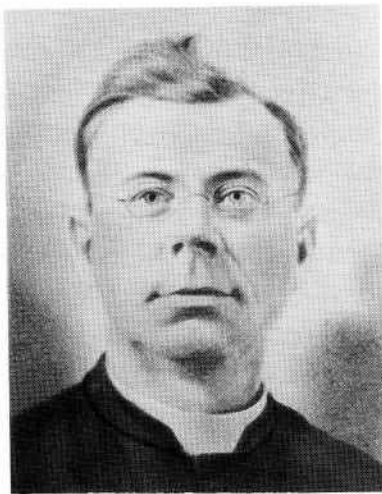
A shrewd negotiator, in 1874, Fr. Szulak convinced Presque Isle County clerk Frederick Denny Larke to donate 40 acres of land to build a church for the Polish settlement as it was then called. He gathered the settlers, and after considerable discussion, chose the present church site because it was centrally located and seemed the highest point in the township.

The enthusiasm and faith of the original colony inspired Fr. Szulak to make immediate plans for a church. Donated lumber came from the several saw mills in the area, and because Bishop Borgess' policy would not allow any debt to be incurred, the members provided the labor or yearly assessments to build the first log cabin church in 1875.

A building committee was formed to oversee the site preparation and building since Fr. Szulak could only spare a short visit. It is recorded that Lawrence Woloszyk and John Losinski were the builders of the first church. Fr. Szulak was pleased and on subsequent visits was prompted to say, "Everything is going smoothly in Posen as usual." The church, given the name of Poland's gallant prince Casimir, was formally dedicated by Bishop Borgess in 1878, and the same year a rectory was built for the soon to be appointed first resident pastor. John Bronikowski was the first child to be born in Posen and the first couple to be united in marriage were Anthony Soik and Helen Semp on April 21, 1878. Seven years after the first arrivals in Posen the

congregation numbered 174 families as documented by the 1879 parish list.

Records preserved in the parish archives record as follows, "The first pastor of the congregation of Posen, the Reverend Anthony Bogacki, has been appointed by Reverend C. H. Borgess on the 1st day of March 1879." Fr. Bogacki was born in 1848 in Srem, Poland, 30 miles directly south of Poznan. His theological studies took place in Krakow where he was ordained in 1873. He traveled to America where he labored in the Diocese of Green Bay until being accepted into the Diocese of Detroit by Bishop Borgess in 1879.



1879 Fr. Anthony Bogacki 1896

Prior to recounting the tenure of Fr. Bogacki as St. Casimir's first pastor, it might help to present the situation of the times in light of the many recorded incidents which occurred throughout Michigan as well as in Posen in the 1880's.

Msgr. Gasper Ancona, a priest of the Grand Rapids Diocese, in his excellent history of the Catholic Church in his diocese writes: "This period of history began with a German-born Bishop coming to a territory with a large Irish-born constituency already well settled and a German-born membership, not as large, but very devoted. In addition, these early years witnessed new waves of immigration from Poland, Italy, the Netherlands, and Lithuania as well as an influx of French Canadians.

Sometimes misunderstandings and conflict arose from differing customs and traditions among the various immigrant groups now making their home in America, as well as from mutu-

al suspicion carried over from the old country.

In the United States, the Catholic experience within the Church itself included disputes over ownership of church property and ultimately over the authority of the Bishop and priests versus the authority of the parish lay groups."

One such difference of opinion occurred when the Bishop insisted that any new Polish church must have a non-Polish name. In Metz, the congregation wanted their church named St. Hyacinth but the Bishop named it St. Dominic saying, "It is the Bishop who gives the name of the Church." Such a ruling, as might be expected, did not please the congregation and showed some of the injustices which were perpetrated by ecclesiastical authority.

Msgr. Ancona continues: "In addition there were opposing views regarding assimilation of new immigrants into mainstream American society versus retaining and cherishing the mother tongue, European customs, and old traditions.

The harshness of penalties (interdicts and excommunications) imposed by these early Bishops (Borgess of Detroit and later Richter of Grand Rapids) reveals the priority placed on their authority as chief Shepherds. It reveals the Bishops' commitment to the assimilation of ethnic groups in a common American identity and their great uneasiness with any movements, groups or individuals emphasizing ethnic distinctiveness or separateness. Nowhere was this more painfully evident than their dealing with Catholics of Polish ancestry."

The *Catholic Chronicle*, a weekly publication at Bay City, explains it thus in 1874: "It has always been difficult to supply the Polish people with priests who speak their tongue. This is becoming a serious matter for many bishops in the United States. Polish priests have followed their people to this country, but somehow on beginning their work here they did not seem to understand their people, or their people did not understand them. As to 'not understanding their people' is easy to comprehend. Most of the first Polonians in Michigan were from northern Poland under Prussian rule. The priests were from southern Poland or Galicia. This was a major conflict in the Polish settlements. The

St. Casimir Catholic Church

Posen, Michigan

Congregation of 1879

Andrzejewski, Anthony
 Andrzejewski, Joseph
 Bas, Albert
 Berant, Thomas
 Bienga, Frank
 Bieszka, Albert
 Boik, Joseph
 Brodnicki, Adam
 Bronikowski, Jacob
 Bruski, John
 Buczkowski, Mathias
 Budnik, Frank
 Budnik, Ignatius
 Budnik, Stanislaus
 Burzych, Andrew
 Buzala, John
 Christoff, Christian
 Czappa, Frank
 Chrzan, Frank
 Chalupniczak, John
 Czolgosz, John
 Dojas, Jacob
 Dojas, Michael
 Dojas, Andrew
 Dering, Joseph
 Darga, Julius
 Durecki, Jacob
 Ditlaf, Anthony
 Donajkowski, Joseph
 Donajkowski, Peter
 Derczynski, Jacob
 Feder, Anthony
 Fryska, Michael
 Gabrysiak, Peter
 Gappa, Frank
 Gappa, Peter
 Glanz, John
 Gornikiewicz, Joseph
 Ginter, John
 Grochowski, John
 Grzendzicki, Joseph
 Gryka, Matthew
 Gulcz, Frank
 Halman, Anthony
 Haske, Jacob
 Hilla, Frank
 Jaracz, Thomas
 Jachcik, Martin
 Jaroch, Andrew
 Jezewski, Matthew
 Hincka, Frank
 Kieliszewski, Anthony
 Kieliszewski, Albert
 Kieliszewski, Michael
 Kieliszewski, Valentine
 Koss, Jacob
 Kowalski, August
 Kowalski, Joseph

Kowalski, Lawrence
 Kiemnec, Mathias
 Kuchnicki, Frank
 Kosinski, John
 Kufel, Simon
 Konwinski, John (1)
 Konwinski, John (2)
 Konwinski, Simon
 Kopydlowski, Martin
 Kandal, August
 Kapala, Lawrence
 Karpus, Dominic
 Kuczynski, Stanislaus,
 Krol, Jacob
 Kusajewski, Frank
 Kornowski, Mathias
 Kobus, Albert
 Kendzierski, John
 Kendzierski, Sylvester
 Kierzek, Frank
 Kuczma, Michael
 Klein, August
 Kaszubowski, Frank
 Kujawa, Jacob
 Losinski, Valentine
 Lewandowski, Katherine
 Lowinski, Martin
 Laczkowski, Anthony
 Lapczynski, John
 Lubawy, Simon
 Lemanski, Albert
 Marszewski, Joseph
 Matuszewski, Valentine
 Maciejewski, Frank
 Misiak, Peter
 Mulka, Paul
 Muszynski, Paul
 Muszynski, Valentine
 Nowicki, John (1)
 Nowicki, John (2)
 Nowicki, Albert
 Nowaczewski, Michael
 Nowak, Nepornucen
 Ojdowski, Valentine
 Olszewski, Michael
 Paul, August
 Paul, Katherine
 Panowicz, Peter
 Peplinski, Martin
 Pilarski, Bartholomew
 Pilarski, Anthony
 Pilarski, Joseph
 Pieczynski, John
 Piotrowicz, Stanislaus
 Przybyla, Lawrence
 Purgiel, Albert
 Romel, Baltzer
 Rygwelski, John

Rembowski, Mathias
 Reisner, Joseph
 Rzepa, Wilhelm
 Rochowiak, Frank
 Richard, Joseph
 Rebowski, John
 Rucinski, Peter
 Rosinski, John
 Sobczynski, Albert
 Sobczynski, Thomas
 Stosik, John
 Szyfka, Frank
 Szymanski, Mathias
 Stejnek, Martin
 Szamak, Martin
 Smith, Joseph
 Smolinski, Joseph
 Semp, Frank
 Semp, Jacob
 Szczepanski, Michael
 Sztyma, Paul
 Strzelecki, Jacob
 Strzelecki, Michael
 Soik, Anthony
 Szczepaniak, Valentine
 Smarszcz, Andrew
 Smolinski, John
 Skowronek, Paul
 Splyt, Michael
 Semp, Anthony
 Sytek, Valentine
 Szerowski, John
 Skiba, Jacob
 Szczepaniak, Joseph
 Szydowski, Andrew
 Suszek, Adam
 Schultz, Joseph
 Stoinski, John
 Szala, John
 Talaska, Joseph
 Tadajewski, August
 Tadajewski, Ludwig
 Ucinski, Joseph
 Woloszyk, Lawrence
 Wyrembelski, Andrew
 Wodny, John
 Wojda, Joseph
 Wozniak, Albert
 Wiza, Joseph
 Wilemski, Martin
 Wasilk, Anthony
 Wojowski, Valentino
 Wisniewski, Bartholomew
 Wolski, Joseph
 Wojt, Michael
 Witucki, Jacob
 Zabczynski, Peter
 Zielaskowski, Martin

northern Poles did not respect many priests, as in 1855 they said 'Polish first, Catholic second' all around the Province of Poznan, Poland. That Poznan saying followed immigrants into American soil."

Again we read the comments from early Jesuit missionaries: "The profound ignorance about matters of faith which they bring from the old country meets us at every step and renders our work difficult, all the more as the pest of 'independence' is bred in this very ignorance. Those who conduct the so-called 'National' churches, instead of enlightening the people, plunge them into deeper darkness. Their chief bait is patriotism and imaginary antagonism on the part of the American Bishops."

The first settlers were not anti-clerical as evidenced by the gracious acceptance and admiration of Fr. Szulak. Their fierce independence and loyalty, however, occasionally lead to much unpleasantness.

In Fr. Bogacki's case, he, being much younger than most of the Posen settlers, may have contributed to a not altogether peaceful pastorate, one being interrupted on several occasions by mob riots.

Divisions arose when a few settlers sided with Fr. Bogacki claiming those who opposed the priest were sacrilegious. These supporters were dubbed "blacks" in reference to the black cassocked priest. Such struggles existed as well in Alpena, Bay City and Parisville.

In spite of, or perhaps because of, the turmoils of the 1880's much was accomplished during the 17 year pastorate of Fr. Bogacki whose congregation swelled to 300 families.

In 1882, Presque Isle county along with 38 other counties, became part of the newly organized Diocese of Grand Rapids. Bishop Henry Richter, born in Germany in 1838, was consecrated first Bishop of the new diocese in 1883 and would shepherd the faithful for 33 years.

Shortly after being assigned to St. Casimir's, Fr. Bogacki built a log cabin, calling it the "kitchen," which was used for school purposes and still later as the sisters' residence.

The original log cabin church built under Fr. Szulak's direction burned in 1883. Another tem-

porary frame edifice was erected immediately to provide a house of worship for the increasing numbers of parishioners. This would later be dismantled when construction of a brick church was begun.

Not much is written about St. Casimir Society but it seems to have been the heart and soul of the building activity in Posen. We read in the 1970 Posen Area Centennial issue: "St. Casimir Society, in Posen, beginning the first of September, will establish a parochial school in the building at present occupied by Fr. Bogacki as a residence. The new brick parsonage connected with St. Casimir Church in Posen will be finished, ready for Fr. Bogacki's occupancy, by the middle of next month.



Old Rectory

It is by far the handsomest residence in the county, the main part being 30' x 30' and two stories high with an addition in the rear. It will have cost close to \$6,000 when fully finished. The society is now about to commence the preliminary work of erecting a new house of worship 60' x 80' to be veneered with brick and surmounted by a huge steeple. It is expected it will take three years to complete the new structure."

It should be observed that the "no debt" policy of Bishop Borgess of Detroit was also embraced by Bishop Richter of Grand Rapids. This, all the more, shows the willingness to sacrifice time, money and material to provide the finest church facilities for the pastor and faith community.

The early pioneers would again be tested with the events of 1895. We read again in the Centennial issue: "On Tuesday morning,

March 5, at 3:30 a.m. when everyone was quietly sleeping, the Catholic church in Posen burned to the ground, and building and contents were destroyed. The church was only completed a short time ago, sufficiently so as to be occupied for divine service. Some of the finer interior work had not been finished yet. The building was a handsome one of brick at cost of \$2,000 and was a standing monument of the energy of Fr. Bogacki and the pious zeal of the Polish people who, in order to raise the magnificent edifice, had denied themselves in many ways in years past. There was insurance to the extent of \$5,800 and the church will undoubtedly be rebuilt."



Old Church

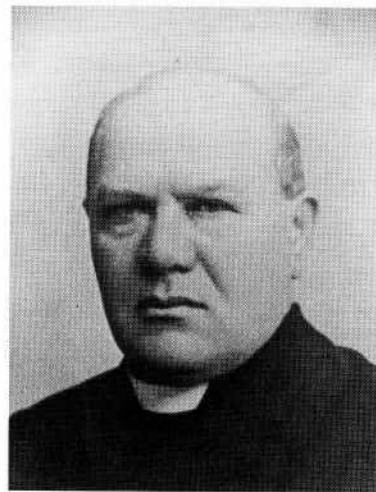
Prophetic words, indeed, as undaunted, the parishioners erected a frame church building the same year (1895). The stately, classic spired country style church would tower nobly toward heaven for 4 generations. The twelve foot cross atop the spire was visible for 10 miles and on a clear day could be seen from hills in Alpena and Montmorency counties. The crisp clear echo of its bell was a daily reminder to area farmers of the 7 a.m., 12 and 6 p.m. *Angelus*, its peal a loud testimony of faith and love of God. When disman-

tled in the spring of 1972, after more than 75 years of faithful service to the religious needs of the people of St. Casimir's, a continuous link to the first pastor was interrupted. This sad moment for the descendants of Posen's homesteaders was rectified when the 84 year old bell was refinished and converted to an electrical ringing unit in 1979 and was placed atop the church within a constructed framework. The \$6,000 project was undertaken by the St. Casimir Usher Club. The bell which was installed in the new church thus serves today as a bond to those Polish pioneers who inscribed the following words on the 1,100 pound bell, "My name is St. Stanislaus, Patron of the Polish People."

Much has been written about Fr. Bogacki's stormy years as pastor, but the tenacious and persistent priest survived the growing pains of the infant St. Casimir Church as did his growing flock of parishioners. Both were tested and strengthened by the events of the 1880's and 1890's. What emerged was proof positive of the adage, "God writes straight with crooked lines."

Fr. Bogacki was transferred to St. Stanislaus Polish parish in Bay City in September of 1896.

From that date until January 1898, there was a disruptive period where parishioners either had no priest or were temporarily administered to by Fr. Joseph Lewandowski and neighboring priests.

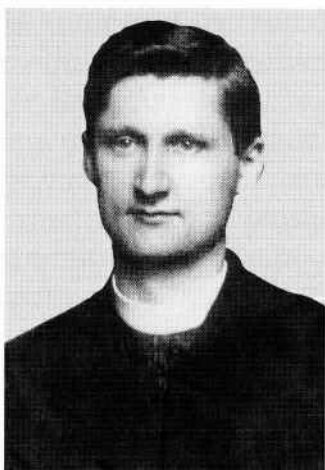


1889 Fr. Marianus Matkowski 1900

Father Marianus Matkowski, himself a victim of malicious accusations and false allegations

at St. Stanislaus, Bay City, was appointed the second pastor of St. Casimir's in January 1889. One author says of Fr. Matkowski, "with amazing resilience and grace he continued an effective and respected ministry with the church." According to tradition, it was during this time that the hard maple trees were planted in the cemetery and in front of the rectory. In 1900, Fr. Matkowski was transferred to Ludington where he died in 1910.

Succeeding Fr. Matkowski in January 1900, was Fr. Joseph Lewandowski. He studied at St. Francis Seminary in Wisconsin and was ordained in 1896. A tall imposing priest, Fr. Lewandowski's strong and adamant attributes were a God-send to a fractured community. Fr. Raymond Mulka, a future pastor, learned first hand, as an assistant to Fr. Lewandowski, when he comments, "by sheer dent of his character, he induced people to face adversity and challenged them to become survivors."



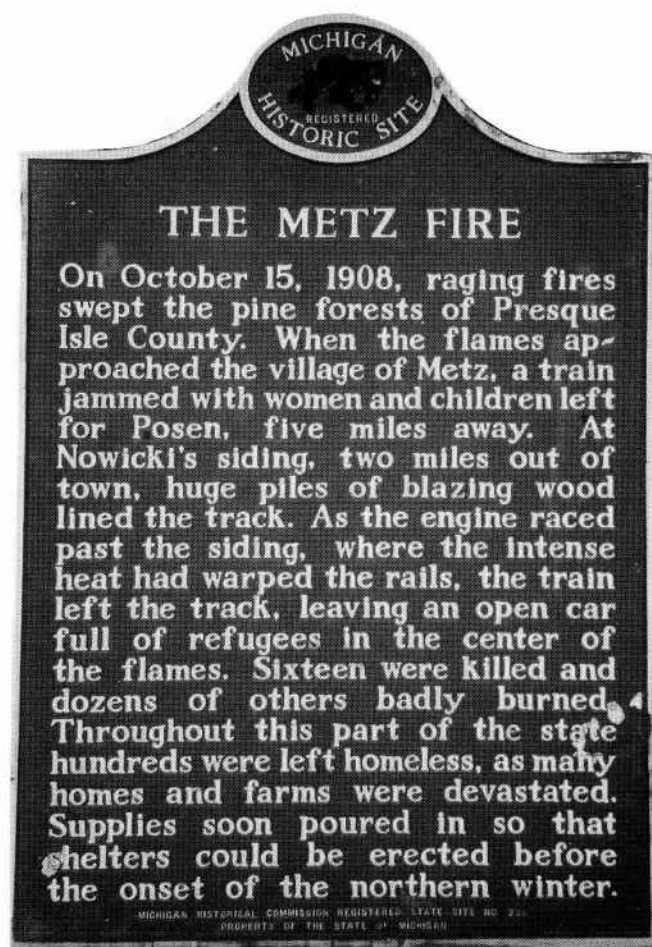
1900 Fr. Joseph Lewandowski 1914

Fr. Lewandowski's greatest legacy was the 1901 school which he built for the exploding population. An indepth look at this school appears elsewhere in this article. During his pastorate, new altars and furnishings were purchased for the church. The Sisters' chapel and the rectory were decorated. Parish grounds were leveled and the cemetery was cleaned up.

Under his stern leadership the community began to heal from the difficult years of the 1890's.

In 1914, after 14 years as pastor, Fr. Lewandowski followed his predecessor in being transferred to St. Stanislaus Church in

Ludington. Fr. Joseph Chodkiewicz was moved from Metz to take over St. Casimir's. He remained for 17 months.



No account of the history of St. Casimir's would be complete without mention of the Metz Fire, the most destructive forest fire in the history of modern Michigan. "On October 15, 1908, the countryside was red with fire," writes Fr. Szyper, "a fire which raged over field and farm, forest and thicket gathering momentum as it advanced. Metz Township suffered the heaviest loss but Posen was not left unscathed. In two hours, this part of Presque Isle county was wiped out of existence. It became a place of desolation. American Red Cross rushed clothing, food, and medical supplies."

The dry hot summer conditions, fueled by a southwest wind, quickly turned the area into a raging inescapable inferno resulting in the destruction of 110 homesteads and the death of 25 men, women and children. Seventy-five percent of the destroyed farms were those of Polish settlers.

Numerous new homes and timber barns had been built about 1900, with settlers leaving behind the cramped log cabins in which their large families had grown up. Now, many of these new buildings had been reduced to ashes, and sons and daughters of the pioneers had only the land, as did their fathers and mothers before them.

The people were stunned and many had an uneasy feeling that the fire was a visitation by God for the sins of the whole community.

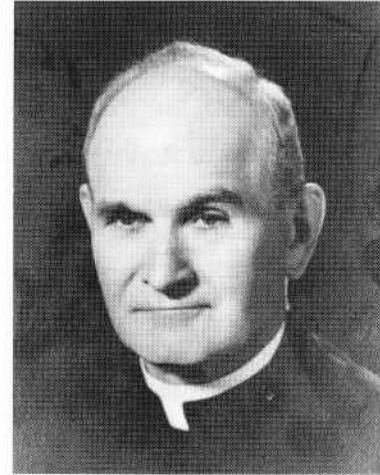
Although this great disaster in Presque Isle county was named after the town and township of Metz which bore the brunt of it, it raged over a vast area of northeast Michigan and was stopped only at the shore of Lake Huron. It was estimated to have destroyed 2.5 million acres.

The great fire seemed to bring an era to a close in the north woods of Michigan. The peak of the lumbering days had passed, the old village of Metz, never large, is no more. Nowicki's siding, the scene of the horrible fate of 16 mothers, children, and the crew of the heralded relief train, is just a name.

Miraculously, the Catholic parish of St. Dominic on Centala Highway in Metz was spared, perhaps in thanksgiving for the parishioners' loyalty and generosity to the Lord. Even after such adversity, pastors from Metz (Frs. Chodkiewicz and Skowronski) were called on to help the parish of St. Casimir's in 1914 and 1915. The favor is being reciprocated today as current and former pastors from St. Casimir's (Frs. Bereda, Mulka, and Smolinski) serve as sacramental ministers for the parishioners of St. Dominic's.

It must be borne in mind that these early years were still in a state of development. The parishes of St. Mary Alpena and St. Casimir Posen were well established unlike Metz (after the fire), Rogers City, and the western portions of the county. So it was that Posen's pastors [Bogacki, Chodkiewicz, Lewandowski, Skowronski and Koss] were also called upon to take care of these "missions" as well as tend to their local flock. Therefore, if you were assigned "up north" you could expect to conduct services in three or four churches.

We tend to take transportation for granted, but in those days before the automobile, the horse and buggy, the hand rail car, or walking were the only options for getting to church. The combination of lack of transportation and long services, which featured a sermon in Polish and English, meant that coming to Mass was a day long activity.



1915 Fr. Casimir Skowronski

Fr. C.T. Skowronski was in residence at St. Casimir's for four months in 1915, coming to Posen from St. Dominic's in Metz. With the expansion of the limestone operation at Crawford's quarry, the formation of present day parishes began to take shape. Fr. Skowronski was assigned to St. Ignatius, Rogers City where his long, and often colorful, pastorate would last 40 years.

Fr. Joseph Koss moved from Metz to begin his 17 year ministry at St. Casimir in July, 1915.



1930 Fr. Julian Moleski (left) Assistant 1931

1915 Fr. Joseph Koss (right) Pastor 1931

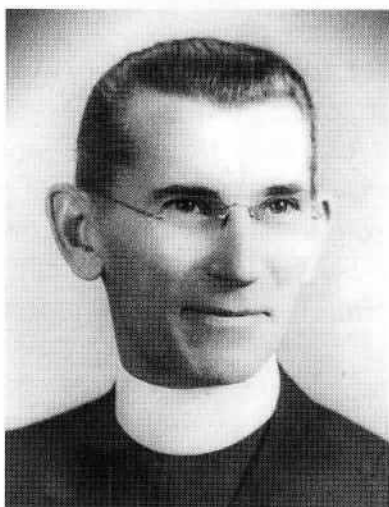
Fr. Szyper describes the times with these

words: "With May, 1915, and the Model T Ford, the era of 'modern times' opened for the Posen Community. From that time on the priests who came here were younger, with a new outlook upon life and a new sense of responsibility for the social welfare of the parish.

Possibly it was the automobile together with the movies that brought new activity into every corner of the nation. Be that as it may, but the facts show that a renaissance spread over St. Casimir's Parish and the process of rebirth is still in possession."

Fr. Koss provided the stability needed after the revolving door atmosphere of pastors since the departure of Fr. Bogacki almost 20 years earlier.

Stern, but fair, is the assessment of Fr. Koss by this writer's father who relates how he persuaded, with the threat of a rubber hose hidden in his cassock, those who would socialize at the horse barns long after Mass had started.



Fr. Leo Buza

Ordained June 15, 1919

It was during Fr. Koss' tenure that the first priest was ordained from the parish. Fr. Leo Buza was ordained on June 15, 1919, and labored in the Diocese of Scranton, Pennsylvania for 57 years.

He died December 26, 1976, and is buried in St. Casimir's cemetery.

It was also Fr. Koss who brought the Sisters of Mercy to teach in the school, replacing the Felician Sisters.



Old Convent

The nuns occupied the "white house" old convent, originally built for the sexton and organist, for 25 years. This building was later sold to Frank A. Budnik and moved to its present M 65 location.

The growth of the parish is evidenced by the 1922 First Communion Class which numbered 114 children.

Fr. Koss was well liked by the parishioners who funded many improvements in the parish, such as the first electrical system and two new furnaces. The stone fence surrounding the cemetery was probably built at this time. Under his prudent and watchful care the parish flourished even through the terrible Depression years. Records show he left a \$21,000 building fund when he was transferred to Ludington, St Stanislaus parish in November, 1931. Later as pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Grand Rapids, he was named a prelate of the church with the rank of Monsignor.

A lesser known but notable fact is that St. Casimir parish enjoyed the services of three assistant pastors in its history. From 1901 until 1906, Fr. Stephen R. Banasiewicz served the parish under the watchful eye of Fr. Lewandowski. Later under Frs. Koss and Kwasigroch, Fr. Julian A. Moleski (1930-1931) and Fr. Joseph S. Kaminski (1932-1934) were assistants at St. Casimir's. Parishioner Anna Konwinski recalls that Fr. Moleski was an excellent homilist.



1931 Fr. Leonard Kwasigroch 1935

Fr. Leonard S. Kwasigroch was named administrator in December, 1931, coming from St. Lawrence parish in Cheboygan and remained in that capacity for four years. A product of the Orchard Lake schools, he was ordained in Bay City on June 21, 1914.

By now, third generation descendants were appearing on the scene, and their parents realized that higher education was needed in a rapidly changing society. The important legacy Fr. Kwasigroch left was the establishment of the 9th and 10th grades of high school. An avid sportsman, Fr. Kwasigroch appears in many photos as manager of Posen's baseball team.

He was transferred in 1935, and died at the age of 57 as pastor at St. Joseph Church in Rapson. His obituary stated he could preach and hear confessions in English, Polish and French.



1935 Fr. Casimir Szyper 1953

The growing community of Posen was very

fortunate when its next pastor was assigned on August 27, 1935. Fr. Casimir Szyper was no stranger to the area, since he had previously been assigned to St. Dominic Church in Metz from 1921 to 1925.

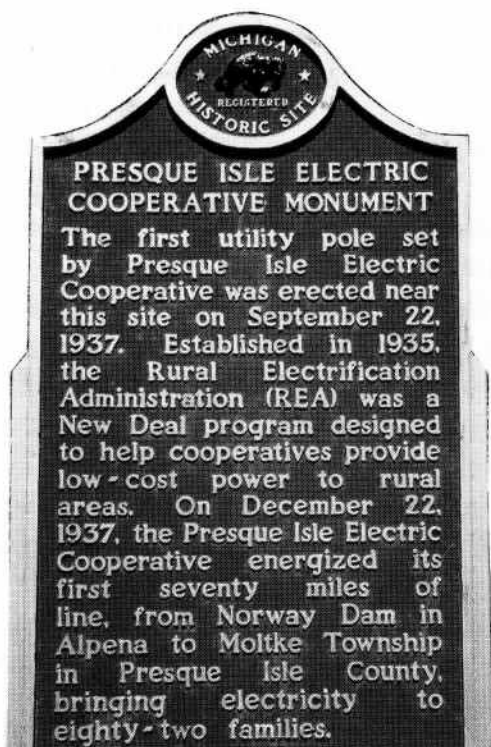
Fr. Szyper was born in Sztabin, Poland, on December 7, 1889. He arrived in New York in 1907 as a 17 year old orphan. He attended St. Mary's College at Orchard Lake and took his philosophy and theology studies at the Grand Seminary in Montreal. After ordination for the Grand Rapids Diocese by Bishop Kelly at St. Andrew's Cathedral on June 14, 1919, he served at St. Adalbert's, Grand Rapids, St. Mary's, Belmont and St. Agnes', Pinconning, before beginning his 18 year stay at Posen.

Fellow seminarians recall him as being gifted intellectually, pious, charitable and well-liked – attributes which characterized his tenure in Posen.

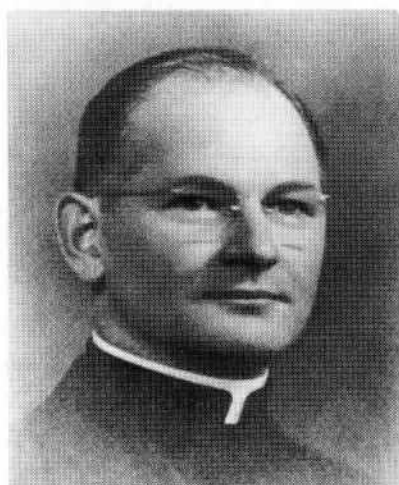
Noted author, former student and parishioner, Norbert Konwinski, says this of him: "It has been said on many occasions that he made frugality an art form but he was exceedingly charitable with the pittance he receives for his own use...he was sent to unite a then divided community, the high school issue was still simmering...his dominant and imposing appearance in classrooms to interrogate students was such that it resulted in immediate and total amnesia...his daily walk from the rectory with breviary in hand was the active vision of a gentle, pious, kind and considerate man...that he was successful at St. Casimir's is a definite understatement."

Such lavish praise is no exaggeration because no one questioned his authority or judgment. The saintly Fr. Szyper not only unified the community, he prepared it for the changing world after the great Depression. Much of St. Casimir's history was recorded by the historian Szyper who certainly understood the people and the changing times.

Extensive repairs and redecorations to the exterior and interior of the church, rectory and the old school were made while Fr. Szyper was pastor, the cost of each meticulously documented.



Fr. Szyper's accomplishments and improvements to St. Casimir's are countless. One noteworthy one, was the change over to electricity when the REA installed the first electric pole in Michigan in Presque Isle county at Posen on September 22, 1937.



Fr. Ignatius Woloszyk
Ordained May 26, 1938

Two events, which took place in 1938 are noteworthy in our history. St. Casimir's became part of the newly created Saginaw, Diocese and Fr. Ignatius Woloszyk, a native son, was ordained a priest. He was in the first class to be ordained

for the new diocese by Bishop William Murphy.

Fr. Szyper's last written outlook on the Posen area is worth presenting: "The Posen parish is essentially a farming community. As such it has not increased in numbers for it prefers to combine farms to make full mechanical implementation possible.

Today two and three tractors are to be found in every farm shed, and trucks of all description and for every purpose, in every garage.

All in all, it is a far cry from the early pioneering years when a yoke of young and robust oxen was a singular privilege and always the safest way to navigate the torturous and many 'corduroy' roads that then existed.

The Posen people were always able farmers, industrious and prosperous. Now, some have gone into cattle raising, but most still depend upon a generous acreage of potatoes as the money crop."

When Fr. Szyper moved in 1953, the Posen parish lost a real hero. He left a smooth running unified community of believers with an undying gratitude toward their beloved spiritual leader.



A continuing testament to this prince of men is carried on today as the charter class of the Posen Knights of Columbus chose to name its Council after him in 1975, thus perpetuating the charity, unity, fraternity, and memory of Father Casimir Szyper.

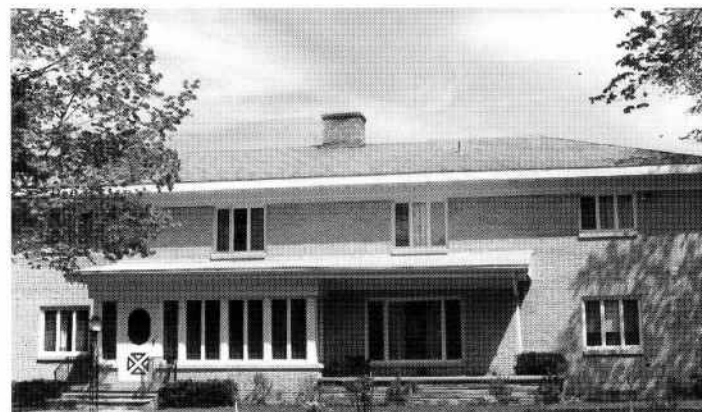


1953 Fr. Stephen Kozak 1968

What remains is the last 50 years of our history and to lead St. Casimir's into this era was its seventh pastor, Fr. Stephen Kozak. Modernization was the trademark of his pastorate. The parish grounds received a new look when an additional 5 acres of land was purchased from the Valentine Wozniak family in 1962. The area serves as an additional playground facility along M65. Two ball fields were erected which the school children, as well as the entire community, used. The old stone cemetery fence was replaced by a higher cyclone fence along M 65.

In 1960, a complete new kitchen addition was built to better serve the parish for its school lunch program and the famous St. Casimir Parish annual chicken dinner.

Extensive repairs were made on the church in 1961-62, natural gas was installed in the existing building, and sidewalks and driveways enhanced the parish grounds. It was during the pastorate of Fr. Kozak that the current rectory



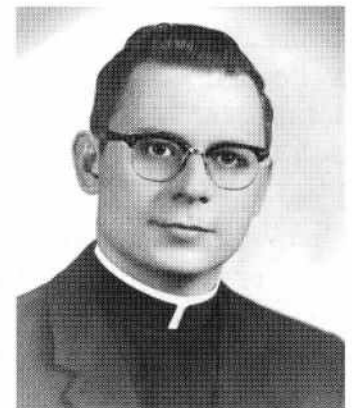
New Rectory

was built, replacing Fr. Bogacki's 75 year old residence. This spacious edifice was built by parishioner Isidore Klingshirn, and continues to serve as the pastor's residence and as parish offices. An excellent administrator and visionary, Fr. Kozak, also began a building fund with a view of building a new church.

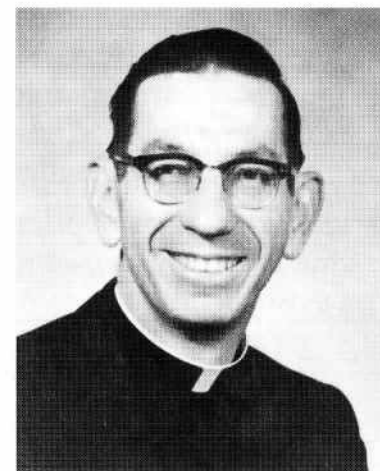
Also during Fr. Kozak's term as pastor, God again blessed the parish with the ordination of the priesthood of two more of St. Casimir's young men. Fr. Anthony Wozniak in 1959, and Fr. Lawrence Hoppe in 1960.



Fr. Anthony Wozniak
Ordained May 23, 1959



Fr. Lawrence Hoppe
Ordained June 12, 1960



1968 Fr. Clarence Smolinski 1980

The task of building the new church, however, would fall upon Fr. Kozak's successor, Fr. Clarence Smolinski, who was installed as pastor in January, 1968. It was like a home coming for Fr. Clarence who had attended "St. Casimir High" in 1941-42 before his parents moved to Alpena.

In June, 1969, Fr. Smolinski met with the parishioners to discuss the possibility of building a new church. The 425 family membership

agreed that the 1895 country style church had served its time. Bishop Francis Reh approved, and in the spirit of the Kowalski's, Przybyla's, and Woloszyk's, a building committee was formed which consisted of the following members: Harlan Addison, Leo Bruski, Andrew and Theodore Budnick, Clarence Darga, Donald Greengtski, Adam Gryniewicz, Donald Krajniak, John Misiak, Frank Momrik, Leo Skiera, Theodore Szymanski, Anthony and Edward Woloszyk, and Casimir and Stanley Wozniak.

Architects Morris and Wesolek of Bay City were chosen to draw up plans for a modern house of worship. The new design would reflect Vatican II guidelines which placed the altar as focal point, and the pew arrangement such as to assist in the active participation in liturgical services. A large (1,000 seating capacity) auditorium shaped interior church would replace the spired country style church of another century.

On September 3, 1970, groundbreaking ceremonies took place when Alpena native Kenneth J. Povish, Bishop elect of Crookston, Minnesota, turned the first shovel of soil to begin construction of the new church.

Perhaps unknowingly, the descendants of those early settlers who arrived 100 years earlier were opening a new chapter in the history of the faith of St. Casimir Parish.

This new beginning would be shared by all of northern Michigan. On June 15, 1971, a new diocese was formed with its Episcopal Seat in Gaylord. Presque Isle county was linked with 20 other counties to make up the new diocese.

Fittingly, a Polish immigrant's son, Fr. Edmund C. Szoka, was chosen as its first Bishop.

On December 15, Bishop Szoka laid the cornerstone of the new church and three days later on December 18, in praise and thanksgiving to God, Fr. Smolinski and the parishioners celebrated their first Mass in the new church. Fr. Smolinski's words at the Mass bear recording: "I feel confident that if your ancestors, who contributed much of the foundation of the faith here in Posen, could be with us now, there would be a sense of pride and gratitude to still see the spark of faith gleaming brightly within the hearts of the people of Posen. It is reflected in various ways in



your lives, by your attendance at parish services and by your contributions as we continue on. I thank you for the sacrifices you have made. Many, no doubt, were made with considerable hardship on yourselves and your families. However, you always realized that this was being done for the greater honor and glory of God."

The finishing touch was applied on June 25, 1972, when Bishop Szoka solemnly dedicated the new church at which time he reiterated: "The church you have built is a beautiful and inspiring testimony to your faith in God and your dedication to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The building of the present church is the fifth time in its history that the good and devout people of St. Casimir's rallied and sacrificed themselves to erect a temple in which to express their love and adoration of God's holy family."

Pioneers would, no doubt, gaze in awe at its beauty and their descendants would sacrifice to completely pay off the \$450,000 cost in two years.

Through substantial donations, the parking lot and cemetery driveways were black-topped thus completing the parish look as we know it today. The major building programs of the past under the leadership of Frs. Bogacki, Lewandowski Szyper, Kozak and Smolinski were now completed.

The present day complex stands as a monument to the immigrants, their descendants, to Fr. Szulak and his successors, and serves also as a living example to future parishioners to keep the faith alive.



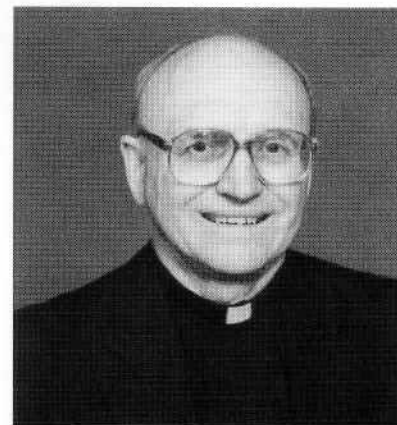
Even the visionary Fr. Szyper would not have recognized his Posen in the 1980's. The small family farm has disappeared and in its place big business farming operations have become a reality. Four hundred cow dairy herds, 800 head of beef cattle and 500 acre potato crops are not uncommon.

Gigantic equipment and computer technology have given birth to another age of progress and way of life. Smaller families and two working parents are the norm rather than the exception. Off-spring are now forced to leave the area to find employment as parish numbers continue to decline and Posen assumes the look of a retirement community rather than the once thriving vibrant village of old. The computer age presents new situations and new adventures, and must be met with new solutions in the light of faith and charity.

In the winter of 1979, Deacon Richard Sitar was assigned to the parish for pastoral experi-

ences prior to ordination. His eloquent sermons, adult education classes, and restructured CCD program made his stay memorable.

Fr. Smolinski was reassigned to St. Joseph's parish in Manistee in July, 1980, after 12 years in Posen.



1980 Fr. Raymond Mulka 1989

Fr. Raymond C. Mulka, a native of Presque Isle County, was appointed pastor succeeding

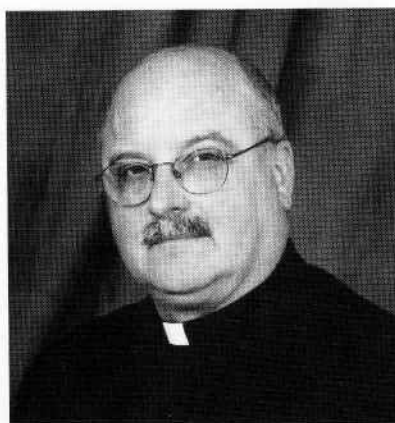
Fr. Smolinski. Fr. Mulka, whose great grandfather Paul was listed on the original 1879 St. Casimir Church roster, was born and educated in Rogers City. His seminary training took place at St. Joseph Seminary, Grand Rapids, Sacred Heart, Detroit, and Mount St. Mary's of the West in Cincinnati prior to ordination on June 16, 1949.

He had previously served in the Alpena deanery parishes of St. Anne's Harrisville and St. Mary's Alpena. Coming back to his roots was a preface to his impending entrance into retired priest status.

Fr. Mulka's legacy was his attempt to hone the spirituality of the parishioners.

So much of the history had been dominated by struggles to provide and maintain the physical structure of parish life. He now strove to strengthen spiritual values which are the backbone of the church of Posen, values which were being challenged by an increasing secularistic age. His eloquent and thought-provoking homilies were aimed at personal and social improvements. His frequent reference to family and ethnic backgrounds endeared him to the descendants of common ancestors. Fr. Mulka celebrated his 40th anniversary of ordination and retirement in June, 1989.

Fr. Gerald Micketti, another Rogers City native son, with Polish ties to his mother's descendants, succeeded Fr. Mulka in June 1989. His three year stay was short, but his impact on the children and teens of the parish was unmistakable.

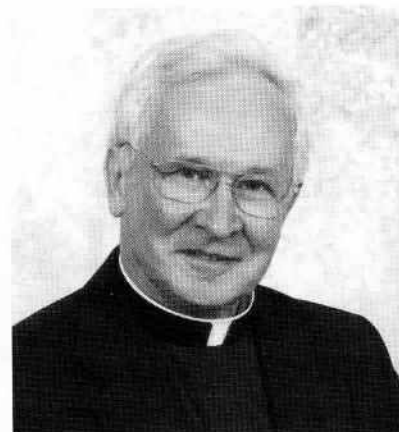


1989 Fr. Gerald Micketti 1992

A history enthusiast, Fr. Micketti reveled in researching and publishing the past times and

events of Presque Isle county and the pioneer settlers of Polish, Italian, French, and German descent. His in depth accounts of the Metz fire and the Bradley disaster are most notable. As diocesan archivist, he continues to preserve and safeguard the past.

Fr. Micketti was transferred to St. Patrick Church in Grawn in the fall of 1992.



1992 Fr. Stanislaus Bereda 2004

Assigned to lead the parish into the 21st century was Fr. Stanislaus J. Bereda. Fr. Bereda's assignment mirrored that of his predecessors over a century ago. He, like the first priests to come to Posen, is a native of Poland.

They faced the problems associated with new settlements taking root in a harsh land, while he has been confronted with the problems associated with secular culture that has taken root in this country. Secularism, with its materialistic emphasis, contradicts the teachings and values of the Church at every turn. Issues and situations have arisen which would have dumfounded our ancestors. Globalization and the Internet have impacted all areas of life in the 21st century. Over a quarter century of killing the unborn through legalized abortion in this country, and a greater acceptance of euthanasia, have lead to what Pope John Paul II has described as the "culture of death." This lack of respect for human life has permeated our society, and challenges one of our fundamental Catholic beliefs: "that all human life is a gift from God to be treasured from conception until natural death."

Many of the problems associated with the Catholic Church world-wide have also impacted us locally. The Gaylord Diocese, like so many

others, is experiencing a shortage of priests. The negative aspects of this shortage include the lack of resident pastors in many smaller parishes, the combining of parishes under a single pastor, and a reduction in Mass schedules. A positive effect has been a greater lay participation in a variety of Church ministries.

In such trying times, one must look back at our ancestors and the faith which they brought with them when settling in the new country. They too were tested and tempered by adversities, but a constant in their lives was their faith and trust in God. If we also have God at the center of our lives, we will be able to weather whatever comes our way, knowing that God always walks with us on our journey through this life.

Faced with the secularization of our society, Fr. Bereda has been very active in promoting the spiritual development and faith-formation of the people of St. Casimir's. While the emotionally wrenching task of closing the parish school fell upon his shoulders, he has been instrumental in fostering a revitalized Religious Education Program for our children and youth, staffed by excellent leaders and teachers. It flourishes, passing on the indispensable tenets of our Catholic faith to future generations, as well as showing the young people how to live out their faith in their daily lives through kindness and charity towards others, including the poor of the world. Fr. Bereda has also fostered the spiritual growth of the adults of the parish with Adult Formation offerings, parish and senior citizen retreats, a parish video library, articles in the weekly bulletin, a daily reflection book, as well as reflection booklets for the Advent, Lent and Easter seasons. He has promoted the ever-expanding role of the laity through active parish councils and commissions, along with a greater participation in the various liturgical ministries.

The annual church picnic, albeit without the historic chicken dinner of old, was restored, though not as a fund-raiser, but as a time to gather together as a parish to socialize and enjoy a fun-filled day. The parish tithe fund has assisted local organizations such as Hospice, Habitat for Humanity, Shelter [for domestic abuse victims], as well as local needy, and a parish in Chile

staffed by the cousin of Bishop Povish. Additionally, collections of food for the local Food Pantry were instituted, and these three collections per year yield two pick-up truckloads of food supplies per collection.

Under his dedicated stewardship, the spiritual needs of the parishioners, as well as the care of the less fortunate have been fostered. During his pastorate, the buildings and grounds have also been maintained and enhanced. A new classic black wrought iron picket fence was installed in the cemetery along M 65. A spacious new maintenance shed replaced the dilapidated storage building of another era. The old convent building, which had been sitting empty, was transformed, primarily through donated materials and labor, into a center for parish and youth meetings, as well as Religious Ed classes. Also, the parish grounds were beautified by landscaping that was accomplished through numerous memorial donations.

The celebration of 125 years of faith at St. Casimir's is a review of our past and present. It will naturally pose questions for the future. How we pass on the faith entrusted to us will determine the life of that faith at St. Casimir's.

With the example of the faith, sacrifice, and devotion of our forefathers and former pastors we begin another chapter in our history of keeping the faith alive at St. Casimir's.



The Black Madonna of Czestochowa, the most important icon of the Catholic faith in Poland, occupies a prominent place of honor in St. Casimir's side chapel. The original painting of the Black Madonna, depicting the Virgin and Christ Child, is enshrined at the Pauline Monastery of Jasna Gora in Poland, the country's greatest place of pilgrimage.

"Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them, O Lord."

*The cemetery, the earthly home of the departed, is a most sacred place. There God is present in the nothingness of time, in the reality of eternity. In a cemetery, the lesson is striking—time and the things of time are passing shadows: **only eternity and the things of eternity have value.***

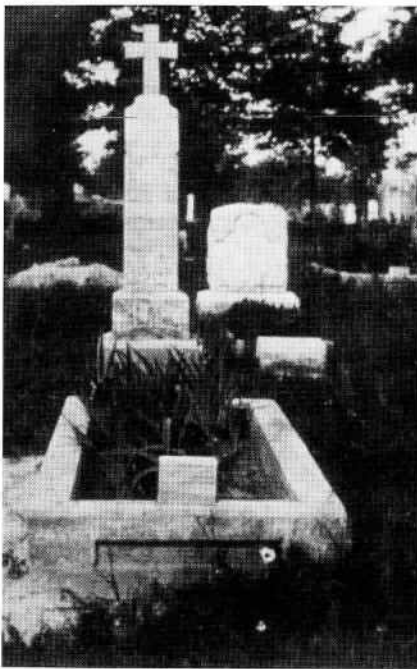
In the cemetery, our relatives and friends are at sleep, awaiting the morning of the resurrection; meanwhile, their memories fill us with hope in God's love.

[Archbishop John Ireland, at the dedication of a cemetery—adapted]

Our Catholic cemeteries have a long history, rooted in the burial traditions of our Jewish ancestors. During the first centuries of the Church, the persecuted Christians buried their dead in secret in the underground catacombs, and gathered at these burial sites to celebrate the Eucharist.

With the spread of Christianity throughout Europe, and the end of the persecutions, cemeteries or bone houses began to be connected with individual parishes. The Catholic immigrants to this country brought their burial customs with them, and with the abundance of land in the United States, parish cemeteries became the norm.

In the mid-1960's, following the Vatican II Council, some of the mandates regarding Catholic burial were modified. Among these changes: Catholics were no longer required to be buried in Catholic cemeteries, and Catholics were permitted to be cremated.



It is within this historical context that we turn to our St. Casimir Cemetery. While there is no documentation in parish records, apparently the current cemetery grounds are the third burial site for the people who settled this area. One of the earlier sites was at the corner of Metz Hwy. and M-65, while another was adjacent to Grand Lake Hwy.

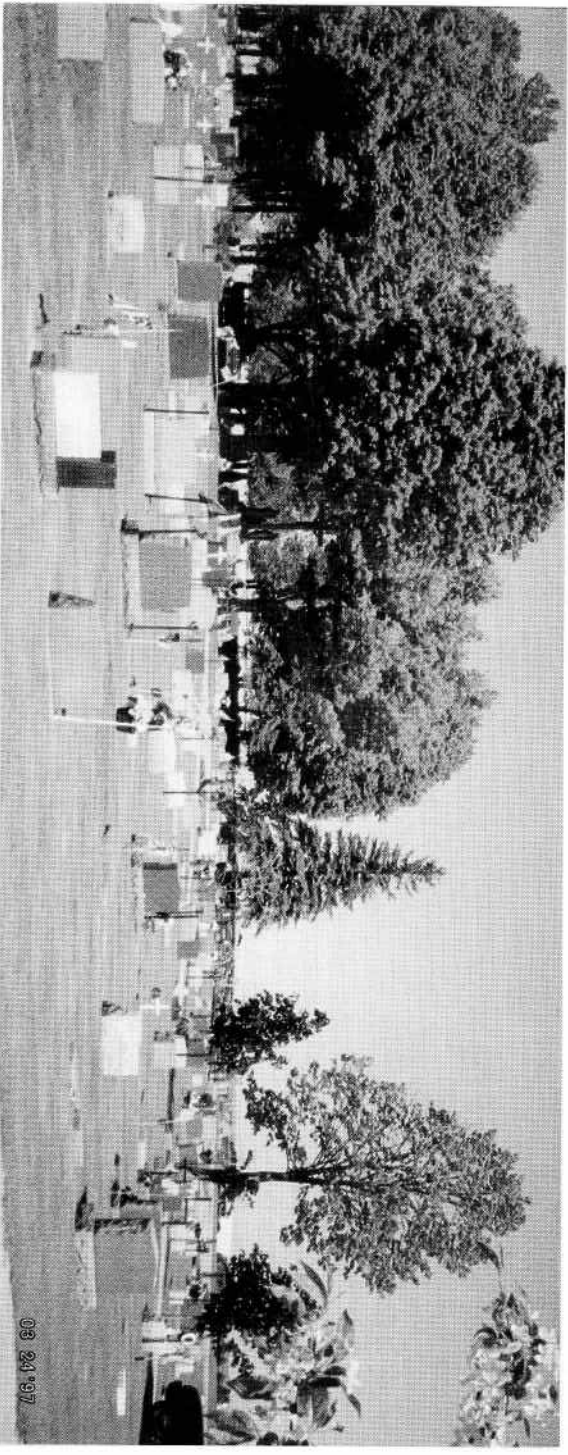
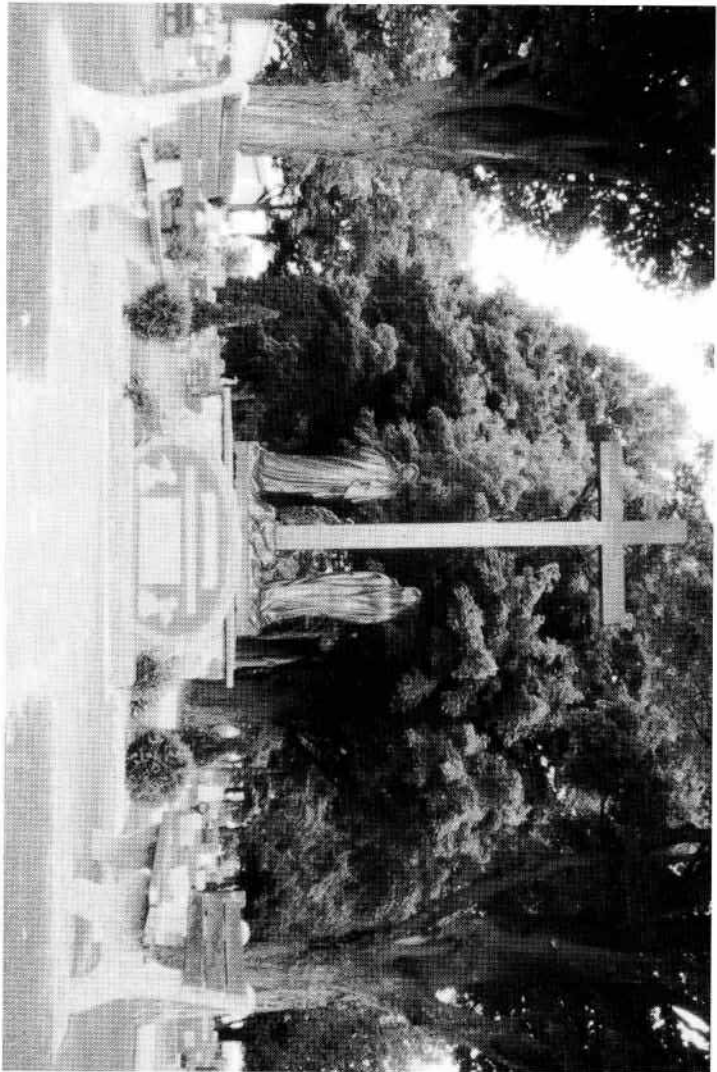
While there are records of deaths and burials from 1879, the early death and cemetery records of St. Casimir's are incomplete. Many of the early entries in the death record do not list a grave number, and the cemetery book [the listing of the graves and those who were buried in them] is missing the names of many of those buried in the first section of the cemetery. Apparently, in these early years, grave numbers were not entered at the time of burial; if some type of monument was in place, the grave number was entered at a later date; otherwise, this information was not preserved. An example of this is the first entry in the existing death records of St. Casimir Parish. The entry is for an E. Soik, with the date of January 22, 1879; there is no grave number listed, and this person is not found in the cemetery records.

The earliest deaths recorded in the cemetery book are: grave # 62, Martin Jachcik, who died on July 5, 1879, at the age of 46, and grave # 106, Theodore and John Smith, twin sons of Joseph and Mary Smith, who died on December 26, 1879, at 24 hours old. While many of the graves from 1-900 are without names, the high infant/child mortality rates of the late 19th and early 20th centuries are reflected in the large number of graves with the notation that an infant/child is buried there.

In 1966, the first burial took place in the "new" portion of the cemetery; Ignatius Wisniewski, age 91, died on August 14, 1966, and is buried in grave #1 in Section A. Also buried in this section are Wallace and Theresa Bonin and seven of their children, all victims of a house fire on July 10, 1969. A more recent addition to the cemetery grounds is the Respect Life monument and meditation area by the cemetery cross; this was donated by the Posen Knights of Columbus, and dedicated on June 7, 2003, reminding us of the sanctity of all human life.

One of the Corporal Works of Mercy is the care of our deceased. The care given to our cemetery by our custodian, Ernie Romel, and to the individual graves by loved ones, is a testimony, not only to this Work of Mercy, but also to our belief in the Communion of Saints, that all the baptized are united to one another, whether living or deceased; death does not end our relationships with others. Therefore, our parish cemetery is more than a burial ground. Rather, it is a testament to our Catholic belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and in the promise that one day, we too, will share eternal life with Him, and with our loved ones who have gone before us from this life.

"Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace. AMEN."



03 24 97



St. Casimir Catholic Church

Posen, Michigan

Congregation of 2004

Alphonse Adamczyk
 Mrs. Clara Adamczyk
 Frank & Pauline Andrews & Family
 Michael & Sophie Andrzejewski
 George Bedford
 Steven & Denise Beland & Family
 Otto & Helen Boyk
 Arthur & Rose Bronikowski & Family
 Mrs. Lorraine Bronikowski
 Miss Martha Bronikowski
 Mrs. Martha Bronikowski
 Vincent & Elsie Bronikowski
 Alice Bruski
 Mrs. Ann Bruski
 Arthur Bruski
 David & Doris Bruski
 James & Lucia Bruski & Family
 Jeffrey & Kate Bruski & Family
 Mark & Anne Bruski & Family
 Mrs. Renetta Bruski
 Mrs. Veronica Bruski
 Terry & Laurie Buczkowski & Family
 William & Jeanette Buczkowski
 Daniel & Emily Budnick & Family
 Dennis & Blanche Budnick & Family
 Dennis & Jenny Budnick
 Glenn & Tammy Budnick
 Marvin & Evelyn Budnick
 Theodore & Arlene Budnick
 Arthur & Margaret Budnik
 Frank & Marge Budnik
 Mrs. Judith Budnik
 Lawrence & Barbara Budnik & Family
 Michael & Kathy Budnik
 Mitchell & Clara Budnik & Family
 Edward Buszko
 Mrs. Rosemary Buszko
 Dolores Buza
 Mrs. Jackie Calhoun & Family
 James Centala
 Mrs. Christine Chalupniczak
 Annette Chappa
 Bernard Chappa
 Esther Chappa
 Joan Chappa
 Albert & Lucille Chojnacki
 Arthur & Barbara Chojnacki
 David & Cecelia Chojnacki
 Roger & Pamela Chojnacki & Family
 Terry & Kim Chojnacki & Family
 Arthur & Cheryl Ciarkowski & Family
 Bernard & Florence Ciarkowski
 David & Grace Ciarkowski & Family
 Edward & Stephanie Ciarkowski
 Frank & Lexie Ciarkowski
 Mrs. Geraldine Ciarkowski
 Mrs. Irene Ciarkowski
 John & Patricia Ciarkowski

Kenneth Ciarkowski,
 Louis & Linda Ciarkowski
 Jack & Virginia Cline
 Halina Cochrane
 Patrick & Donna Couture & Family
 Paul Czajkowski
 Aloysius & Eileen Darga
 Clarence & Eleanor Darga
 Harry & Alice Darga
 Paul & Carleen Darga, Jr. & Family
 Stanley & Eleanore Darga
 Mrs. Gertrude Dembny
 Leonard & Margaret Dembny
 Joe & Diane Derosia
 Craig & Linda Dersa
 James & Janet Dietlin & Family
 Neil & Carla Dietlin
 Gerald & Rita Donajkowski
 Leonard & Irene Donajkowski
 Lloyd & Irene Donajkowski & Family
 Valentine & Julia Donajkowski
 Mrs. Alice Emke
 Mrs. Barbara Ernest
 Jeffrey Filarski
 Mrs. Lottie Filarski
 Vincent & Audrey Filarski, Jr.
 Leroy & Mary Flanner, Jr.
 Leroy & Vicki Flanner, Sr.
 Joshua & Amanda Fleming & Family
 Ben & Michelle Freske & Family
 Edward Freske
 Robert & Monica Freske & Family
 Walter & Gloria Fuhrman
 Eugene & Barbara Funke
 Stanley & Patricia Gabrysiak & Family
 Mrs. Clara Gajsiewicz
 Edward Gappa
 Mrs. Virginia Glomski
 Dennis & Sally Goupell & Family
 Edward & Mary Goupell
 Mrs. Helen Greengtski
 Mrs. Theresa Greengtski
 Mrs. Angeline Greka
 Michael & Joan Grohowski & Family
 Mrs. Carla Grulke
 Joseph & Alicia Hall & Family
 Mrs. Blanche Hentkowski
 James & Mary Jane Hentkowski & Family
 Jerry Hentkowski & Family
 Steve & Mary Hentkowski & Family
 Mrs. Anna Hincka
 Arthur Hincka
 Casimir & Bonnie Hincka
 Clarence & Bernadine Hincka, Sr. & Family
 Clarence & Beth Hincka, Jr. & Family
 Mrs. Clementine Hincka
 Edward & Sue Hincka, Jr. & Family
 Elizabeth Hincka

Eric & Tammy Hincka & Family
 Mary Hincka
 Raymond Hincka
 Mrs. Rose Hincka
 Todd & Elizabeth Hincka & Family
 William & Mandee Hincka & Family
 James & Ann Hirschman & Family
 Mike & Julia Honoway
 Gregory & Jennifer Idalski & Family
 Mrs. Laura Idalski & Family
 Robert & Marcie Idalski
 Julianne Jakubcin & Family
 Harry & Agatha Jakubiak
 Edward & Geraldine Jaracz
 Michael & Denise Julian & Family
 Mrs. Mayvine Kamysiak
 Randall & Jane Kamysiak & Family
 Arthur & Diane Kamyszek & Family
 Edward Kadow
 Gerald & Alice Kadow
 Edmond & Dorothy Kapa
 Mrs. Helen Kapa
 John & Donna Karsnick
 Rodney Kasubowski & Family
 Karin Kaszubowski & Family
 Mrs. Kathleen Kaszubowski
 Mrs. Verna Kaszubowski
 Clifford Kelly
 Mrs. Theresa Kelly
 James & Bernadette Kenjorski
 Alphonse Kieliszewski
 Mrs. Gertrude Kieliszewski
 John & Debra Kieliszewski & Family
 Anthony & Joyce Kluft
 Florian & Barbara Klein
 Robert & Pamela Klein & Family
 Judy Klimaszewski
 Mrs. Pauline Kline
 Mrs. Anna Konwinski
 Anthony & Joyce Konwinski & Family
 Lori Konwinski & Family
 Thomas Konwinski
 Wilbur & Geraldine Konwinski
 Dennis Koss
 Ervin & Monica Koss & Family
 Melvin & Barbara Koss
 Norvel & Patricia Koss
 Wayne Koss
 Frank & Sophie Kozdron
 Mary Kozdron
 Alex & Denise Krajniak & Family
 Dominic & Janet Krajniak
 Donald & Bernice Krajniak
 Mrs. Dorothy Krajniak
 Edwin & Laurie Krajniak & Family
 Gary & Lois Krajniak & Family
 Gordon & Connie Krajniak & Family
 Kevin & Brandie Krajniak & Family
 Mrs. Margaret Krajniak
 Norbert & Patricia Krajniak
 Wayne & Debra Krajniak
 Alfred Krawczak
 Theodore Krawczak
 Gerald & Joanne Kroll & Family
 Jacob & Tamara Kroll & Family

James & Lucille Kroll & Family
 Janet Kroll
 John & Mary Kroll
 Katherine Kroll & Family
 Mrs. Mary Kroll
 Philip Kroll
 Mrs. Sophie Kroll
 Thomas & Jeanine Kroll & Family
 Genowefa Kurek
 Mrs. Genevieve Kuszajewski
 Richard & Marilyn Kuszajewski
 Mrs. Bernice Kuznicki
 Stanley Kuznicki
 Mrs. Mary LaBita
 Leo Lapczynski
 Gerald & Loretta LaPointe & Family
 Edmond & Theresa Lauzon
 Mrs. Frances Lenard
 John Leonard
 Arthur & Jacinta Lewandowski & Family
 Bette Lewandowski
 Ervin & Mabel Lewandowski
 Felicia Lewandowski
 Mrs. Irene Lewandowski
 Mrs. Katherine Lewandowski
 Mrs. Loretta Lewandowski
 Marie Lewandowski
 Mark & Denise Lewandowski & Family
 Philip & Nancy Lewandowski & Family
 Richard & Darlene Lewandowski & Family
 Stanley T. & Pamela Lewandowski & Family
 Mrs. Virginia Lewandowski
 John & Diane Lijewski, Jr.
 Bernard & Margaret Litwinski
 Gregory Litwinski & Family
 Julie Litwinski & Family
 Matthew & Kim Litwinski & Family
 Gerald & Janet MacFalda
 Louis Macfalda
 Duane & Jeanette Maxwell & Family
 Frank McFalda
 James & Theresa McFalda
 Raymond & Blanche Meyers
 Rose Ann Meyers
 Thomas & Denise Meyers & Family
 David & Connie Miller
 Jeannie Miller
 Lawrence & Elaine Miller
 Alletta Misiak
 Clement & Elaine Misiak
 David & Janet Misiak
 Dennis & Julie Misiak & Family
 Gerald & Joyce Misiak
 John & Martha Misiak
 Kenneth & Sherry Misiak & Family
 Louis Misiak
 Mark & Eleanor Misiak
 Paul Misiak
 Raymond Misiak
 Theodore Modrzynski
 Casimir & Laura Molski, Jr.
 Mrs. Regina Molski
 Alex & Evelyn Momrik
 Allan & Marie Momrik
 Daniel & Irene Momrik & Family

David & Amy Momrik & Family
 Frank & Patricia Momrik
 Glen & Clare Momrik & Family
 Katherine Momrik
 Daniel & Mary Ann Mulka
 David & Anne Mulka & Family
 John Mulka
 Julian & Carol Mulka
 Mitchell & Angela Mulka & Family
 Gerald & Josephine Murray
 Merle & Rita Muszynski
 Richard & Janet Nakoneczny & Family
 Debbie Nefske
 Mrs. Sylvia Nefske
 David & Ann Nelson
 Mrs. Helen Niedzwiecki
 Paul Niedzwiecki
 Kenneth & Marge Nowak
 Aloysius & Virginia Nowicki
 Alphonse & Marjorie Nowicki
 Bernard Nowicki
 Thomas & Lori Olsen & Family
 Alphonse & Lorraine Orban
 Mrs. Gladys Orban
 Kenneth & Mary Orban & Family
 Leonard & Sophie Orban, Jr.
 Raymond Orban
 Wilbert & Paula Orban & Family
 Charles & Beatrice Otremba
 Leonard & Alice Otremba
 Edward Palka
 Mrs. Alice Paull
 Steven & Vicki Paull & Family
 Edward & Denise Perrault & Family
 Gregory Peters & Family
 Leo & Theresa Peters
 Steven & Constance Peters & Family
 Thomas Peters
 Mrs. Viola Petrykowski
 Ronald Piaskowski
 Adam Pieczynski, Jr. & Family
 Mrs. Rose Pieczynski
 Adeline & Beverly Pieczynski & Family
 Gary & Loretta Pieczynski & Family
 Mrs. Ida Pieczynski
 Marvin & Blanche Pieczynski
 Julian & Judith Pilarski & Family
 Michael & Darlene Polaski
 Robert & Blanche Polaski
 Paul & Doris Ponik & Family
 Ted & Maryann Ponik
 Walter & Florence Ponik
 Helen Przybyla
 Kevin & Margaret Przybyla & Family
 Mrs. Lucia Przybyla
 Arthur & Diane Pszczolkowski & Family
 Chester & Rita Pszczolkowski
 Barbara Purgiel
 David & Colette Purgiel
 Stanley & Regina Purgiel
 Clarence & Julia Purol
 Mrs. Gertrude Purol
 James & Marie Purol & Family
 Mrs. Kathleen Purol & Family
 Patrick & Laurie Purol & Family

Raymond Purol
 Robert & Gladys Purol & Family
 Mrs. Theresa Purol
 Leon & Cecilia Purta
 Mrs. Jane Radyko
 Alex & Ann Ramsay
 John & Rebecca Rasmussen & Family
 Mrs. Emily Ratkowiak
 Mrs. Ruth Reisner
 Alvin & Denice Romel & Family
 Mrs. Bernice Romel
 Mrs. Betty Romel
 Chad & Jessica Romel & Family
 Ernest & Karen Romel & Family
 Mrs. Esther Romel
 Frank & Lori Romel & Family
 John & Ariane Romel & Family
 Joseph & Cynthia Romel & Family
 Kevin Romel & Family
 Leo F. & Denyse Romel & Family
 Richard & Suzanne Romel
 Stephen & Margaret Romel
 Timothy Romel
 Anthony Roznowski
 Norbert & Leona Roznowski
 Walter & Martha Roznowski & Family
 Mrs. Dorothy Rygwelski
 Mrs. Betty Ann Schellie
 Danny & Sharon Schellie & Family
 Joel & Tami Schellie & Family
 Thomas & Janelle Schellie
 Kurt Schultz
 Mrs. Linda Sharpe & Family
 Terrence & Diane Sheldon
 Jerry & Maxine Shemanski
 Dominic Skiera
 Stanley & Helen Skierski
 Mrs. Frances Skowronek
 Julian & Genevieve Skowronek
 Edward & Lucy Skudlarek
 Steven & Rita Skudlarek
 Edward & Virginia Smigelski
 Gerald & Dawn Smigelski & Family
 Harry & Stella Smigelski
 James & Lorraine Smigelski
 Michael & Ann Smigelski
 Mrs. Stella Smigelski
 Mrs. Angeline Smolinski
 David & Marcia Smolinski & Family
 Frank & Mary Smolinski
 Mrs. Sophie Smolinski
 Kenneth & Colleen Smolinski & Family
 Mrs. Margaret Smolinski
 Regina Smolinski
 Richard & Connie Smolinski & Family
 Mrs. Stephanie Smolinski
 Mrs. Gladys Sobek
 Joseph & Sallea Sobek & Family
 Stanley & Susan Sobek & Family
 Bernard & Patricia Soik
 Emil & Julianne Soik
 Eugene & Jenny Soik
 Irene Soik
 John & Phyllis Soik
 Paul & Gail Soik

Edward Stema & Family
 Josephine Stema & Family
 Lester Stema
 Gary & Tamyra Stepanski & Family
 Norman & Sylvia Stokosa
 Anthony & Rebecca Strzelecki & Family
 Jacob & Bonita Strzelecki, Jr.
 Lou Ann Strzelecki
 Richard & Beth Strzelecki & Family
 Mrs. Theodosia Strzelecki
 Timothy & Ann Strzelecki & Family
 Albert & Clair Styma, Jr.
 Erwin & Carey Styma, II & Family
 Erwin & Yvonne Styma
 Joel & Michelle Styma & Family
 John & Pamela Styma & Family
 Michael Styma & Family
 Norbert & Janet Styma
 Paul & Beverly Styma & Family
 Randall & Jane Styma & Family
 William Styma & Family
 Aloysius & Theresa Swan
 Catherine Swan
 Stephen & Cindy Swan & Family
 Alex & Judy Szczerowski
 Theophilus Szczerowski
 Mrs. Theresa Szczerowski & Family
 Mrs. Eleanor Szott
 William & Pamela Szumila & Family
 Clarence & Alice Tadajewski
 Gerald & Evelyn Talaska
 Gerald Talaska, Jr. & Family
 John & Perri Talaska & Family
 Dennis & Annette Taratuta
 Douglas Taratuta
 Elias Taratuta
 Mrs. Lucy Taratuta
 Daniel & Laura Themel & Family
 Louis & Maryann Urban
 Ronald & Marcia Urban
 Stephen & Georgene Urban, Jr.
 Mrs. Catherine Warminski
 Mrs. Theresa Wasilk
 Leonard & Kay Wekwert
 Louis & Theresa Wekwert
 Marvin & Gayle Wilk
 Jon & Barb Wirgau & Family
 David & Virginia Wisniewski
 Mrs. Josephine Wisniewski
 Michael & Kimberly Wisniewski & Family
 Stanley & Justine Witucki
 Mrs. Grace Woida
 Leo & Pamela Woida & Family
 Ben Woloszyk, Jr.
 Benjamin Woloszyk
 Mrs. Delphine Woloszyk
 Mrs. Edith Woloszyk
 Edwin & Alice Woloszyk
 Mrs. Eulalia Woloszyk
 James Woloszyk
 Leroy & Marcia Woloszyk
 MaryJane Woloszyk
 Paulette Woloszyk & Family
 Valentine Woloszyk
 Mrs. Virginia Woloszyk

Wayne & Peggy Woloszyk & Family
 Apolonius & Dorothy Wozniak
 Charles & Joette Wozniak & Family
 Edmund & Bernice Wozniak
 Frank Wozniak
 Gary & Marie Wozniak & Family
 Gordon & Anita Wozniak & Family
 Mrs. Helen [Bernard] Wozniak
 Mrs. Helen [Casimir] Wozniak
 Joseph & Evelyn Wozniak
 Kenneth & Virginia Wozniak & Family
 Leonard & Margaret Wozniak
 Mary Ellen Wozniak
 Raymond & Loretta Wozniak
 Stanley & Virginia Wozniak
 Mark Wyrembelski
 Raymond Wyrembelski
 Sylvester & Kay Wyrembelski
 Clarence & Angeline Yarch
 Fred & Eileen Zaborney
 Joseph & Sally Zaborney & Family
 Peter & Terry Zaborney & Family
 Philip John & Elaine Zaborney & Family
 Philip & Gertrude Zaborney
 Stanley & Virginia Zaborney
 William & Kathy Zaborney & Family
 Mrs. Martha Zajkowski
 Peter & Therese Zajkowski
 Theodore & Margaret Zajkowski & Family
 James & Maryann Zakshesky & Family
 Robert & Laurie Zielaskowski & Family
 Mrs. Anna Zmarzlik
 Clarence & Patricia Zwolinski
 Sophie Zyracki

TEACHING THE FAITH

1875 – ST. CASIMIR SCHOOL – 1997

When considering the history of St. Casimir's one must include a look at its school's history. As early as 1875, religion was taught by the Jesuit Fr. Szulak. These sessions, lasting three hours, had to be interrupted to give the children a little rest period. During this time, Fr. Szulak would send the children in different directions to collect bugs and would reward them for their finds with holy cards.

In the spring of 1879, when he first assumed the leadership of the church Fr. Bogacki, a former Jesuit, immediately made the education of the children his priority. He taught religion and was sympathetic to the idea of establishing a school of higher learning. It was a dream ahead of its time and proved to be a divisive topic in his early pastorate.

Fr. Bogacki pioneered the first parochial school in his log cabin home. In September, 1886, Anthony Kwilinski came from Chicago to serve as sexton and teacher.



1890 First School

In 1890, at his own expense, Fr. Bogacki built a two room schoolhouse. The familiar style of school was a prototype for dozens of similar structures which would dot the countryside until modern consolidation occurred. This building, along with the future imposing two story "old

school" built by Fr. Lewandowski in 1901, would serve the educational needs of area children for almost 70 years.



1901 School

This school provided seven classrooms and living quarters for the nuns. This was necessitated by increasing school enrollment (now numbering 140) from the growing community.

It must be stated that this was the first full time school to be conducted in Posen Township, and for that matter, the only school for many years was the parochial school. The "old school," which offered so many pleasant memories to three generations, would stand as a living monument to Fr. Lewandowski and the hard working farmers.

Because the priests, as well as the parents, insisted on a Catholic education for the children, and since long distances required to get to school were a burden, a boarding facility was instituted by Fr. Lewandowski in 1904. An excellent portrait of boarding school days by Ann Bruski appears in the St. Casimir School Centennial Issue of 1986. Children ate meals, slept, and shared chores during the week and spent only weekends at home. These arrangements continued also in the "new school" until 1948, when buses provided daily transportation home.



The Felician Sisters
1895-1918

In 1895, the Felician order of Sisters came to Posen and took charge of the education of the children. The first staff included: Sister M. Junipera, Mother Superior and Principal, Sister M. Simeona, teacher, and Sister M. Laurentia, convent housekeeper. This Polish Order first came to America in 1874, at the insistence of Fr. Joseph Dabrowski, universally acknowledged as the founder of parochial schools in Wisconsin, and later in Michigan, as pastor of St. Adalbert Church in Detroit. He also established the Felician Motherhouse, novitiate, and normal school, which many young women of the parish attended to become nuns. He later also established a similar school to educate Polish speaking youth for the priesthood at SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Orchard Lake which continues until this day.

A large two story convent was built in 1914 to accommodate the nuns whose numbers increased to teach the large parish school.

Education was at a cross roads when Fr. Koss became pastor in 1915. The automobile was quickly changing the world forever. Enrollments at the school increased as another generation took over the tilling of the land and began families of their own in the tradition of their immigrant parents. This meant change and expansion which are inevitably accompanied by difficulty and opposition.

The Mercy Sisters
1919-1984



The Felician Sisters ended their 24 years of teaching at St. Casimir's when Fr. Koss invited

the Sisters of Mercy, founded in Dublin to take over the school in 1919.

Sister M. Stanislaus (Jeleniowski), remembered well by her students, recalls her early (1923) days at Posen: "Sixty years ago, the day after my reception in August, Rev. Mother Thomas took me to Posen to teach. I was a novice, only 19 years old, and hardly able to handle my new religious garb. I was one of the pioneers. We traveled to Rogers City where Fr. Skowronski met us and drove us to Posen. Awaiting us were S.M. Luke, principal, SS.M. Purissima, Hyacinth, Anthony, and Antoinette whom I was replacing. The school, which served also as a convent and church, was "handmade." Living was not easy. A classroom became our convent with the center for our community room. One side served as a bedroom for three and two had private rooms, such as they were, on the other side. The heat could not be regulated and on cold winter days S.M. Anthony would wrap herself in newspapers to keep warm. There were boarders and when they arrived by wagon on Monday they also brought their food. S.M. Anthony cooked for all 40 (50 in winter) as well as for the Sisters with about the same food for all. It was our duty to take care of the boarders who had two rooms upstairs, one for the boys and one for the girls. In April of that year, we moved to the home of the organist but two Sisters had to continue to sleep in the school during the week. Despite the hardships, I was happy that year. I loved the children and admired those hard-working Polish farmers who shared their products with us. They were devoted, loved their land, and wanted their children to have a religious education."

Fr. Koss was a visionary who perceived the need for higher education. Like Moses, however, he would not see the high school for which he so ardently labored.

Fr. Leonard Kwasigroch replaced Fr. Koss in 1931, and the following year, the 9th grade was taught for the first time.

With the inception of High School classes, there began a unique era in the history of St. Casimir school. The Posen Unit School Board, whose members included Stanley Roznowski,

Anthony Wozniak, Joseph Woida, and John L. Konwinski, leased two classrooms from St. Casimir parish, and in 1933 hired the nuns to teach the now expanded two years of high school. Students finishing the 10th grade and wishing to continue in High School had to travel to Alpena to graduate.

Thus, the High School in Posen was always a public school, but it was housed in parish facilities, an arrangement that was permitted by the State Department of Instruction. This is referred to as an "only in Posen" situation because other than the alliance of God with the Jewish people in the Old Testament, nowhere were church and community more closely identified together than in Posen. They were one and the same with no separation or distinction.

On June 9, 1941, *The Alpena News* carried the picture and story of the first graduating class of Posen High which it mistakenly headlined "St. Casimir High School".

Fr. Casimir Szyper, who came to Posen in 1935, was also was a firm believer in the tenets of Fr. Szulak. Both priests placed great importance on the religious education of children. He personally taught religion daily to the children, to the High School before 9 a.m. (to satisfy growing objection to religious instruction in a publicly leased building), and to the elementary grades at 11 a.m.

The construction of the magnificent new school in 1939 still stands as a monument to the saintly Fr. Szyper.

The modern six classroom building with gymnasium and kitchen cost \$75,562.72. His *Sprawozdanie Finansowe* (Financial Report) for 1939 shows that he donated \$500.00 of his \$1,200.00 salary toward the building fund, and that only \$28,000.00 was borrowed to pay for the school. This project, as well as the building of the new convent in 1949, he personally supervised, often rolling up his sleeves to save labor costs. Many of the parishioners followed his example and donated labor and materials.

The High School situation, however, was not resentment free. Some complained that the Church did not belong in state run schools which prompted the Department of Instruction in Lansing to tighten safety standards and in general to cause erosion in Posen's closely knit structure of school and community.

It started when Township school board secretary, Myron Konwinski, also assumed the role of acting superintendent to satisfy state officials. Soon afterwards, in 1950, the first fulltime lay superintendent, Frank Gruenwald, took over to the chagrin of the all nun faculty. They had served as mothers, teachers, and administrators for many years and were now being replaced. Renato Mauti succeeded Gruenwald, but by then the groundwork for consolidation had begun.



In 1955, no nuns were on the High School staff and the Posen Consolidated School District #9 was formed from Posen, Pulawski, and parts of Metz and Krakow Townships. In 1957, Andrew Budnik dismantled Fr. Bogacki's two room schoolhouse and Fr. Lewandowski's 1901 brick school.

Seventeen graduating classes, 213 students (34 female and 79 male), would call St. Casimir High their Alma Mater. The 1958 class of Posen High was the first to graduate from the newly constructed public school at the northern village limits. The excellent working relationship, however, between parochial and public schools would continue in an "only in Posen" environment.

Elementary education, in the meantime, continued and flourished under the competent direction of the Sisters of Mercy. As many as 10 nuns taught at St. Casimir's in the 1940's. This influenced the decision by the parish to erect a new convent in 1949. It proved to an unnecessary venture because the nuns involvement in education began to decrease almost immediately.



New Convent and present CYC

Lay persons began to staff the parish school in 1950. Eight grades were taught in 1958, but the following two years saw the departure of the 1st and 2nd grades because of lack of classroom space. Since 50 students per class were not uncommon, the existing structure was able to accommodate only six grades. Fr. Szyper's dream of adding a second story to the new school for high school classes was also destined to go unfulfilled.

The faith of the original settlers persisted as evidenced by the insistence of parents to main-

tain and staff a parochial school. The discipline of the nuns, the excellence of curriculum, plus the permeation of religion throughout the educational process convinced parishioners to shoulder increasing educational costs.

The zeal, hard work, and loyalty of the St. Casimir Rosary Sodality has always been evident in the parish's history. This group of dedicated women provided financial support for the school and parish through its many functions, such as: summer chicken dinners, Christmas bazaars, paczki sales and Festival potato pancake dinners. They have been and continue to be a shining example of commitment and sacrifice.

As teaching Sisters became less available, religious education now was to be imparted by the laity. Initially, five ladies of the parish attended Confraternity of Christian Doctrine teacher classes to teach religion to the children who attended public schools. Many other dedicated parishioners followed and continue the tradition today.

In 1974, there were only two teaching sisters at St. Casimir school. Fr. Mulka's arrival in 1980 witnessed increasing diocesan regulations, skyrocketing costs, and advancing computer technology which put a heavy burden on the existence of a parochial school. The lack of employment for child-bearing aged couples, and the trend of having fewer children per family were additional factors which contributed to further declines in enrollments.

In 1984, The Sisters of Mercy withdrew from the school, thus ending 65 glorious years in Posen. Mary Ann Palacios became the first lay principal, followed by James Leinbach.

The parish celebrated the 100th anniversary of St. Casimir School on May 18, 1986. Centennial chairman, David Shafto, remarked: "The centennial is an occasion for all of us to tap our roots and draw inspiration and courage from parents, grandparents and great grandparents. They made far greater sacrifices than the present generation when you compare what they accomplished in proportion to their means. It is also, in fact, an opportunity to give thanks, to give praise, and to give of ourselves in such a way as to honor those pioneers who had the foresight

to provide us with a Catholic education."

Hundreds of alumni gathered to reminisce about the "good old days," perhaps sensing the impending end, and wishing to prolong the glorious days of life at St. Casimir school.

In 1996, after much study and a series of meetings with parishioners, the difficult, but necessary, decision was made to close the school at the end of the 1997 school year. The student body, numbering 39, was assimilated by the Posen Consolidated Elementary school in the fall of 1997.

St. Casimir School's 111 year history was over. Its long and proud history, however, will remain forever as a testimonial to the dedicated pastors, Sisters, lay teachers, and fathers and mothers who sacrificed to provide for the Catholic education of their children.

The school building is now used for classes by the Religious Education Program and for various parish functions. It continues to stand in our midst as a legacy of our Polish Catholic ancestors.

Women of the parish and their respective Religious Orders:

FELICIAN SISTERS

S.M. Canuta (Frances Kieliszewski)	S.M. Emiliana (Mary MacFalda)
S.M. Bonfilia (Helen MacFalda)	S.M. Miloslawa (Anna Konwinski)
S.M. Rita (Frances Koss)	S.M. Joanetta (Mary Koss)
S.M. Bruno (Theresa Koss)	S.M. Pius (Julia Romel)
S.M. Deporres (Angela Lewandowski)	S.M. Cyrilla (Bernice Konwinski)
S.M. Clarita (Elizabeth Wozniak)	S.M. Martin (Emily Lewandowski)
S.M. Zerefyna (Mary Szczersowski)	

MERCY SISTERS

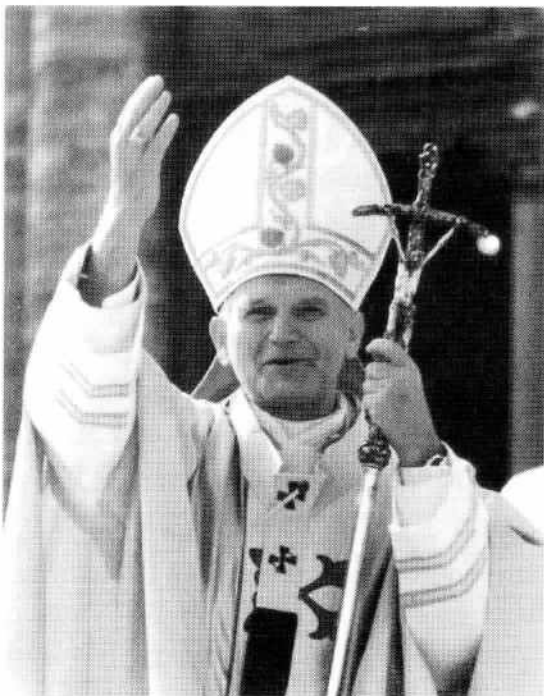
S.M. Arthur (Frances Purol)
S.M. Flavian (Elizabeth Reisner)
S.M. Lois (Lois Wozniak)
S.M. Michaeline (Michaeline Lewandowski)

DOMINICAN SISTERS

Sister Tereska (Mary Wozniak)

Two men of the parish are Brothers of the Order of St. Francis:

Brother Benedict (Jerome Kuznicki)
Brother Julian (Richard Zapczynski)



Joannes Paulus pp II

The First Polish Pope – John Paul II

In this year of 2004, we celebrate the 125th anniversary of the establishment of our parish of St. Casimir. As we celebrate this milestone of our Catholic family, Pope John Paul II, the 264th successor of St. Peter, and the first Polish Pope, leads God's People into the third millennium with its unique challenges.

Karol J. Wojtyla, known as Pope John Paul II since his election to the papacy in 1978, was born in Wadowice, a small city 33 miles from Cracow, on May 18, 1920. He was the second of two sons born to Karol Wojtyla and Emilia Kaczorowska. When Karol was 9 years old, his mother died. He would lose the remaining members of his family by the time he was 21 years old. His elder brother Edmund, a doctor, died in 1932, and his father, a non-commissioned army officer, died in 1941.

At the age of 9, Karol received his First Holy Communion, and he was confirmed at age 18. Upon graduation from Marcin Wadowita high school in Wadowice in 1938, he enrolled in Cracow's Jagiellonian University, pursuing studies in drama.

The Nazi occupation forces closed the university in 1939, and young Karol had to work in a quarry (1940-1944) and then in the Solvay chemical factory to earn his living and to avoid deportation to Germany. Karol would continue his studies and acting clandestinely [he was one of the pioneers of the Rhapsodic Theatre]. During this time, he was also active in the UNIA, a Christian democratic underground organization. B'nai B'rith and other authorities have testified that he was involved in helping Jews find refuge from the Nazis.

Karol had developed a love of the theater and for a time it was his ambition to study literature and become a professional actor. These plans were derailed by a dawning awareness of a call to priesthood. In 1942, responding to the call of God, Karol began his studies for the priesthood. These studies took place in an underground seminary in Cracow because during the Nazi occupation, seminaries were not permitted to operate.

After the end of the Second World War, Karol continued his studies for the priesthood, and was ordained a priest in Cracow on November 1, 1946. Soon after, Cardinal Sapieha, the archbishop of Cracow, sent him to Rome where he worked under the guidance of the French Dominican, Garrigou-Lagrange. He finished his doctorate in theology in 1948, with the focus of his thesis being faith in the works of St. John of the Cross. During these years, his vacation time was spent ministering to the Polish immigrants of France, Belgium and Holland.

Karol Wojtyla returned to Poland in 1948, and was vicar of various parishes in Cracow as well as chaplain for the university students until 1951, when he resumed his studies in philosophy and theology. Later he became professor of moral theology and social ethics in the major seminary of Cracow, and was on the Faculty of Theology of Lublin. In 1958, Father Wojtyla was named auxiliary bishop of Cracow, and on January 13, 1964, he was nominated Archbishop of Cracow by Pope Paul VI, who made him a cardinal on June 26, 1967, at the unusually young age of 46. As both bishop and cardinal, Karol Wojtyla was a visible leader, often taking a public stand against communism and government officials. Also, by this time, several of his poems and writings had been published including *Easter Vigils and Other Poems*.

Cardinal Wojtyla was a participant in the Vatican Council II which took place from 1962-65, and while residing in Cracow, he served in a number of Vatican departments. He was also involved in the consultations that preceded the publication of Pope Paul IV's encyclical on the regulation of births, *Humanae Vitae*, in 1968.

Pope Paul VI died in August of 1978, and his successor, Pope John Paul I, lived for just 33 days after his election. Another conclave was convened, and on October 16, 1978, on the second day of voting, Cardinal Wojtyla was elected pope. He chose the name John Paul II in honor of his two predecessors. He is the first Polish Pope and the first non-Italian since the Dutchman Adrian VI (1522-1523). He was the youngest (58) at the time of his election since Pius IX (1846-1878). In March 2004, he became the third longest reigning Pope in the history of the Church.

Until prevented by his infirmities, the Pope enjoyed hiking, skiing, backpacking, and kayaking. He has always had a special place in his heart for young people, and they have responded to him in kind. In 1985, he called young people to join him for the first World Youth Day celebration in Rome. These special gatherings of hundreds of thousands of youth from all over the world have continued every two years since that time. Pope John Paul II uses these opportunities to encourage young people to live the values of the Gospels and to reach out in a spirit of evangelization to their peers.

In May of 1981, Pope John Paul II was severely wounded when he was shot as he entered St. Peter's Square to address a general audience. The Pope was hospitalized for two and half months, recovering from his injuries. Two days after Christmas in 1983, following the example of Jesus who forgave his killers as he hung dying on the cross, Pope John Paul II visited his would-be assassin in prison to offer his forgiveness. The Pope has kept the contents of their conversation confidential.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of his pontificate has been his travels throughout the world, including a trip to the Holy Land. His visit to Poland in 1979 is credited with strengthening the Solidarity movement which was instrumental in bringing down Communist rule in Poland, and the ultimate dismantling of the former Soviet Union.

In his 25 years as Pope, John Paul II has issued 14 encyclicals, many other letters and exhortations, and he has also published three books : *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (October 1994); *Gift and Mystery: On the 50th Anniversary of My Priestly Ordination* (November 1996); and *Roman Tryptych - Meditations*, a book of poems (March 2003). He has canonized 476 saints and beatified 1,320 others, and has created 232 cardinals. He has presided over the celebration of the Great Jubilee Year of 2000, and even in his current physically weakened state, he presided over the Vatican Triduum [Holy Thursday-Easter] services this year.

Seeing the Pope now, it is obvious that his physical vigor has been greatly diminished. At the age of 83, the Pope has not hidden himself away from the public eye as he suffers the effects of his near assassination and the infirmities of his illness. He continues his work, impelled by a spiritual vigor which defies his physical limitations. In an age which is preoccupied with physical attractiveness, with the preservation of youth, and with the material world, John Paul II stands as a contradiction. As he lives with the afflictions of old age, his life points to another realm. His life continues to remind us of the spiritual reality which is the true identity of all human beings.

Presently, John Paul II is like a courageous traveler who is determined to arrive at his destination, whatever the cost, knowing that he cannot afford to squander his energy. Although obviously tired, he is determined not to give up. Through all the years of his papacy he has taught us how to work for Christ and his Church. Now in his old age, like Jesus, John Paul II teaches us how to die. He teaches us how to bear our sufferings in union with Christ, and how to accept the many limitations and weaknesses of ill health and of old age. His life points to the eternal life that awaits each one of us when our journey on this earth has been completed.

SPREADING THE FAITH

1789 – ST. CASIMIR CHURCH – 2004

In looking back at our beginnings, it may be interesting to trace our Catholic Church history in the "new world," the Popes, the Bishops and its Dioceses.

QUEBEC

Early on, the French Jesuit Missionaries first explored the territories of North America, converting the Indians, and often being martyred in the process. They were under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Diocese of Quebec established by Pope Pius IX in 1674.

BALTIMORE

We trace our United States Catholic Church roots to the first American Diocese of Baltimore which was established by Pope Pius VI in 1789. The Right Reverend John Carroll was the first Bishop of that Diocese. His Episcopal authority extended from Maine to Florida, and westward from the Atlantic coast to the Mississippi River and the Louisiana Territory.

BARDSTON

In 1807, Bishop Carroll recommended to Pope Pius VII that, due to the increase of Catholics, four new Dioceses should be created. The following year, the Dioceses of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Bardston, Kentucky, were created all under the Province of the now Archbishop Carroll.

The Diocese of Bardston embraced Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and a portion of Minnesota. Father Benedict Joseph Flaget, a Sulpician Priest, reluctantly accepted the appointment as its first bishop.

CINCINNATI

The arduous travels throughout this vast territory prompted Bishop Flaget to recommend the creation of a separate Diocese for Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and the remainder of the Northwest Territory. This led to the establishment of the Diocese of Cincinnati in 1821. Fr.

Edward D. Fennwich, a Dominican priest, was consecrated its first Bishop.

DETROIT



In 1833, Michigan and Wisconsin had eight churches and four Indian missions when the Diocese of Detroit was established by Pope Gregory XVI. German-born John Frederick Rese was installed as its first Bishop. He served in that capacity for 38 years, although the Diocese was administered by Coadjutor Bishop Peter Paul LeFeuvre for 28 of those years because of the ill health of Bishop Rese.

Wisconsin detached to become the Diocese of Milwaukee in 1844, and later in 1853, Rome annexed the upper peninsula to that Diocese, leaving only the 68 counties of the lower peninsula to comprise the Diocese of Detroit.



1833 Bishop Rese 1870

1879 Bishop Burgess 1882

This brings us to 1870 and the era of our forefathers. Pope Pius IX, in his 25th year as Supreme Pontiff, appointed Bishop Caspar Henry Burgess to succeed Bishop Lefevere as the third Bishop of Detroit. Bishop Burgess was born in Germany and was serving as a priest in the Diocese of Cincinnati when he was chosen to lead the Diocese of Detroit. He was probably the first bishop to visit Posen. His years as Bishop were described as "struggling," as Detroit and in fact all of Michigan, was experiencing "growing pains."

GRAND RAPIDS



In 1882, while meeting with the Provincial Bishops of Cincinnati, Bishop Burgess proposed a division of his vast state. The five Bishops con-

curred, and Leo XII ratified the request by establishing the Diocese of Grand Rapids on May 19, 1882. It was comprised of 39 counties with the southern-most being Kent and Ottawa and the rest reaching from the Lake Michigan shores to the Straits of Mackinaw to the north, the Lake Huron coast to the east to Saginaw Bay on the south. The new Diocese was made up of 22,561 square miles.



1882 Bishop Henry Richter 1916

A German-born priest of the Diocese of Cincinnati, Henry Joseph Richter, who was ordained from the North American College in Rome, was consecrated Bishop and assumed duties as the first Bishop of the Grand Rapids Diocese at age 45. He served in that capacity for 34 years.

The Grand Rapids Diocese had 37 churches (Posen being one) and only three cities had more than one church, (Grand Rapids four, Bay City four, and Saginaw three). It also boasted seventeen Catholic Schools (again including Posen's) and a Catholic population of almost 50,000, a far cry from 50 years earlier when the first Mass was offered in the area by Father (later Bishop) Frederic Baraga. Bishop Richter heeded the church's call for the Catholic education of children by establishing 66 new parochial schools, plus the founding of St. Joseph Minor Seminary in 1909.



1916 Bishop Michael Gallagher 1918

Appointed Coadjutor of the Diocese of Grand Rapids, with rights of succession, Fr. Michael J. Gallagher was consecrated a Bishop in 1915 thus becoming the first native American to head a Michigan Diocese.

Born of Irish immigrant parents in Auburn, Michigan, Fr. Gallagher was ordained in Innsbruck, Austria in 1893, and became head of the Grand Rapids Diocese upon the death of Bishop Richter in 1916.

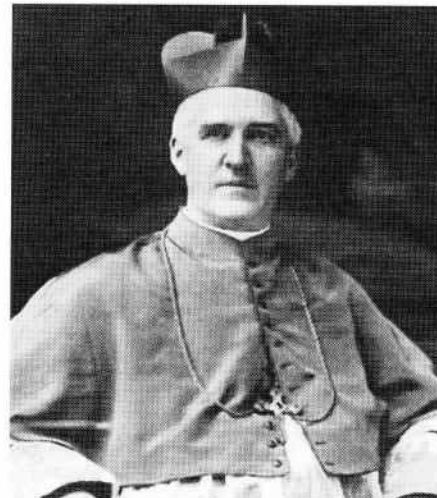
It was a short lived tenure, however, because he was appointed to fill the vacant seat in Detroit caused by the death of Bishop John Foley, the fifth Bishop of Detroit, in 1918.

Bishop Gallagher was known as the builder. During his 19 years as bishop of Detroit he established 105 parishes and the majority of Diocesan buildings, including Sacred Heart Seminary.

Edward Dionysius Kelly, born in Watervliet, Michigan in 1860, was ordained in 1885 for the Diocese of Detroit. He served for 27 years at St. Thomas parish in Ann Arbor before being consecrated auxiliary Bishop of Detroit in 1911 and named administrator of the Diocese of Detroit in 1918.

It was generally thought he would succeed Bishop Foley, but rather, Bishop Gallagher of Grand Rapids received that appointment.

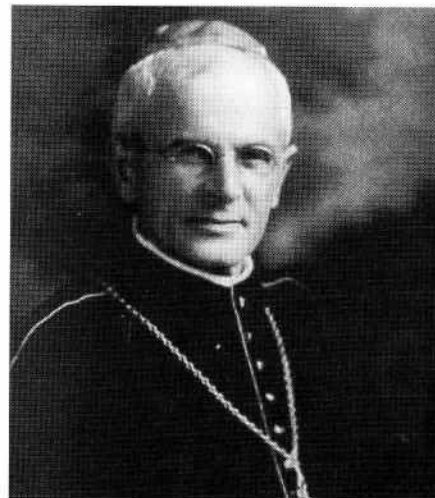
Bishop Kelly was named the third bishop of the Diocese of Grand Rapids in 1919. His Diocese numbered over 140,000 Catholics, over 128,000 Catholic School pupils with over 100 churches and missions.



1919 Bishop Edward Kelly 1926

His administration witnessed an ever expanding population which necessitated new building and expansion. Included was the relocation of St. Joseph Seminary to Burton Street in 1919. It was from here that hundreds of priests would be educated for the future Saginaw and Gaylord Dioceses during the next 60 years.

Bishop Kelly died unexpectedly in 1926 at the age of 67. He was called a prince of a man, and it was said he transformed a pioneer Diocese into one of the best organized and administered in the country.



1926 Bishop Joseph Pinten 1938

Joseph Gabriel Pinten, an Upper Peninsula native, was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Marquette. He was named Bishop of Superior, Wisconsin, in 1921, before being named to succeed Bishop Kelly in 1926.

Bishop Pinten was said to be a quiet, guarded, and retiring man who was intent on restoring strict financial practices insisted upon by his

predecessors (Bishops Borgess and Richter) but relaxed under Bishop Kelly. Providentially these frugal belt-tightening measures came just before the Stock market crash of 1929 bringing with it the Great Depression.



Vatican City State

The same year brought an end to a 59 year exile of the Popes at the Vatican. The Popes, in protest of the seizure of papal lands and buildings throughout Italy, had refused to leave the 109 acres around St. Peter's Basilica. The Lateran Treaty recognized the Pope's absolute sovereignty and independence of the Vatican City State. It allowed the Church to carry out its religious mission. That December, Pope Pius XI visited the Basilica of St. John, the cathedral church of Rome, to reclaim his seat of authority for the first time since 1870.

SAGINAW

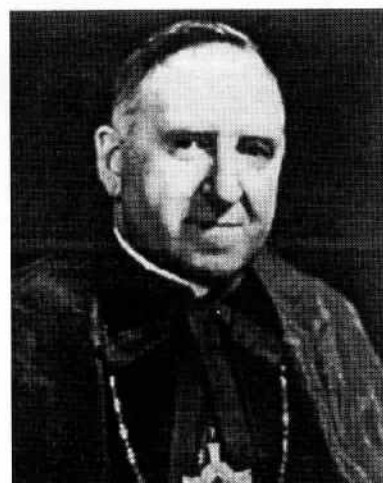


On February 26, 1938, Pope Pius XI announced the creation of a new Diocese in Michigan with the Cathedral seat at Saginaw. It was made up of 16 counties separated from the Dioceses of Grand Rapids and Detroit.

The new Saginaw Diocese stretched from Presque Isle county in the north to the thumb and Saginaw Bay in the south.

A year earlier the Diocese of Lansing had been formed and the Diocese of Marquette was joined to Michigan from Milwaukee and Diocese of Detroit was raised to an Archdiocese.

In 1946, Pope Pius XII further enhanced the Province of Michigan by elevating its Archbishop, Edward Mooney, Detroit's fifth bishop, to the rank of Cardinal, one of only four American cardinals at that time.



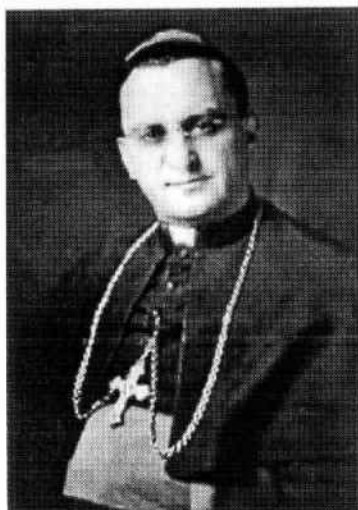
1938 Bishop William Murphy 1950

Msgr. William F. Murphy, pastor of St. David Church in Detroit, was consecrated the first Bishop of Saginaw and installed by Archbishop Edward Mooney on June 1, 1938. He was born May 11, 1885, in Kalamazoo and studied philosophy and theology in Rome where he was ordained in June, 1908.

With 100,000 Catholics and 125 priests, the new Bishop set about organizing his new Diocese. One of his most notable accomplishments was the establishment of *The Catholic Weekly* newspaper in March of 1942, which is still published today.

Another important and innovative introduction to the Diocese was the creation, in 1947, of the Mexican Apostolate. Father (later Cardinal) James A. Hickey directed the care for

the Spanish-speaking people who came each year as migrant workers from Texas. These migrants (10,000 in the Saginaw Valley), estimated to be 94% Catholic, were provided spiritual and recreational programs by priests and seminarians from April through September. It proved so successful that it attracted national attention and served as a model for migrants elsewhere in the United States. Bishop Murphy died February 7, 1950.



1950 Bishop Stephen Woznicki 1968

The Most Reverend Stephen S. Woznicki was installed as the second Bishop of Saginaw on May 25, 1950. His appointment would mark the first American of Polish decent to lead a Michigan Diocese. Born one of 10 children on August 7, 1894, in Miners Mills, Pennsylvania, he received his High School and College training at St. Mary College, Orchard Lake, Michigan, and his theology at St. Paul Seminary in Minnesota.

Ordained for the Diocese of Detroit on December 22, 1917, he served as secretary to Bishop Gallagher for 18 years. While serving as pastor of St. Hyacinth Church in Detroit, he became Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit on January 25, 1938.

As new bishop of Saginaw, Bishop Woznicki witnessed a tremendous growth of parishes, churches, schools, rectories and convents (Posen built a school, convent and rectory during this time).

Highlighting the achievements of Bishop Woznicki, was the establishment of the St. Paul Minor Seminary in Saginaw. It was opened in the

fall of 1960 at a cost of \$4,000,000. It was built to accommodate the needs of 290 seminarians.



1958 Bishop Francis Reh 1980

Upon the death of Bishop Woznicki in 1968, Bishop Francis F. Reh became the third bishop of the Saginaw Diocese.

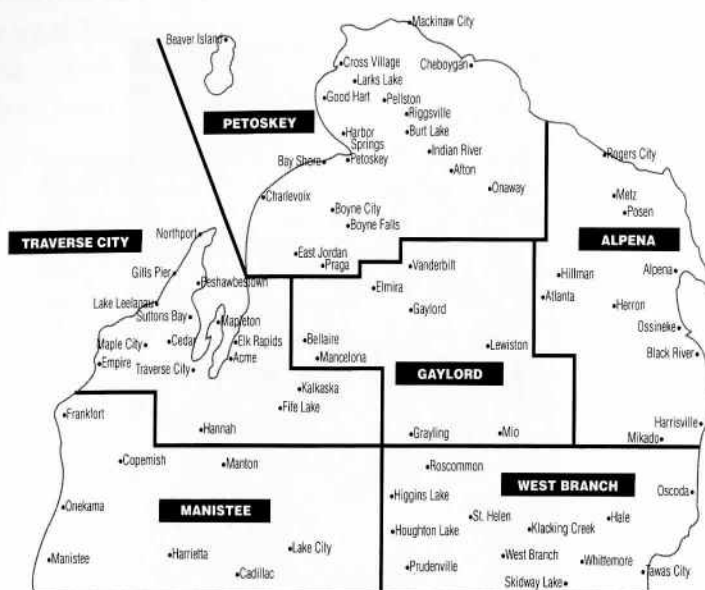
Born January 9, 1911, in New York City, Bishop Reh took his theological studies at the North American College in Rome. He was ordained there on December 8, 1935, and returned to New York following completion of graduate studies in Canon Law at the Pontifical Gregorian University.

He taught moral theology and canon law at St. Joseph Seminary in Yonkers, N.Y. for 10 years. After serving three years as Vice-Chancellor of the Archdiocese of New York, he was appointed vice rector of the North American College in Rome where he served until being named rector of St. Joseph Seminary in New York in 1958.

In 1962, Pope John XXIII named Bishop Reh the ninth bishop of the Diocese of Charleston, S.C. and he served there until 1964 when he returned to the North American College as rector. Four years later he became the third bishop of Saginaw, where he served for 11 years.

As bishop of Saginaw he organized the Diocesan Pastoral, Finance, Education and Liturgy Councils as well as dividing the diocese into 12 vicariates.

Vicariate Map of the Gaylord Diocese



GAYLORD

In 1971, Posen and all of Presque Isle County would, for the fifth time in a hundred years, become part of a newly created Diocese. In June, the 21 counties of northern lower Michigan learned they would form the Diocese of Gaylord, being made up of seven counties from Saginaw and fourteen from Grand Rapids. The area of 11,171 square miles had a population of 288,556 with 66,600 Catholics, 83 parishes and missions, 81 priests, 25 parochial schools with 6,129 pupils.

Since we, as the Gaylord Diocese, are relatively new as far as history goes and since most readers are personally acquainted with our bishops, we will present a more lengthy look at these three bishops.

Msgr. Edmund Casimir Szoka, the Vicar General of the Diocese of Marquette, at age 43, was chosen to be the first Bishop of the Gaylord Diocese by Pope Paul VI.

The new Bishop was born September 14, 1927, in Grand Rapids, the second child and first son of Polish immigrant parents. After elementary studies in Muskegon, young Szoka entered St. Joseph Seminary in Grand Rapids in 1939. There he was widely regarded as a hard working and gifted student.



1971 Bishop Edmund Szoka 1981



Upon graduation in 1948, he studied philosophy at Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit and later theology at St. John Provincial Seminary at Plymouth. Bishop Szoka's involvement in the seminary included editor of the newspaper and the *Gothic* magazine, librarian, tutoring, and master of ceremonies. Contemporaries recall him as a well organized, fun loving, intellectual giant destined for great things. St. Joseph's rector, Msgr. Thomas L. Noa, was very impressed with the bright young Szoka and became his mentor and spiritual father. Later as bishop of Marquette, he accepted him into the diocese and ordained him in 1954.

After 15 months of parish duties, he was appointed Bishop Noa's secretary with additional duties as hospital and military chaplain. Fr. Szoka accompanied his Bishop to the first session of the Vatican Council in 1962. After nine years of pastoral duties he was installed as the Bishop of Gaylord, on July 20, 1971, by John Cardinal Dearden, the sixth Archbishop of Detroit, in tiny St. Mary Church in Gaylord.

Not unlike our pioneer forefathers and his immigrant parents, Bishop Szoka was faced with a situation of starting from nothing. He had no home, no Cathedral, no office or staff. As he himself observed, "I came with myself, my car, my books, and my clothes."

Perhaps his Polish ancestry summoned up

the spirit and determination necessary to create the family of God we are today. His chosen motto, "To live in Faith," would define his efforts and symbolize the tradition brought to America by his ancestors.

His organizational skills, so well defined in the seminary, would now create a smooth running Diocese. Bishop Szoka was and is a financial wizard. His CSA collections are legend. In 10 short years, he put Gaylord "on the map" and made it the crown jewel of Michigan's seven Dioceses.

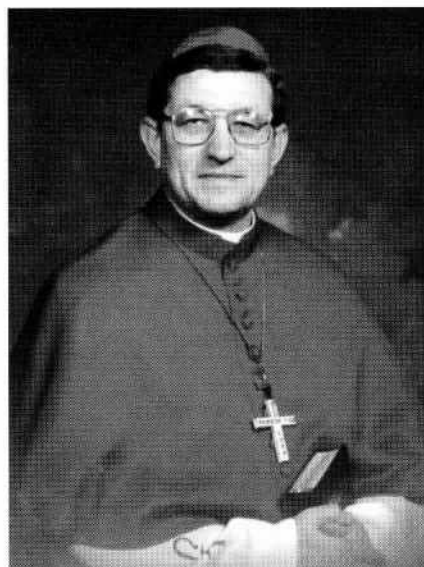
Unfortunately for the Church of Gaylord, the Holy See also took notice and in March 1981, he was summoned to Rome where, in a private audience, Pope John Paul II informed him of his appointment as Archbishop of Detroit.

This meteoric rise within the Church was, however, just beginning. He was named Cardinal in 1982. In 1990, after nine years as head of the Province of Michigan, Cardinal Szoka was called to Rome to serve as head of the Pontifical Commission of Vatican City State.

His job was to head the economic prefecture and help balance the budget. In 1997, Pope John Paul II named him head of the commission of Cardinals that govern Vatican State. As chief executive of the 109 acre world's smallest state, Cardinal Szoka oversees the affairs of the state so that everything runs smoothly. This means counting revenues, fixing buildings, implementing security measures, easing traffic flow as well as funding fire and police departments and managing 1,500 employees. He was responsible for wiring Vatican City with fiber optics and standardizing the nine different computerized book- ing systems under a single local area network.

Cardinal Szoka will celebrate the 50th anniversary of his priestly ordination this June in his native Michigan. When he submitted his mandatory resignation to the Pope at age 75 he was told, "keep working."

Our heritage connection, both ethnic and spiritual, to Cardinal Szoka make us very proud of his accomplishments and we pray for his continued success.



1981 Bishop Robert Rose 1989



On October 13, 1981, while on a three month study program in Rome, Fr. Robert J. Rose, a priest from the Grand Rapids Diocese, was informed that he was appointed the second Bishop of the Gaylord Diocese. After a private audience with Pope John Paul II, he returned home to prepare for his consecration and duties in his new Diocese.

Born Feb 28, 1930, the Bishop-elect attended St. Joseph Seminary in Grand Rapids where he excelled academically. This writer recalls with awe when, as was the custom, the seminary rector publicly read report card results twice a year before the entire assembled student body: "Robert J. Rose, Latin 100, Greek 100, Religion 100, History 100, English 100." An admiring murmur of approval always followed.

He finished philosophy at Le Grand Seminaire in Montreal, and was ordained in Rome in 1955, after studies at the Pontifical Urban College. He taught at his Alma Mater before being appointed rector of St. John's Provincial Seminary in Plymouth in 1971. In 1977, he became pastor of Sacred Heart parish in Muskegon. He was consecrated a bishop by his predecessor, Archbishop Szoka, in the new St. Mary Cathedral in Gaylord on December 6, 1981.

A soft-spoken, affable and confident man, Bishop Rose quietly strengthened the faith and commitment of the priests and laity developing their roles as people of the Church of Gaylord.

"During his leadership," writes Fr. Patrick Cawley: "the Diocese of Gaylord grew in many ways not the least of which was making the Kingdom of God a reality for all members of the church."

After eight years in "God's Country," Bishop Rose returned to his native Grand Rapids, in August 1989, to replace retiring Bishop Joseph H. Brietenbeck as the ninth Bishop of the now eleven county Grand Rapids Diocese.



1990 Bishop Patrick Cooney



Patrick R. Cooney was consecrated an Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Detroit by Edmund Cardinal Szoka on June 27, 1983.

Bishop Cooney was born in Detroit on March 10, 1934. After minor seminary classes at Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit he was sent to Rome's North American College for theology studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University and was ordained on December 20, 1959. Under Cardinal Szoka, he served as Director of Archdiocese Worship and rector of the Most Blessed Sacrament Cathedral. As a member of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, he served on several committees as well as on the Board of Governors of the North American College and Sacred Heart Seminary.

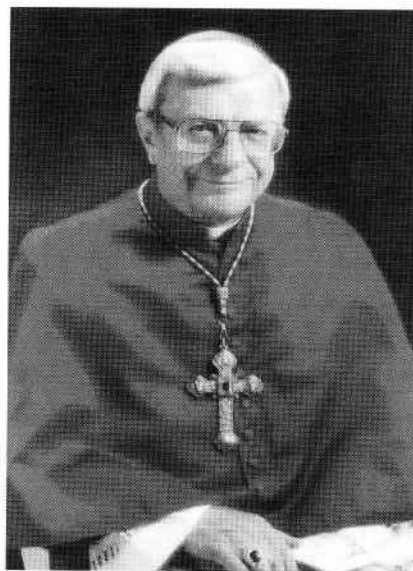
Bishop Cooney was installed as the third Bishop Of Gaylord, January 28, 1990, by his Eminence Edmund Cardinal Szoka, the first bish-

op of Gaylord.

Faced with the increasing influx of laity "up north" (87,000 in 1996), along with the decreasing and aging clergy (75 in 1996), Bishop Cooney looks to Religious Sisters and greater laity involvement to fulfill his goal to "Co-build His Kingdom."

His motto, "Forever Faithful," is not only a challenge but also a means to accomplish this dream in an ever-changing secularistic society.

The 21st century presents obstacles and situations unheard of by our forefathers. In the spirit, however, of their determination, following their example of hard work, being faithful to the moral values they imparted to us through our parents and grandparents, we will survive and succeed as they did.



1924 Bishop Kenneth Povish 2003

It would be remiss if we did not include a few words about the beloved friend of Alpena and Presque Isle counties, Bishop Kenneth J. Povish, the product of hard-working, religious and faithful immigrant stock.

Kenneth Joseph Povish was born in Alpena on April 19, 1924, the eldest child and only son of Joseph and Elizabeth (Jachcik) Povish and a grandson of Polish immigrants. As a boy he traveled often to Posen to visit relatives, and spent summers with his uncle, Julius Jachcik, then sexton of St. Casimir's. Many parishioners recall those early days spent playing with the young Povish boy on the parish grounds. His love of the north, born here in childhood, would continue

throughout his entire life. That love of the north country was only overshadowed by his love of the Church

After attending elementary school at St. Anne's, he graduated from Alpena High School in 1942. He entered St. Joseph Seminary in Grand Rapids and finished his college degree at Sacred Heart Seminary in 1946. Seminarian Povish was one of the original staff of the Saginaw Diocese Mexican Apostolate program.

Because of his excellent grades, Bishop Stephen Woznicki sent him to finish theology studies at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. and ordained him at St. Mary's Cathedral in Saginaw on June 3, in the Holy Year, of 1950.

Fr. Povish's first assignment was assistant to Fr. C. T. Skowronski at St. Ignatius's Church in Rogers City. The pastor, generally acknowledged to be very difficult on his assistants, quickly took a liking to the smart young Fr. Povish, and a friendship and admiration began which would follow them to Bay City.

It was in Rogers City that Fr. Povish became acquainted with an extended family which he fostered throughout his entire priestly life. After two years in Rogers City, he served at St. Hyacinth's in Bay City, St. Mary's in Port Sanilac, St. Norbert's in Munger, and his final pastoral assignment was at the famous Polish Church of St. Stanislaus Kostka in Bay City.

From 1966 to 1970, Fr. Povish served as the first Dean of the College department at St. Paul Seminary in Saginaw, and as instructor of Latin, History and religion.

An excellent orator, he soon became a literary figure in the state for his informative and entertaining column *The Question Box* which appeared in *The Catholic Weekly* newspaper. He often used this medium to recall his boyhood and priestly experiences in the Alpena Deanery. These references were his trademark which further endeared him to the north country.

In October, 1967, the title of Monsignor was bestowed upon Fr. Povish which was soon changed to Bishop as Pope Paul VI named him the 5th Bishop of the Diocese of Crookston, Minnesota on July 28, 1970.

Happily, Bishop Povish returned to his native Michigan to succeed the late Bishop Alaxander Zaleski on October 8, 1975, as the third Bishop of the Diocese of Lansing.

Bishop Povish's twenty year tenure epitomized his motto "To Accomplish His Work." He continued his written columns, *Grace and Peace* and *The Way, Truth and Life* until his death. In his new Diocese he created 26 offices and councils "...to foster Catholic education at all levels, ...to further expand outreach to Catholics of all races, cultures and ethnic groups, ...to spearhead formation programs for the laity (*Renew* for the laity and *Emmaus* for priests), ...to televise the Outreach Mass."

His involvement on the state and national level are well-documented, resulting in a host of awards.

The Knights of Columbus held a special place in the heart of Bishop Povish. His annual trek to Mackinac Island for the state convention was welcomed not only by the Lansing delegates but those of the entire state.

Colon cancer forced Bishop's retirement in 1994, when he moved to nearby Dewitt. In June of 2000, writes his biographer: "Bishops, religious and faithful celebrated his 50th anniversary of ordination as a priest and the 30th anniversary of his consecration as Bishop. His faith in encountering the recurrent cancer in 2000 and 2002, and the way in which he faced death, has taught us much about facing life. He was born into eternal life on September 5, 2003."

Bishop Povish was a prince among men. His down-to-earth, common sense approach to all his endeavors endeared him to people of all walks of life. His ability to relate to commonplace events, coupled with a flair for oratory made him a popular speaker.

We mourn his loss, but feel enriched by the way he touched our lives with his humor, his holiness, and his humanity.

St. Casimir of Poland

Casimir was the second son of King Casimir IV and Elizabeth of Poland. He was born in 1458, one of thirteen children. As a prince, Casimir was expected to help his father, the king, increase Poland's power through war, as well as through an arranged marriage that would give Poland more territory and more power.

However, from an early age, Casimir knew that his life belonged, not to his father or to Poland, but to God. Casimir's tutor was a holy man, and it was from him that Casimir developed his commitment to God. God was the center of Casimir's life from an early age. Despite pressure, humiliation, and rejection, he stood by that loyalty throughout his whole life.

It may be hard for us to imagine royal luxury as a burden. But for Casimir, the riches around him were temptations to forget his true loyalty or dedication to God. Rebelling against the rich, fashionable clothes he was expected to enjoy, he wore plain, simple clothes like the ordinary people. Rejecting even ordinary comforts, he slept little, spending his nights in prayer. And when he did sleep, he slept on the floor, rather than on a royal bed. Many of those around him laughed at him, but Casimir refused to change his ways.

As a young man, Casimir's father, the king, sent Casimir to lead an army to take over the throne of Hungary--a neighboring country-- at the request of some nobles there. Casimir felt the whole expedition was wrong, but he was convinced to go out of obedience to his father. When soldiers in his army began to desert, Casimir was only too glad to listen to the advice of his officers and turn back home to Poland.

Unfortunately for Casimir, a very different response awaited him upon his return to Poland. Casimir's father was furious that his plans to conquer Hungary had failed; he banished Casimir to a castle in another part of Poland, hoping that imprisonment would change Casimir's mind. However, Casimir's commitment to what he believed was right only grew stronger in his exile. He refused to cooperate with any more of his father's plans despite continuing pressure to give in to what his father wanted him to do. Casimir also rejected a marriage alliance his father tried to set up for him. Instead, he devoted his time to God, his true King, praying, studying, and helping the poor.

Casimir died at the age of 26 on March 4, 1484, from a lung disease while visiting in the neighboring country of Lithuania. He was buried in Lithuania, and named a saint in 1604. He was buried with his favorite song, a Latin hymn to Mary called "Omni die dic Mariae" which we know as "Daily, Daily Sing to Mary." Because of his love for the song, it is known as the Hymn of St. Casimir although he didn't write it.

St. Casimir's feast day is March 04. St. Casimir is patron saint of Poland and Lithuania. St. Casimir has a special place in the hearts of all Poles. St. Casimir, as the patron saint of our parish, is one of our special guides on our journey here on earth.

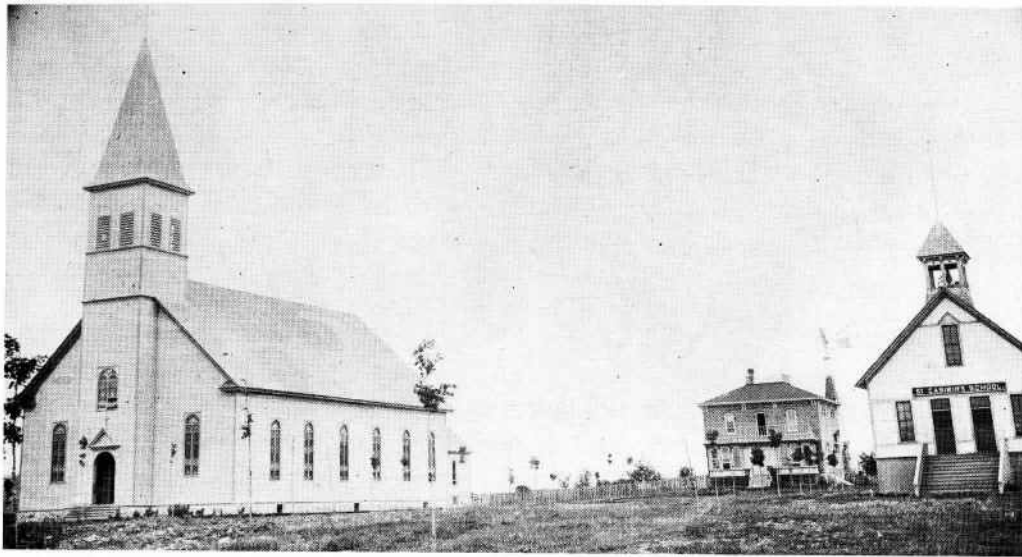
St. Casimir, by the example of his life, teaches us that:

- ◆ we should always see ourselves as God's servants first; that even when others pressure us to do something that we don't want to do, or something that is wrong, we should always choose what God wants;
- ◆ we should think of others, especially those who are poor or in need in any way, and do what we can to help them;
- ◆ if we choose to follow the way of Jesus with our whole heart, we may experience opposition and ridicule from others, including from family members and friends;
- ◆ if we are true to our Catholic beliefs and moral convictions, we will have a place in God's Kingdom for all eternity.



OLD ST. CASIMIR CHURCH INTERIOR

125 Years of St. Casimir Parish





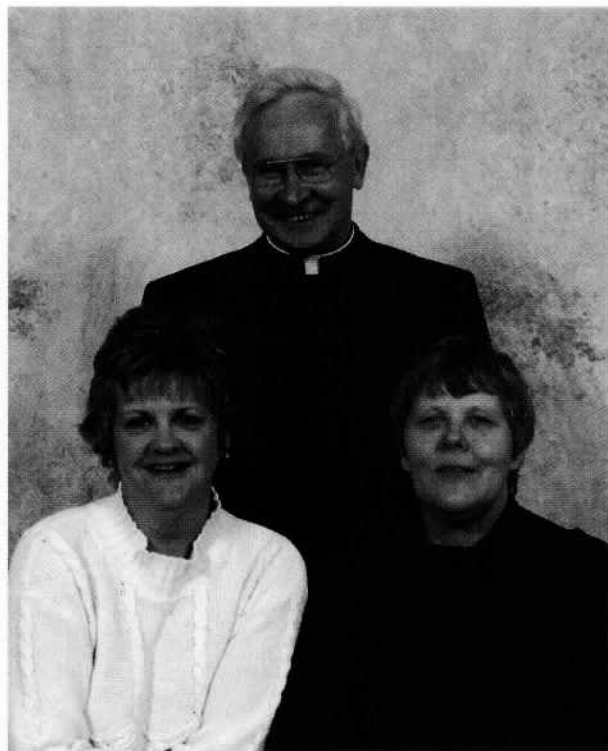
Finance Council: Fr. Stan Bereda, Julian Mulka, Gerald Donajkowski, Walter Roznowski, Bernard Soik. Not Present: Daniel Budnick, Mitchell Mulka & David Purgiel.



Pastoral Council: Joan Grohowski, Denyse Romel, Bernice Krajniak, Roger Chojnacki, Fr. Stan Bereda. Not present: Denise Beland, Kathy Kaszubowski, Edward Perrault.



Evangelization Commission: Virginia Cline, Clarence Zwolinski, Patricia Zwolinski, Jack Cline, Fr. Stan Bereda. Not present: Susan Sobek.



Religious Education Commission: Kathy Zaborney, Joan Chappa, Fr. Stan Bereda. Not present: Kathleen Bruski, Denise Julian, Doris Ponik.



Worship Commission: Ann Ramsay, Catherine Swan, Paula Orban, Alex Ramsay, Fr. Stan Bereda. Not present: Connie Peters.



Religious Education Teachers and Aides: front row from left to right: Dorothy Romel, Sally Zaborney, Janet Misiak, Kathleen Purol, Kathy Zaborney. Back row: Joan Chappa, David Misiak, Catherine Swan, Ernest Romel, Paula Orban, William Zaborney, Denyse Romel. Not Present: Denise Beland, Mary Hentkowski, Doris Ponik, Denice Romel.



2004 Confirmation and First Eucharist

Front Row, left to right: Adam Pieczynski, Zachary Beland, Anthony Rasmussen, Kendall Hirschman, Natalie Przbyla; Second Row left to right: Michael Freske, Nicholas Hincka, Anthony Freske, Austin Sharpe, Chelsea Schuch, Ashley Meyers; Third Row, left to right: John Zaborney, Zachary Smigelski, Dasha Sedlow, Korynn Hincka; Back Row: catechists, Joan Chappa and Kathy Zaborney, with Fr. Stan Bereda.

ST.
CASIMIR
CATHOLIC CHURCH

10075

MASS SCHEDULE

SATURDAY 5:00 PM

SUNDAY 8:00 & 10:30 AM

COME & PRAY

