



History of St. Michael's Church.

90th and 85th Anniversary of St. Michael's Church, Glen Campbell, PA. 1900-1990 and SS. Peter and Paul Church, Arcadia, PA. 1905-1990. CAP at Orchard Lake.

St. Michael's parish begins around 1890. The Polish and Slovak immigrants came to America to seek a better life, which they were deprived of in their homeland because of wars, persecutions, and hard living conditions.

The Catholic population grew very rapidly in this area. Being of deep religious conviction they felt the need for worship and public prayer.

The nearest churches were in Punxsutawney and Spangler. They decided to meet in the home of George Bienowicz in Glen Campbell where they began to hold public prayer, lead by John Huga. They gathered here for about one year. From their offerings they were able to bring Fr. Wienker from Punxsy once a year to fulfill their Easter duty. Soon by making greater sacrifices, they were able to bring him four times a year. He spoke few languages, had many duties, and his only means of travel was a bicycle. Truly he was the apostle of this territory.

As the attendance at these public prayers grew, they were forced to seek a larger gathering place. A large house owned by Phillip Bendera in Rickersdale was rented and served as a temporary church.

In 1894, after four long years of seeking more frequent religious attention, Fr. Wienker suggested to the people to undertake the building of a church. There was a collection of \$350.00 for the church and H.E. Clark donated property on the west side of the town which is the present site of St. Michaels'.

In the year 1900, having \$600.00 in the treasury, the construction of the church building was begun, which is the first floor of our present structure. Then the debate began as to who would be the patron saint of this newly organized parish. The Slovak people wanted St. George and the Polish wanted St. Joseph. Fr. Zubrycki of Adrian, PA, suggested St. Michael. The name should be derived from the date on which the cornerstone would be laid. This date was September 29, 1901, the feast of St. Michael.

Several members of the parish went to the Bishop of Pittsburgh to ask him to appoint them a priest. The first pastor, Fr. John Kopera was appointed in May of 1903. During his stay, the property for the cemetery was acquired between Glen Campbell and Hooverhurst. He left in November of the same year.

His successor was Rev. John Adamowski. He remained pastor for a little over two years. During his stay he purchased vestments, statues, and candelabra for services.

The third pastor, Rev. Stephen R. Banasiewicz remained for one and a half years, until August 1907. In 1905 the mission parish of SS. Peter & Pauls' came into existence.

A very energetic and zealous priest was appointed in 1907, newly ordained. Rev. John Wasyliszyn. During his stay the church was extended, the super structure was built, new altars were bought, pews were installed and the bell placed in its tower to call the faithful to worship.

In 1913 Rev. John Rokosz took charge as pastor. He was able to pay off a debt that hung over the heads of the people for twenty years. The first floor of the church was remodeled. Two classrooms were made in the front where about seventy-five children received instructions by the Sisters of St. Francis from Chicago in 1917. The former rectory served as a convent for the sisters.

That same year the mission church in Arcadia had begun its parochial school. One Sunday Mass was not sufficient as the number of families multiplied so rapidly that Fr. Worbel and Fr. Kulpra were called on for help as assistants. In July 1922 a permanent assistant, Fr. Walter Rokosz, brother of the pastor was appointed. Mass was said in both places every day and twice on Sundays.

1924 was the beginning of the decline in population with the closing of the coal mines. Because of lack of work nearly two-thirds of the people left. It was this year that Fr. Marion Rosenthal was appointed pastor.

During Fr. Rosenthal's sixteen years as pastor, many improvements were made to the church and rectory. A new roof was put on the church, the interior was painted, pews and altars were renewed, the buildings painted, linoleum was laid in the aisles, and a new lighting system was installed. The adoring angels were also purchased. The property around the church was improved and work in the cemetery was done. A lot was purchased from the Androsky family in 1934 and in 1935 a hall for social activities was built. The first activity in the new hall was on July 29, 1935. This same year brick siding was put on the church. Fr. Rosenthal's stay as pastor was the longest. He was transferred to Luzernemines in 1940.

During Fr. Stanislaus Anoskiewicz's pastorate of five years not many improvements could be made because of World War II. Money was available but material and labor was scarce. He was promoted to Ford City in 1945 and his successor was Fr. John Kaczmarczyk. During his stay many things needed repair. Despite lack of money and with the cooperation of the sixty families that made up the parish the sanctuary was enlarged, altars raised, walls and ceiling painted, the choir loft steps were taken from the aisle and moved to the vestibule. A Baptistry was built in the back of the church. The old pulpit was removed and remodeled for a lectern. Rubber tile was laid and soft rubber cushions were put on the kneelers. Various religious articles were donated by parishioners to beautify the church. A new lighting system was installed. And remodeling was completed in September 1947 and a new heating system was installed in 1948.

In 1949 parish volunteers responded to obtain machinery and materials to build a new wall in front of the church. The year of the golden jubilee of 1950 the Altar/Rosary Society donated a statue of St. Michael the Archangel to be placed in front of the church. It was made of white concrete and weighed 1400 pounds. The property was landscaped and the church steeple was repaired.

Fr. John remained pastor until 1956. Fr. Francis Lesniak replaced him. His stay was from April 29, 1956 to 1960.

The changes that would occur in the next thirty years would not only be dramatic to this parish community, but for the Catholic Church worldwide.

Pope John the twenty-thirds announcement of the convocation of an "Ecumenical Council" stunned the Catholic Church population. "The winds of change would move rapidly through the church." The Council opened on October 11, 1962 and ended on December 8, 1965. This historic event would be a spiritual awakening to all Catholics. After four hundred years since the "Ecumenical Council of Trent" (1543-631. Catholics would become more aware of their role in the active ministries of the church. To site a few changes: we would witness the celebration of Mass and other celebrations in the vernacular. The priest would face the people for the Eucharistic celebration and the altar would become the focal point of the church. Competent laity would proclaim the Word of God as lectors, and when needed. Eucharistic Ministers would help distribute Holy Communion.

We would see our uniqueness in relationship to other Baptized Christians and the Ecumenical Movement was born. Parish Councils were formed to assist the pastor in administrative and spiritual matters. The laity would become more involved in the total religious education of children and adults. And the list would go on and on.

Fr. Thomas Rogers became pastor in 1960 and would be the first often pastors to give witness to this "Church in the Modern Era." He would be followed by: Fr. Stephen Drab in 1965 to 1971. Fr. Patrick O'Conner from 1971 to 1973. Fr. Paul Sicilia in 1973 to 1974. Fr. J. Edward McCullough from 1974 to 1979. Fr. John Foriska in 1979 to 1983. Fr. James G. Joyce in 1983 to 1984. Fr. V. Paul Fitzmaurice from 1984 to 1986. Fr. Lawrence L. Hoppe in 1986 to 1987, and the present pastor Fr. James Goldberg.

During these thirty years we would see more repairs and changes in both churches. Fr. Rogers would begin the renovation of the interior of the churches according to the directives of the Council Fathers. Fr. Drab would oversee the renovation of the Church hall. This was followed with the building of a new rectory under Fr. McCullough. St. Michael's large stained glass window was repaired under Fr. Fitzmaurice and both churches were painted. Fr. Hoppe would see a new furnace installed at the Mission, wainscoating at St. Michaels' and the insulation of both churches. Fr. Goldberg would implement a two year renovation plan for St. Michael's church in 1988 bringing us to the year 1990.

What is in store for the future? God knows? May our patrons. St. Michael and Sts. Peter and Paul guard and guide us to the year 2000.

FORMER PASTORS

*Rev. John Kopera	May 1903-November 1903
*Rev. John Adamowski	November 1903-1905
*Rev. Stephen Banasiewicz	1905-August 1907
*Rev. John Wasyliszyn	June 23, 1907-March 3, 1912
*Rev. John Rokosz	May 18, 1913-May 11, 1924
*Rev. Marion Rosenthal	May 18, 1924-March 3, 1940
*Rev. Stanislaus Anuskiewicz	March 10, 1940-Feb. 11, 1945
*Rev. John Kaczmarczyk	May 6, 1945-April 1, 1956

Rev. Francis Lesniak	April 29,1956-April 26,1960
Rev. Thomas Rogers	September 26,1960-June 3,1965
Rev. Stephen Drab	June 3,1965-November 27,1971
Rev. Patrick O'Connor	November 27,1971-April 5,1973
Rev. Paul Sicilia	April 5,1973-May 29,1974
Rev. J. Edward McCullough	May 29,1974-May 30,1979
Rev. John Foriska	May 30,1979-,July 27,1983
*Rev. James G. Joyce	August 10,1983-June 5,1984
Rev. V. Paul Fitzmaurice	June 5,1984-July 15,1986
Rev. Lawrence L. Hoppe	July 15,1986-August 10,1987
Rev. James M. Goldberg	August 10,1987-Present

* Deceased

Rev. Walter Rokosz was appointed to this brother in 1922 to 1924 as the only associate in the history of the parish.