



## **History of St. Barbara R.C. Church of Houtzdale, PA** CAP at Orchard Lake.

According to Father Houst's Church History, the majority of the Polish and Slavish immigrants came to this area from Europe in the period from 1880 to 1890.

They joined the English speaking Catholics of the newly-formed St. Lawrence Parish under the pastorate of the Rev. Martin Meagher, and continued as members of that parish until 1892.

Because of the language barrier and the increase in the Polish population, it became evident that a Polish Roman Catholic Church was necessary to reach the people in their native tongue. To this end a new Catholic Parish of St. Barbara, the patron saint of coal miners, was formed in 1892, with Rev. Sigismund Suszczynski as Pastor.

The new congregation met for a short time in a store across from the Madigan Store on Brisbin Street. Finally in 1892 a wood framed church was erected on the corner of Clara and George Streets and St. Barbara's was dedicated by the Rt. Rev. Tobias Mullen in 1892.

For a short time the Slovaks joined the new parish, but when the first Slovak Union was formed they separated, amicably, to form the Congregation of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

A second church was built in 1899 during the pastorate of the Rev. Joseph Karpiński, when the original was destroyed by fire. This church was rebuilt in 1904 when Rev. Severin Niedbalski was Pastor. On both occasions the Rt. Rev. Bishop John Fitzmaurice officiated at the dedication.

In 1893 St. Joseph's of Osceola Mills was established as a mission of St. Barbara's and continued as such for nearly forty years. During this time St. Barbara's Cemetery was opened in Brisbin, and a social hall was built on Mary and George Streets. A new brick rectory was built on Clara Street in the forties.

On June 4, 1966, Father Kuziora became administrator of St. Barbara's and on October 27, 1970, the parishes of St. Barbara, St. Lawrence, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus were united as Christ the King Parish, with the Rev. Leonard M. Kuziora as first pastor of the new parish.

A publication of the early 1900's, THE DIOCESAN ORBIT, described the progress of the new St. Barbara Parish in these words:

"The Polish Catholic church St. Barbara was formed about 1894, and first held services in the store room now occupied by John O'Connor. A new church was built about 1898 which was destroyed by fire and replaced by the present building. Father Swiderski is the priest in charge."

"St. Barbara's parish maintains a school for the proper Christian education of its children and nearly 300 little ones are said to be patronizing the institution, which fact augurs well for the future of the congregation."

#### PASTORS OF ST. BARBARA PARISH

Fr. Sigismund Suszyński	1874-1894
Fr. Emra Richtarsik	1894-1894
Fr. Aleksander Michnewski	1894-1894
Fr. Joseph Karpinski	1899-1900
Fr. Joseph Kuminek	1900-1901
Fr. Vincent Matysiak	1902-1903
Fr. Severin Niedbalski	1903-1904
Fr. Paul Szulereski	1908-1909
Fr. Joseph Kuminek	1908-1909
Fr. Marian Guzek	1909-1911
Fr. Maximilian Swiderski	1911-1915
Fr. Martin Matysiak	1915-1916
Fr. Joseph Rajs	1916-1930
Fr. Anthony Misiukiewicz	1930-1934
Fr. Thaddeus Napieralski	1934-1942
Fr. Joseph Kacprowicz	1942-1953
Fr. Joseph Radziszewski	1953-1959
Fr. Stephen Katarzynski	1959-1966

#### VOCATIONS

REV. RONALD GMOREK  
REV. STANLEY STASZEWSKI  
REV. JOSEPH STASZEWSKI

SR. FIDENCYA KAUCZKA  
SR. FELINA EMALA