



Holy Angels Catholic Church 1938-2017

As far back as 100 years ago, this area of West Tennessee had priests from Kentucky and missionaries of the Humboldt Mission offer Masses in the homes of Dyersburg residents. In 1938, a “station” was formed with Fr. William Neidert as the pastor. In February 1939, the Most Reverend William L. Adrian, Bishop of Nashville gave permission to Father Neidert for the construction of a new church – the only Catholic Church on US Hwy 51 between Memphis and Union City.

On July 10, 1939, ground was broken for the church on the corner of Charles and Fowlkes Streets. On November 26, 1939, the cornerstone was laid by Bishop Adrian. Holy Angels developed as a Mission of Humboldt in 1940. Masses were held twice a month in the church basement until the dedication in 1946.

Father Morris Stritch constructed the rectory on Charles Street in late 1948. Property on the north side of the church was obtained in 1961 for an educational building. In 1965, Holy Angels started their first renovation project and made the first addition to the church since it was built in 1940. In addition to the interior of the church being redecorated, a new wing was added to the church which would house the much needed classrooms for the Religious Education Program, the nursery and a large conference room. With the addition of classrooms, Holy Angels was able to offer more specialized instruction to the children and adults of the parish. On January 27, 1991, the blessing of the bells for the church took place. The bells were named Ruth, Ann, Veronica and Elizabeth. A concert and blessing of the organ was held on September 12, 1963.

Through the years, more property was purchased and changes were made. Construction was started on the parish hall with completion and dedication by Bishop J. Terry Steib in December on 1998. Early in 2002, ground breaking for a new rectory facing Tucker Street took place and Bishop Steib dedicated this house on June 19, 2002. As of July 2008, the church now owns all of the surrounding property.

With the growth of Holy Angels over the last 76 years, from just a handful of members in the beginning to over 580 members today, the following liturgical, evangelization and community enrichment ministries have been established. These ministries offer the parishioners of Holy Angels

numerous ways to serve and be served. They give us opportunities to put our talents to use in serving others in our parish and the community.

In 1981, the Knights of Columbus Council #7838 was chartered with 34 members and now fills the roll of the original Men's Club in the parish. They help the pastor by providing any necessary help with parish and church projects. Their annual money making project is their famous Cajun Chicken Sale.

Parishioners volunteer to be altar servers, cantors, instrumentalists, lectors, Eucharistic ministers, offertory honor families, sacristans and ushers. They enhance our worship, encourage active participation and help keep God's house in order. These are active Liturgical Ministries at Holy Angels.

Spiritual companions and sponsors for adults receiving instruction in the Catholic faith (RCIA); sacramental preparation instructors for students preparing to receive First Penance, First Communion and Confirmation; instructors and directors for weekly religious education classes (PRE); vacation bible school directors and teachers and youth group director are all active evangelization ministries at Holy Angels. They help to develop community, lead people to worship and prayer and motivate us to serve others.

Carpentry and construction, grounds beautification, parish archivist, church nursery, Tree of Love, Thanksgiving Food Drive, parish gatherings, a welcoming committee, pastoral council, finance committee and ministry to the sick and prison inmates are all active community enrichment ministries at Holy Angels. Each November, the youth in the 9th – 12th grade PRE classes sponsor the "Thanksgiving Food Dive" and with the food items collected, provide a Thanksgiving Dinner for three needy families in our parish. Each December, the youth again sponsor the "Tree of Love". Through this project, they collect food and household items to re-stock the pantry at the Salvation Army.

In November 2007, a parish-wide effort to raise fund to purchase the remaining piece of property on Fowlkes Street took place; \$32,000 in cash donations was received from our parishioners who gave so generously. Holy Angels Catholic Church celebrated its 75th Anniversary in 2015-2016. Father Robert J. Stellini is the current pastor of Holy Angels. In 1931 there were just 11 members. Today, there are over 220 families and 580 parishioners.

Pastors of Holy Angels Catholic Church – Dyersburg, Tennessee

1938-1947	Reverend William G. Neidert
1947-1951	Reverend Morris Stritch
1951-1957	Reverend Edward O. Heymer
1957-1967	Reverend J. A. Rudisill
1967-1977	Reverend Joseph L. Fisher
1977-1978	Reverend William F. Davis
1978-1982	Reverend David M. Foley
1982-1986	Reverend Alfred F. Graham
1986-1991	Reverend Charles A. Bauer
1991-1994	Reverend John A. Aiello
1994-2006	Reverend Elbert R. Callis
2006-2010	Reverend Russell D. Harbaugh
2010-	Reverend Robert J. Stellini