In 1900 there were about thirty-five Polish families in Lawrence and its suburbs. These first Poles fled from the country of their parents, because in their homeland their freedoms were curtailed. The human being, no matter what language he or she speaks, resents this, especially if the attach is on its freedom of religion.

There is no wonder then that our first Polish Lawrencians turned their attention to the Church of their own faith — to the Roman Catholic Church, the one and only true Church of Christ. From their very existence as a nation, as an independent country (and that goes back to the tenth century), the religion of the Poles was that of the Roman Catholic Church.

Knowing very well the commandment of God — to keep holy the Sabbath day — they obeyed this Divine order according to the directions of the Church of Christ. They attended the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in different churches of their choice, which existed at that time in Lawrence. They especially frequented the former St. Lawrence Church, which is now that of Holy Rosary.
Our first Poles, however, were quite dissatisfied with the situation that existed at this time. They wanted to have their own church with priests speaking their own language. The first step in this direction was a meeting, held at the home of the late Michael Dziadosz. The result of that meeting was to extend an invitation to the Pastor of Our Lady of Chestochowa parish of South Boston, the Rev. John Chmielinski, to preside over another meeting which took place shortly thereafter.

This meeting was held in Ford's Hall on Oak Street, at which Father Chmielinski was the speaker. Twenty-eight Poles attended this meeting which resulted in the formation of the first Polish society in Lawrence — the Society of St. Joseph. The officers of this society were: Michael Dziadosz, president; Adam Winiarczyk, secretary; Francis Indyk, financial secretary; and Adalbert Warzala, treasurer.

During these days, Polish priests out of South Boston rendered spiritual services to these first organized Poles. Among these were the Revs. John Chmielinski, John Duda, Rev. Ogonowski, and John Rothenburger, a Jesuit.

In August of 1902, these first organized Poles began collecting monies in order to build a church of their own. This continued until 1905 when finally these first energetic Poles saw their dream come true — a Polish Roman Catholic Church was built, that of Holy Trinity, on the corner of Avon and Trinity Streets.

The first pastor of the parish was Father Francis Wojtanowski. Prior to his coming to Lawrence, Father Wojtanowski was stationed in Holy Cross Church in Trenton, New Jersey, where he became pastor shortly after his arrival from Poland in 1902. He arrived in Lawrence in December of 1904, and on February 5, 1905, the church was dedicated to the Most Holy Trinity.

The present rectory was built in 1907. Prior to this, Father Wojtanowski lived in the corner house on Lawrence and Fitz Streets — the lower floor of which is presently occupied by the Louis Dempsey Barber Shop.

Father Wojtanowski, though burdened as he was with various parish problems, undertook the task of building a parish school. His foresight is to be admired, as should also the courage of those pioneers who were so willing to make additional sacrifices towards a new school. For this purpose, more property was purchased, and upon it the first floor of the new parochial school was completed and blessed in 1915 by Cardinal O'Connell.

The first nuns who staffed the school were the Felician Sisters. At first, they lived in a home which was built on Belmont Street at the foot of Durant Street. Better quarters, however, were provided for them in October of 1917 by Father Wojtanowski, who bought the former Hannah Murphy property at 51 Avon Street and had it remodeled into a sisters' convent.

This was the last of the many good works that Father Wojtanowski accomplished before his long illness and death. He died on August 25, 1919, after having been a priest for twenty-eight years.
On May 20, 1919, the jurisdiction of the parish was placed in the hands of the Franciscan Fathers, with Father Adalbert Topolinski, appointed by Cardinal O'Connell, as the administrator, and Father Michael Drzewucki as curate.

In 1921, the Felician Sisters were recalled to their motherhouse and in their place, in August of this same year, came the Franciscan Sisters. The second and third floors of the school were also completed in this year.

In 1923, Father Anthony Witkowski succeeded Father Bonaventure as pastor, and his curate was Father Bernard Gwitt.

When Father Anthony left in February of 1928, Father Peter Hajna took his place. During his twenty years of pastorship, Father Peter labored much with his curates to pay off the debt that still existed when he arrived. Not only did he erase the debt of about fifty thousand dollars, but managed the parish so well, that about twenty-five thousand dollars were in the treasury when he left. It was during his time that the two grottoes were erected — one of the Blessed Virgin and the other of St. Theresa. He introduced many other external improvements.

Father Peter Hajna left Holy Trinity in September of 1948. On September 17th of this year, Father Method Szymanski, the present pastor, arrived to take over the pastorship of the Parish, as assigned by his superiors.

The tact and administrative ability of Father Method speak well of his fatherly concern in behalf of his parishioners. One need only enter the church, of which he is pastor today, and one will be convinced that this is true.

The Golden Jubilee of Holy Trinity parish will be the more remembered because of the newly repainted and redecorated church. This alone shows the pleasant and artistic taste that Father Method has for the finer things in life.

A new and beautiful bronze wrought iron altar rail has been installed to further enhance the beauty of the church. A modern and artistic Way of the Cross replaced the old set of Stations. A bronze wrought iron pulpit, to match the altar rail, has been introduced to the sanctuary proper. A public address system has been installed for the convenience of both the priests and the people. Plans are also in the making for a liturgical baptistery, which will be erected in the vestibule of the church.

Truly indeed must it be said, that Father Method Szymanski transformed Holy Trinity Church in 1955!

Great were the labors and sacrifices of our predecessors. God did not overlook their love for church. He crowned it with success. Wherefore, to them we are thankful, because it is they who made this Golden Jubilee possible. Let long live their memory! Let their labors and success be examples for us!

Above all, let us celebrate this Golden Jubilee in humility and with gratitude towards God. Without God nothing is possible; with God and for God all things are possible.
Many significant changes have taken place at Holy Trinity School since 1955.

Due to a tremendous increase in enrollment over the years, it was necessary to change the double grades into single ones. A shortage of sisters made it necessary, in March of 1957, to bring to the staff at Holy Trinity, our first lay teacher. At the present time, our faculty consists of five dedicated lay teachers and five Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph.

In 1965 the Holy Trinity School Mother's Guild was formed with the sole purpose of aiding the Pastor and the Principal financially with the upkeep of the school. During the same year, the library in our school was opened. This room now contains over four thousand books geared to all grade levels. The school also boasts of a well-equipped audio-visual room.

In 1969, the Parish Development Fund was initiated to help finance upkeep and repair of the Parish property. Bingo was also introduced to help defray school operating costs. From this time, a great number of changes took place.

In conjunction with Vatican II, the sanctuary of the church was completely changed. The interior of the church was redecorated by painting and carpeting. In addition, all Parish buildings were painted and the school playground area was hot-topped for a much needed parking area. With the proceeds from Bingo, the school hall was completely renovated.

The Title 1 program was brought to Holy Trinity in 1970 with the purpose of helping any child who has a problem in either reading or mathematics. At present, the Title 1 staff consists of two teachers and four teacher’s aides.

In 1977, the St. Theresa shrine was replaced with a new shrine to St. Anthony of Padua. With the dedication taking place on June 18, 1978, an outdoor Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Humberto Medeiros, followed by an outdoor picnic and dance, which was well attended.

In 1978 new windows were installed in the entire school building and shortly thereafter, a new heating system. Through contributions of the Holy Name Society and the Parents’ Guild, all the classrooms were painted and new tiled floors were installed by a few dedicated Holy Name members.

At present, the enrollment is two-hundred and sixty-seven students. Of this number, approximately ninety-six families are parishioners and ninety-two families are non-parishioners. Recent test results have shown that many of our students rank within the eleventh percentile, nationwide.

In 1980, we began renovation of the church, convent and rectory with vinyl siding. This project will be completed in 1981.

Due to the foresight of our predecessors, continued changes and improvements will be made in the coming years. Thanks to a good Parish Development Fund, we should be able to handle whatever changes are necessary in future years.
In closing, let us thank God for all His help in all our material successes. However, let us pray for a spiritual rebirth, not only in our Parish but throughout the world, that we may be able to love one another in all our works and thank God for all His goodness.
Past Pastors

Legend
7. 1957-1961
8. 1961-1962
9. 1962-1969
10. 1969-1976
11. 1976-1979
12. 1979-Present

Stephen Musielak

Felicjan Plichta

Theophilus Kujawa

Emil Majchrzak

Felix Brackowski

Edward Kurdzlei
First Pastor and First Assistant

1st Pastor 1905-1919
Fr. Francis Wojtanowski

1st Assistant 1917 to 1919
Rev. John Dudzik
Former Curates

Rev. Michael Drzewski — 1919-1922
Rev. Marlon Weron — 1922-1923
Rev. Francis Wilejta — 1925-1928
Rev. Bruno Dobala — 1928-1931
Rev. Alex Podsladko — 1931-1932
Rev. Vincent Grucela — 1932-1933
Rev. Fabian Zator — 1933-1940
Former Curates

Rev. Edwin Agonis — 1942-1943

Rev. Stanley Polowarczyk — 1943-

Rev. Charles Porada — 1943-1949

Rev. Adrian Paszek — 1943-1944

Rev. Thomas Nowak — 1944-1946

Rev. Felix Mazur — 1946-1947

Rev. Andrew Skiba — 1947-1954
Former Curates

Rev. James Bibrzycki — 1949-1955

Rev. Adalbert Sroka — 1954-1958

Rev. Oderic Palys — 1955-1957

Rev. Benuemute Gorczyca — 1958-1959

Rev. Ephrem Andraka — 1959-1968

Rev. Dennis Bizmlak — 1961-
Former Curates

Rev. Sixtus Wawrzaszek — 1968-1973

Rev. Thomas Gwozdz — 1972-1973
Rev. Camillus Blaszczak — 1973-
Rev. Francis L. Pilor — 1973-

Rev. Romulus Rosolowski — 1976-77
Local Vocations

Bronislaus Swiszcz
Edward Kostrzewa
Claude Iskrzak
Francis Pilor
Cassian Zembruski
Valerian Czywil
Local Vocations

Alfred Stopyra

David Stopyra

Conrad Salach

Martin Kobos

Charles Kinsella

Timothy Fleming
Local Vocations

Sr. Sophie Jurczak

Sr. Mary Anice Jarosz  Sr. Edna Marie Pelczar  Sr. Ann Mary Lyons
Holy Trinity Parish - designated for Polish immigrants in Lawrence, Massachusetts, United States.

Founded 1905. It was one of the Polish-American Roman Catholic parishes in New England in the Archdiocese of Boston.

The parish closed November 1, 2004.