



### **History of St. Mary Catholic Church.**

150 Rok Historii Mariackiego Katolickiego Kościoła 1858-2008, Parisville, MI, p 4-34. CAP at Orchard Lake.

The Poles of Parisville were simple men and women of great faith in their Church. Occasionally missionaries from the Detroit Diocese tended to the spiritual needs of the settlement. The early missionaries, including Fr. Lawrence Kilroy, the first priest ordained in the diocese of Detroit, but could not take care of these people because of the difference in language. To ease this complicated situation there now appeared, providently, the well-known Polish priest, Fr. Julian Maciejewski from the archdiocese of Posen, Poland. Hampered by bad roads and the necessity of other missions, Fr. Maciejewski was forced to abandon these people. This good priest must certainly be counted among the early apostles of Michigan. In January 1856, Bishop Peter Paul Lefevere appointed Fr. Francis Krutil, a Redemptorist from St. Mary's in Detroit, to prepare a report on the spiritual needs of Huron County's Catholics.

In the fall of 1858, Bishop Lefevere sent to Huron County its first resident priest, Fr. Peter Kluk, and began administrating to the Poles for five years. Since there was no church, the first Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered in the spring of 1858 in the log house of Anton Slawick. The kitchen table served for the altar. The first weddings and funerals also took place there. The first white Polish child born in the area was Joanne Slawick, daughter of Anton and Joanna Slawick on November 18, 1857.

In September of 1854, hardy Polish Settlers penetrated the unbroken virgin forests of Huron County (known then as Sanilac County) and settled primarily in Paris Township, thus establishing the first Polish Settlement in the United States. It later became known as Parisville.

It is likely that Poles were here already in 1852 since a land grant dated 1857 for 23 Polish Settlers is extant (Fr. Walajtys sent a copy to Fr. Kluska) and tradition has it that settlers had to be in a region for five years before becoming eligible for such grants. These Poles came from Canada. First among them were Sasala (Susalla), Wojtalewicz, Jagielski and Peter Dudek; next year Slowick (Slawik), Czechanski, Polk and others.

The first Polish Festival in America was held in Parisville, Michigan. In the spring of 1868, the Polonian settlement at Parisville decided to have a Polish Festival. The Festival was to be held in August. All proceeds of the festival were to be applied to hire a lay teacher. The teacher was to instruct the Polonian children in the English language. With the proceeds from the first Polish Festival, a Miss O'Conner was hired as the first lay teacher. With the financial success of the festivals, subsequent festivals were even more successful and continue to the present day.

The school was opened in early 1869 and was taught by Fr. Wolkowski and Miss O'Conner, from whom the Priests learned English.

During the drought in the summer of 1871 in the "Thumb" area, the festival was held in early August. Over 300 families were in attendance, silently talking about the "dry" summer and the possibility of a forest fire. In October of 1871, a terrible forest fire demolishes, church, rectory, school (whatever type of building these later may have been - it is possible that all three were in one structure - church on one floor, rectory and school on another.

The fire left 28 persons dead. The whole O'Conner family lost. Their beloved teacher perished in the fire. All church records burned. With no Parish Church or Rectory Fr. Wieczorek left for his Detroit Mission. He was temporarily replaced by Rev. John Dziurowicz, but his stay was short lived.

The forest fire of October, 1871, left Parisville, nearby Krakow and the "thumb" area of Michigan in ashes. After the church burned services were held in John Woytalewicz's house. It was the biggest house and had the biggest living room. It was one of the frame houses that did not burn. They laid out planks out for benches to be used for the services.

In 1872, the festival was meager. The festival committee continued, stating that the proceeds shall continue to accumulate money to erect another school.

Parisville needed an energetic man. He came in the person of Rev. Joseph Musielewicz in 1874. He raised the spirits of the people and began the building of the second church in June of 1875 and saw its completion by October of the same year. Fr. Musielewicz left Parisville after many excruciating experiences.

Rev. John Gratza next assumed the post and held it till 1884. Fr. Gratza was born in Upper Silesia on February 3, 1849; he was ordained in May, 1872 and immediately left for America, coming to the diocese of Alton, Illinois where he labored for a few years as an assistant.

Then in the year 1884, Fr. Gratza was the pastor in Parisville, the oldest Polish settlement in America. Here during the second terrible fire he almost lost his life.

On September 5, 1881, another great forest fire struck Parisville, burning down almost every farm house, barn and granary that stood in its path.

The Pastor, the Rev. Fr. John Gratza ran to the Church and began ringing the bells, but precisely this morning while ringing the bells the church tower fell with a horrid crash, and the whole structure was enveloped in flames. "That the Priest was able to escape is almost miraculous." Some people racing away in a wagon saw their beloved pastor standing stupefied in the parish cemetery. Hurriedly they threw the almost unconscious form into their wagon and sped away to safety. Many were left without food, shelter or clothing. The community managed to pull itself together and rebuild their homes, farms, businesses, church and school.

According to Catholic authorities consulted, the celebration of the Mass determines the date of establishment for a parish. If anyone can provide documented proof that Mass was celebrated at Parisville before December 24, 1854, then Parisville can claim the honor of being the oldest Polish

Catholic Parish in the United States as well as the oldest Polish Catholic settlement.

The first and largest parcel of land to be purchased exclusively for parish purposes by Polonians in America was in Parisville. It should be noted that the grantees were Polish Settlers; therefore the settlers owned the land, not the parish or the bishop.

In Liber B, at page 599, The Huron County Register of Deeds Office, Bad Axe, Michigan, reveals, that: Anton Slawick and wife conveyed to Polish Settlers the following:

"This indenture, March 5, 1859, between Anton Slawick and wife, Joanna Slawick, party of the first part. And Polish Settlers, party of the second part, for and consideration of nineteen dollars...conveyed. Certain piece or parcel of land known and described as follows: To wit: A square piece of land from the southeast corner of the Northeast quarter of Section 22 in Township 15 North, Range 14 East, containing twenty one acres, in the County of Huron, State of Michigan.

This land was free of any encumbrances... and the signatures of (Signed) Anton Slawick, Joanna X Slawick (Her Mark). The witness to the signature and transfer was an Agny Gelski.

Notarized in Sanilac County on March 5, 1859."

This deed was received and recorded in Huron County on May 4, 1859, at 7:00 P.M. The land was later deeded to Bishop Lefevere on October 10, 1861.

In 1859, with the Settlers combined efforts, the first log chapel was erected on the present site of the Grotto and dedicated to the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This land would also be used to house the Church's rectory and also her Cemetery.

Fr. Francis Breitkopf, Resurrectionists (Polish) from Canada, also ministered to the Poles several times a year, 1856-1867. There were 99 families. The settlement continued to grow and soon the log chapel was outgrown. A large church was begun in 1867. The church being built on the present site of the Shrine of St. Roch. (Huron County News of September, 1867 carries an article reporting on the building of the Church, then in progress: 85 or 90 ft. deep x 40 or 50 ft. front and 30 ft. to eaves. (Quoted in Huron County History, Page 9). The parish was made up of 174 Polish families and Parisville received their first permanent pastor in 1868 and given the title St. Mary's Parish.

Two Resurrectionists were assigned to the parish, Fr. Simon Wiczorek, pastor and Fr. John Wolkowski, assistant and bursar. Accompanying them was Brother Horatius. Previously Parisville was a mission with the title of Immaculate Conception. A school was organized and classes began in April 1869 with 80 children attending.

The school built after the 1881 fire was a two story building with wooden shingles, clapboard siding and was painted gray located in front of the present cemetery site. On the first floor were one classroom and Sister's kitchen and dining room. On the second floor were one classroom, chapel and Sister's sleeping quarters. The chapel was used daily for parishioners for Mass because the church was not heated on weekdays. The school was staffed by Felician Sisters in 1888. Lessons were both in Polish and English. The morning lessons and all conversation and directions were in Polish; and in the afternoon were in English. Studied geography, history, arithmetic, reading in English; catechism (some Polish, other English), bible History, Polish History, Polish reading.

Most children attended only one year, to make Holy Communion. They lived too far to attend longer. Many went to nearby public schools and had to help on farms. Communion was a big day. Children led in procession to church, stayed for breakfast, then for Vespers.

In 1884, Fr. Constantine Domagalski was named pastor. Financial records extant from January, 1886 show collection for school, payment for work around school (\$140.48 from July 1, 1887 to August 1887) also furniture for school January 1886.

In October of 1887 he was replaced by Fr. Adalbert Sulek. His first baptism was October, 1887. Last Baptism entry for Fr. Sulek is June, 1889.

The third Church was built with an inspiring tower, which could be seen many miles away. It was 62 ft. by 160 ft. long with three altars, three immense bells and an imposing pipe organ with 1600 tubes and seating capacity of 800. The valuation of the church property is about \$30,000, free of debt.

In the year 1884, Fr. Gratza left his beloved Parisville and returned to his original diocese in Alton, IL. After this he labored in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and the last six years of his life in Tiffin, Ohio. He died January 18, 1923 and was buried in Tiffin. Immaculate Conception Church (St. Mary's) in Parisville still stands as a monument of his courage and zeal.

Exhaustion and ill health prevented Fr. Moczygamba from remaining long at St. Mary's. He left in 1890 and died February 23, 1891, in Dearborn. His body remained in the priests' lots' section of Mt. Elliott Cemetery in Detroit until he was reinterred October 13, 1974 at Panna Maria, Texas beside the church that he had founded. The observance included a field mass for several thousand visitors, including priests from Upper Silesia, the reburial ceremony, and a huge banquet for the guests. Plans were made immediately for the erection of a suitable memorial at the new grave, which lies under the same oak where the missionary first said mass for the immigrants at Christmastime 1854.

Fr. Victor Rodowicz, pastor, came for the first time in October, 1890. Sister M. Josepha was the first superior in 1890/91. Also came were Sr. Josephine Przbyszewski, a postulant, and Sister Mary Elizabeth, novice for domestic work. There were two classes in the school with 95-100 children in the lower class and 70 in the upper. At Christmas, the First Holy Communion class numbered 90 children some 15-18 years old.

In July of 1892, Fr. Rodowicz left the parish, which was then served intermittently by priests from Detroit, Fr. Vitold Buhackowski and Fr. Appolonius Trzaska.

In July of 1893, Fr. Casimir Walajtys became Pastor. In 1900-01, classes in the school were suspended because of damage to the Sisters convent by lightning.

Sisters came in May to prepare children for First Communion. On February 6, 1902, the Rectory burnt down and was rebuilt by Fr. Walajtys.

There were four Societies connected with St. Mary's Church. The Sacred Heart of Jesus, 90 members, The Ladies Society, 200 members, Young Ladies Society, 180 members, The Cecelia Society, and 38 members.

In 1889, Parisville was honored with the arrival of the well-known Rev. Leopold Moczygemba. This is the same priest who was delegated by Cardinal Ladochowski to found a Polish Seminary in the United States to train young boys of Polish decent for the priesthood. Owing to his advanced age, this active apostle was forced to entrust this difficult project to the younger Fr. Joseph Dąbrowski, who later became the founder of SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, Orchard Lake, Michigan. The Felician Sisters, upon the invitation of Fr. L. Moczygemba, came to Parisville in 1889-90 to conduct the school. They had, however, visited the settlement in 1881 for a short duration. The first regular school year in which the school was in charge of the Felician Sisters began in the fall of 1890.

The Pastors in these years were: 1908, Rev. John Mueller, 1923, Rev. Joseph Folta, 1926, Fr. Constantine Dziuk, 1932. Fr. Dziuk renovated the Church in 1926 and 1927 and improved the Sister's Convent by installing running water and bathrooms.

When there was a need for a third classroom, the Chapel was moved to the community room, and the Chapel space transformed into a classroom. On level with second floor on front facade of Sister's House was a stone tablet with the inscription: "CZCIJ OJCA TWEGO I MATKE TWOJA". The English translation means "respect your father and your mother" or "honor thy father and thy mother" The word "czcij" is an old Polish word meaning "respect" that isn't used much anymore but the people that came here in the 1800's would have used it.

Two statues on fence pediments in front of the school; St. Michael and Guardian Angel were there since erection of the convent. The front porch on sister's House and School were added during Fr. Koper's time, and built by August Grzeca.

Following is a letter written by Fr. Casimer Watajtyś to Right Reverend John S. Foley DD, Bishop of Detroit

"Parisville, Mich. May 22nd, 1905  
Right Rev. John S. Foley D. Bishop of Detroit

Mi Lord,

On the 8th of December A.D. 1904 we had a mass meeting concerning to build a new brick school house. The people came to a resolution to build it 1 went around and took subscribers (\$2,161.00).

There are 137 families to be collected yet, from which I expect to get \$1500.00. The sum will cover the expense on the school and debts on the residence - in two years.

Please grant permission to take the old school house apart and use the lumber for the new one. Why? Because the foundation is rotten, the roof is leaking, the chimney smoking as five stove pipes go to one chimney, the windows are 9 ft-high and rotten, the tights fall out and the rattling noise all the time. It takes so much fuel to heat it and the fuel is dear now days. And worst of all that the water is micro bed, because it is too close to the cemetery. The pupils and sisters have to carry water from the neighbors; and some time the snow is from 3 to 5ft. deep. It is hard for them, and in the spring they cannot get out, for is all flooded.

Then be so kind Milord, to give permission to build the school and to borrow \$2000.00 at 6%.

There is a fraction of people that are against building, they claim the old school is good, just to repair it, but they never lived in it Lordship, grant the permission this week if you please. We are working and building for the Almighty God and glorious country. Yours humble servant Casimer Walajtyś"

(Diocese of Saginaw Archives)

Also, in 1904-05, there were no classes as the new school was being erected. The old school was being torn down and whatever materials could be re-used, were used in the new school, which had mainly brick exterior. School resumed in September, 1905. The Sister's Convent was in the same building as the school. On the ground floor there were four cells, a kitchen, dining room, community room and Chapel. On the second floor were two large classrooms which also used for parish meetings. Lessons were both in Polish and English. Most say that in the morning lessons and all conversations and directions were in Polish; in the afternoon all was in English. The children studied geography, history, arithmetic, reading in English; catechism (some Polish, others English), Bible History, Polish History and Polish reading.

The following is a letter from the Bishop of Detroit

"April 17, 1923  
Rev. Joseph Folta  
St. Mary's Church, Parisville, Mich.

Rev. Dear Father

We hereby appoint the following five gentlemen to serve on the Church Committee of St Mary's Parish, Parisville, Mich. Until the end of the year 1923.

Leo Oborski, Martin Sofka, J. Peplinski, E. Gliniecki, J Rompea.

Regarding the financial administration of the parish we wish to state that the pastor is responsible for it to his Bishop, and, therefore, he is to have full control and management of the temporal affairs of the parish as well as the spiritual. The parish committee is expected to meet at the end of each month, examine the pastor's books, and satisfy themselves that they are correct All expenses of the parish are to be paid by check only. All entries of income from collections, etc., can be witnessed by the Committee. In other words, it should be possible for the committee to be absolutely certain at the end of each month that the parish books are in good order. If the parish so desires, the committee can keep a set of books also, which of course would only be duplicates of the books kept by the pastor.

The method of administrating the financial affairs of a parish, as explained above, is the rule of the Diocese, and we expect St Mary's Congregation of Parisville to follow in this example of all other Parishes of the Diocese. We wish to lay stress on this fact again that we hold the newly appointed Committee equally responsible with the pastor, and expect them to help him by faithfully attending the regular monthly meetings for the purpose of examining the parish books along the lines indicated.

With kind regards, I remain Cordially yours in Xt Bishop of Detroit"

Between the Church and the Rectory, in a constantly maintained garden, is a Shrine with the Statue of St. Roch. Fr. Casimer Walajtys and other parishioners donated it in gratitude to the Good Lord and to St. Roch for turning away a ravaging epidemic. These good people gathered in humble prayer at the foot of Our Lord and prayed that He remove His hand held in vengeance. When these most fervent pleas reached Heaven, the merciful Lord took pity and through the intercession of St. Roch, designed to hear this suppliant people, and He diverted the plague. For this reason, this patron saint is held in great honor and respect. St. Roch was born in France around 1350. The moment of his religious conversion was a pilgrimage he made to Rome. It was there that he became involved with the poor and the sick, earning a reputation of having healing powers. He was also invoked, at a later time, for relief from the plague and other epidemics. The Shrine of St.

Roch was dedicated around 1895.

This shrine was erected as an expression of gratitude by the Lemanski family, whose lives and property were spared when the Great Forest Fire of 1881 swept through the township. The prayers of the Lemanski family asking that their lives and property be spared were answered. The strong winds "divided". The destructive fire passed to the north and south of the farm. Several farms east of the Lemanski's home were also spared.

On property north of St. Mary's Church on Parisville Road Frank Osentoski had a parcel of land that he leased out for parking spaces for parishioners to park for church services. The charge was five dollars a year.

The Cemetery north of the Church was started about 1856 and ended about 1884. In 1926, the tombs that were left there were moved to the present Cemetery. About 1930 a parking lot was made on the Old Cemetery, but in later years, the parking lot was seeded.

In 1931, permission was granted to install stained glass windows in the church. It was done by The Detroit Stained Glass Works at the cost of \$1,215.00 with grass.

Fr. Joseph Koper arrived from Hilliards, Michigan in 1932 to continue the work begun by his able predecessor. When he got here the Cemetery was that was moved from north of the Church to the location of the present Cemetery was used as a parking lot.

Fr. Koper said that it was blessed ground and should not be driven on. In 1936-37 Pine trees were planted there and still exist there today.

In 1938 the Rosary Society celebrated their 50th Anniversary with 200 Members.

Towards the end of his pastorate Fr. Koper supervised the cleaning of the cemetery. His greatest project was the installation of the Crucifixion Monument in the Cemetery. The Crucifix was imported from Italy. Being war time, it could not be shipped until after the war was over (being afraid that the ship would be torpedoed). It was finally delivered in 1946. It then was installed in the cemetery and blessed on Memorial Day of the year 1946.

Fr. Kujawa's monumental works included the renovation of the church interior and the ranch-type school. (Ground breaking on May 21, 1950) He saw that the school without providing transportation would-be a failure, hence Fr. Kujawa bought two busses and built a garage and a house for the custodian.

During the 1950-51 school years, the 7th & 8th grade classes were held in the janitor's house by the cemetery.

"May 8, 1951, students transferred to a new school (built from May, 1950 to May, 1951). Has four classrooms, large corridor for cafeteria, rest rooms, office, two additional Sister's quarters added to old building, stairways from sister's house leads to school corridor. Modern ranch type, modern lighting, kitchen serving off into corridor, buff brick facing in corridors, cinder block in classes." The school was dedicated by Bishop Stephen Woznicki on September 29, 1951. (Catholic Weekly, May 21, 1951)

In the year 1948, Fr. Koper was transferred to St. Florian in Standish, Michigan. He was replaced by Fr. Michael Kujawa on June 15, 1948.

Memories in the school were waxing the floors with the waxed bread wrappers brought from home, scrapping the top of the desks with broken pieces of glass and the rides down the fire escape. In May of 1948, the first crowning of the Blessed Virgin Mary took place with Marie Gliniecki doing the crowning on behalf of the Parish.

The successor of Fr. Kujawa was Fr. Ignatius J. Woloszyk, installed as Pastor on June 24, 1953. Greater internal improvements in the church are attributed to Fr. Woloszyk's efforts. There is much evidence of beautiful handiwork and carpentry done in the Church. The confessional, artistic altar rail, new floor, new pews and recently installed lights changed the whole internal appearance. New expensive bronze candle sticks replaced the old. Even the exterior of the Church received a new look as a preparation for the Centennial.

Fire of undetermined origin leveled the historic St. Mary Catholic Church at Parisville Tuesday night as hundreds of parishioners look on helplessly, many of them weeping, at the loss of the venerable and tradition-steeped building of worship. Firemen from five Huron County departments, no match for the wall of intense flames that spread almost instantly through the church, confined their efforts to saving the rectory next door and the church school and convent across the street.

Standing fast against the stifling intensity of heat generated by the fire in the 90-year-old wood frame church, firemen poured hundreds of gallons of water on the brick rectory, which nevertheless sustained some superficial damage in terms of broken windows and damaged walls.

Across the street, firemen hosed down the convent and church school while others mounted the roof to kick off burning debris which was carried across the street by a moderate west wind. Rev. Stanley Surman, pastor of the church for less than a year, was away when the fire broke out around 8:15 p.m. and the rectory and church building were unoccupied.

Across the street, the two nuns assigned to the parish, Sr's. Mary Gerald and Mary Maschal were in the convent watching television. Sr. Mary Gerald noticed a glow outside the convent window and looked out where she saw the fire, which appeared to have originated in the steeple tower. The nuns did not call firemen as the fire had been noticed first by a passerby who already had summoned the Ruth Fire Department. Subsequently, firemen from Ubly, Minden City, Harbor Beach and Bad Axe were also called in as a total of nine firefighting units converged on the scene. Ronald Booms, who lives near Parisville, noticed what he described as "smoke or steam" coming from the steeple and attempted, with a companion to put out the flames with a fire extinguisher. Ruth Fire Chief LaVerne Hanselman said Booms was unable to reach the source of the fire. Flames towered into the dark autumn sky visible as far away as Bad Axe and perhaps further.

Some rain fell before the fire and lightning was sighted on at least two occasions. Some speculation is that a bolt of lightning may have struck the church steeple.

Parishioners lined Parisville Road, many of them wiping tears from their eyes, as the church where their baptisms, first communions, confirmations and marriages took place was consumed by the raging. One of Fr. Ignatius J. Woloszyk projects was the erecting of the Grotto. It was built on the



site of the first Church. Many hours of work and tons of stones were brought in by the parishioners to help achieve the monument. It was built in a period from 1960 to 1962.

In reviewing the history of the parish on this, its bi-centennial year, one marvels at the people of Parisville. People of staunch faith; people of dauntless courage; people of adamant convictions. Their beautiful Church embedded in a wonderland of pine trees, stands out symbolically against the clear sky as a testimonial of God's grace abundantly showered upon this rugged countryside. The single steeple, pointing heavenward seems to cry out: "Divine Mercy was the foundation of this community and in that Mercy it had its origin."

The new Church which replaced the one destroyed on October 22, 1974 was dedicated to B.V. M. Immaculate Conception on July 11, 1976. Sixty nuns, Fifty Priests and over 1100 lay people witnessed the impressive dedication ceremony performed by our Most Rev. Bishop Francis Reh.

As we approach the present, modern, fan-style Church, we see the statue of Our Lady of Czestochowa which embraces the outside entrance. The statue made of stainless steel and the beautiful windows depict the history of the first Polish pioneers that came to the United States in 1848 from Ontario, Canada. The stained glass for these windows was imported from France.

Upon entering the Church the first window shows a bell hanging on a tree to call the parishioners to worship. The next window shows the first Priest here holding a cross and a picture of Our Lady of Czestochowa. The third window shows them worshipping, using stumps and logs for kneelers. The first pioneers used materials from the immediate surroundings to help build the Church.

This theme is repeated throughout the new Church in respect for our founding families. A plow is the focal point of the fourth window. Then, as now, agriculture was the main source of employment. All their farm equipment was brought from Poland.

Directly over the inside entrance is a window honoring Elizabeth Seton, the first American Saint. The next window is in memory of St. Anne, the Mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a memorial to St. Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr, who raised Peter from the dead. We also see the Knights commemorating a thousand years of Christianity in Poland.

The window that holds the Polish Eagle and the symbol M represents the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The wing shaped roof signifies the life which comes from God and returns to God. It shelters the believer under God's wing and reminds him of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. The Believer rises up his entire person in praise and offering to God leaving all earthly cares aside.

Historically, it was the third time St. Mary Catholic church had burned. Twice before, during the fires of 1871 and again in 1881, the building had been lost to fire. The structure lost Tuesday night was built sometime after the 1881 fire.

The huge hanging Cross on the main wall was made by Archie Peplinski. The risen Christ on the Cross was imported from Italy.

The Tabernacle, along with the statue and the windows, were designed and made by Marion Owczarski, art professor of Orchard Lake School and a famous sculptor from Europe.

The Altar and Podium were made by Larry Rutkowski from trees in the Parisville area to symbolize the forest that helped give birth to St. Mary Church's.

The present St. Mary's Church was built by Booms Construction of Bad Axe, Michigan with Virgil Peplinski, a parishioner of St Mary's as foreman and Loton Eastman, architect and engineer of Port Huron, Michigan.

We salute the graves of those who gave so much that we could survive. To those still living, we express our thanks. The past is gone but not forgotten. The present has constant developments. The pioneering spirit is not new here. Every now and then the Parish has adjusted to meet the needs of the Church militant of Christ's mystical body in a particular time. There will be more celebrations and more histories.

We look to the future with hope. We have matured through the sacrifice of the past. The Lord has created us in his image and likeness and has molded us into his Community of Faith. We proudly acknowledge this mark of glory as he continues to lead us on our pilgrim way towards his Window.

Most Reverend Bishop Francis F. Reh retired in 1980 and was replaced by Most Reverend Bishop Kenneth E. Untener. Bishop Reh died November 4, 1994. Most Reverend Bishop Kenneth E. Untener died March 7, 2004 and he was succeeded by Most Reverend Bishop Robert J. Carlson in 2005

The Table of Worship is made from local trees which symbolize Jesus Christ who died on the cross. Here we celebrate the Sacred Mysteries, which united us as Christians.

The Pulpit is the Stand which holds the word of God before whom all humankind stands in judgment. It, as well as all other liturgical appointments, is created from wood to capture the austerity and simplicity of spiritual life.

The tabernacle is made of stainless steel and is the Home of Jesus Christ who is present in the Sacrament of Love. "He who eats my body and drinks my blood will have eternal life."

The Baptismal font is made in the form of a cross with the symbols of the seven sacraments and the Holy Spirit. Here we are baptized into the people of God. Four niches in the back wall hold the statues of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, St. Joseph, St. Isadore, and St. Francis.

Stations of the Cross are made from copper and wood. The confessional is designed to allow for private form of reconciliation. However, if the penitent chooses to sit with the Priest, a room is available for the new rite of the sacrament.

Early Missionaries were Fr. Lawrence Kilroy, Fr. Julian Maciejewski and Fr. Joseph Krutell. They were Resurrectionists Fathers from Berlin, Canada. Priests that served St. Mary's Parish were:

Fr. Peter Kluck, (1858), Fr. Francis Brietkopf, (part time, 1865-1868), Fr. John Wollowski, (1868-1869), Fr. Simon Wiczorek, (1868-1871), Fr. John J. Dziurawicz, (1872), Fr. Joseph Musielwicz, (1874), Fr. John Gratza, (1875), Fr. Dominic Kolasinski, (1882), Fr. Constantine Domagalski, (1884), Fr. Adalbert Sulek, (1887), Fr. Leopold Moczygamba, (1889), Fr. Victor Rodowicz, (1890), Fr. Witold Buhaczkowski, (1891), Fr. Appolonius Trszka, (1891), Fr. Casimier Walajtys, (1893), Fr. John Mueller, (1908), Fr. Joseph Fulda, (1923), Fr. Constance Dziuk, (1926), Fr. Joseph Koper, (1932), Fr. Thomas Jobs, (1936)

Assistant Pastor, Fr. Camillus Klos, (1937) Assistant Pastor, Fr. John Kucinski, (1938) Assistant Pastor, Fr. Marion Pawlowski, (1943) Assistant Pastor, Fr. Ignatius Woloszyk, (1943) Assistant Pastor, Fr. Francis Piaskowski, (1944) Assistant Pastor, Fr. Michael Kujawa, (1948), Fr. Joseph Szarek, (1948) Assistant Pastor), Fr. Ignatius Woloszyk, (1953), Fr. Richard Ratajczak, (1967), Fr. Stanley Surman, (1974), Fr. Len Wilkowski, (1983), Fr. Ronald J. Dombrowski, (1991), Fr. Michael Dunekel, (1994), Fr. James Krasman, (1997), Fr. Charles Hammond, (1999), Fr. Andrzej Borocho, ( 2002), and present Pastor Fr. Jerzy Dobosz, (2006).

Women from St. Mary's Parish that entered Religious Careers were:

Sr. Mary Aloysius, (Emma Klajda), Sr. Mary Nicodemus, (Mary Maj), Sr. Mary Baptista, (Anthonina Kowalski), Sr. Mary Albertina, (Anna Elandt), Sr. Mary Adeline, (Mary Abraham), Sr. Mary Stephen, (Magdalen Elandt), Sr. Mary Reginald, (Frances Spitz), Sr. Mary Marietta, (Martha Slowik), Sr. Mary Desiderata, (Bertha Schemka), Sr. Mary Gualbertha, (Angela Abraham), Sr. Mary Thomas, (Mary Kowalski), Sr. Mary Orentia, (Anna Osentoski), Sr. Mary Evangelista, (Bertha Abraham), Sr. Mary Gloria, (Jeanette Ertman), Sr. Mary Leonita, (Anne Susalla), Sr. Mary Claret, (Theresa Rutkowski), Sr. Mary Ascenzia, (Patricia Trepkowski), Sr. Mary Lucinia, (Helen Susalla), Sr. Mary Claudette, (Margaret Susalla).

Men from the parish that are active as Priests are: Fr. William Rutkowski, Son of Mr. & Mrs. Clarence Rutkowski and Father Dennis Kucharczyk, son of Mr. & Mrs. Harold Kucharczyk.

Men from the parish that entered the religious life temporarily are; Joseph Buchkowski Jr, Eugene Susalla, Leonard Susalla, Marshall Lackowski, Joseph Pawlowski and David Romzek.

Some Sisters who served at St. Mary's School were: 1889-92, Sr. Mary Josepha Zarach, 1892-1893, Sr. Mary Joanne Pukownik, 1893-96, Sr. Mary Cunegunda Kowalska, 1896-98, Sr. Mary Adiuta Slupecka, 1898-1900, Sr. Mary Nepomucene Rzezab, 1900-01, Sr. Mary Theotima Dorff, 1903-05, Sr. Mary Brunona, 1905-06, Sr. Mary Marcelline Slupecka, 1906-07, Sr. Mary Agnes Oswaldowska, 1907-08, Sr. Mary Patricia Przytarska, 1908-10, Sr. Mary Marcella Wasilewska, 1910-16, Sr. Mary Innocenta Grupzynska, 1916-21, Sr. Mary Honoria Kempczynska, 1921-23, Sr. Mary Venancia Kosmicka, 1923-26, Sr. Mary Benjamin Golinska, 1926-30, Sr. Mary Catherine Pyterek, 1930-31, Sr. Mary Luchesia Guss, 1932-32, Sr. Mary Philipina Owczarzak, 1932-38, Sr. Mary Maura Musial, 1938-41, Sr. Mary Chrysostom Lodowska, 1941-42, Sr. Mary Evelyn Andrysiak, 1942-45, Sr. Mary Christopher Karamol, 1945-51, Sr. Mary Thomas Kowalska, 1951-54, Sr. Mary Mildred (Nepomunene) Bandy, 1954-57, Sr. Mary Pacifica Andrezejewska, 1957-60, Sr. Mary Seraphim Wozniak, 1960-66, Sr. Mary Janine Marie (Henry) Filipowicz, 1966-69, Sr. Mary Goodwin (Dobrosława) Hahn, 1969-72, Sr. Mary Joanne Marie (Ronald) Gwizdala, 1972-77, Sr. Mary Gerald Budnik, 1977-83, Sr. Mary Edwardine Stoppa, 1978-89, Sr. Mary Mercita Kula, 1989, Sr. Mary Thaddea Meyers, Sr. Mary Lorenzo to the closing of school.

The Anthony Jezak family bought the log cabin in the 1930's and sold it to their daughter Sabina Susalla in 1945. The home and an acre of land were both purchased for \$1000.

The Log House was originally on the corner of Parisville and Purdy Roads. It was donated to St. Mary's Church in 1978 by Mr. and Mrs. Alex Susalla and moved to the present site in 1979. The Log House has been in the family of Mrs. Susalla, the daughter of Anton and Marianna (Kucharczyk)

Jezak, for many years.

When the museum was first moved on the site it was set up by Stanley and Marilyn Rutkowski. They managed it for four to five years. Later it was taken over by Clem Ulfig, Beatrice Kubacki and Pat Vogel with some help from Don Susalla. It is normally open three to four times a year or an appointment can be made.

The Log House was restored to its original look on the exterior and the interior is tastefully furnished and decorated. The museum has pictures of early Parisville picnics and the church that was destroyed by fire in October of 1974.

There is a collection of chalices and other religious articles that had been stored in other buildings on the property when the fire occurred, such as a statue of St. Hedwig, an incense burner and a press to make communion wafers. There is a First Communion certificate dated 1888, and pictures of several of the confirmation classes from the church.

The stamp to place the official seal of the church on sacramental documents is also in the museum. There is a letter from Michigan electric Power Co. with an agreement of supplying power to Paris Township for \$2,750.00.

There are newspaper clippings on the History of the Church, boasting it as the "Oldest Polish Catholic Settlement in America."

Another clipping indicates that the First Mission in Parisville had its beginnings in 1852. The Polish American Journal important dates in History records that on July 1, 1847, (The Founding of Parisville, Polish Settlement in Michigan)

The museum also includes clippings about the first white woman born in the settlement, Joanna Jezak, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Slovik. She was born in a wigwam because the log cabin wasn't yet completed.

The museum also has a collection of items that were common to the area, such as a bean picker, butter churns, tobacco cutter, an assortment of crocks and tool used on the farms.

It also houses many document, maps, census records, family histories, photos, slides of the past, books, drawings and paintings, portraits of the early settlers, and records.