

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

A HISTORY

1960 ~ 2010

DIRECTORY



25 PURDUE AVENUE, OAKLAND, NEW JERSEY

LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear Parish Family:

Our friends and neighbors, Ponds Reformed Church, are celebrating a milestone this year: three hundred years since their founding! We, the Church of Lady of Perpetual Help, also celebrate a milestone: fifty years since our founding! While Ponds Church can look back on a long history, we look at a much shorter one – one that includes parishioners who have been here since our founding, members who once belonged to Saint Elizabeth's Church (Wyckoff) before Oakland was given its very own parish.

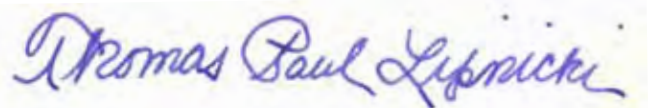
This is the fifth time that our Parish has published a Photo Directory – and yes, there are members in this edition who have been in all four previous ones! What a blessing that some of our Founders are still among us! What a tradition of faith handed down from one generation to the next!

Our Fiftieth Anniversary Year is one Jubilee! We are proud of what we've accomplished, celebrate who we now are, and look forward to what is yet to be achieved. This Anniversary Photo Directory is so much more than individual parishioner's pictures: it is an annals: history both written and visual.

All of us extend our thanks to the many people who worked to make this Directory a reality; those who posed for pictures, those who contributed both pictures and memories, those who wrote and edited, those who formatted and who made final decisions with our publisher, Olan Mills.

Enjoy this Golden Jubilee Directory and enjoy putting names on all of the faces you recognize as fellow members of your Parish Family!

Sincerely,



Reverend Thomas Paul Lipnicki

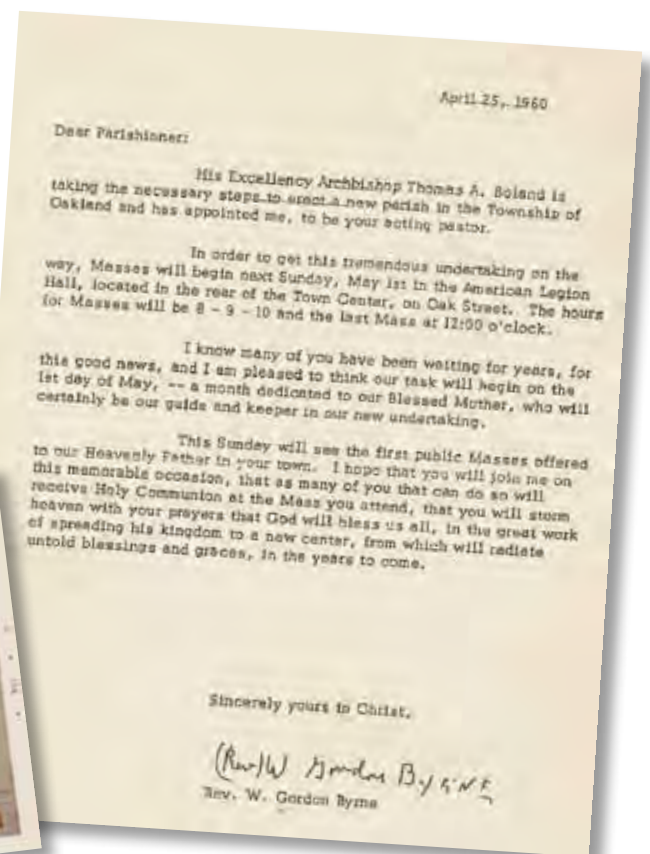
BIRTH OF A PARISH

As the population of Oakland rose dramatically in the 1960's, Archbishop Thomas A. Boland provided for Oakland Catholics by establishing them as a mission church carved out of the parish of St. Elizabeth in Wyckoff. On April 25, 1960, Father W. Gordon Byrne visited all the prospective parishioners, introducing himself as the pastor of the new community. On June 26, the mission received its name, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Roman Catholic Church, and on July 2, its designation changed from a mission church to an official parish. From May 1, 1960, until the completion of the church building in June of 1962, the parish celebrated Sunday Masses in the American Legion Hall, and religious education classes were taught in the basement of the Hall by the Sisters of Charity of Convent Station from Immaculate Conception School in Mahwah. In July 1960, Father Byrne and his assistant, Father John B. Konen, moved into the rectory at 11 Loyola Place, and weekday Masses, baptisms, and confessions began to be celebrated in the chapel of the rectory.

BUILDING A NEW CHURCH HOUSE, CONVENT AND SCHOOL

In September 1960, Father Byrne presented plans for the construction of a Church House, a convent, and a school to be built on property bordering Franklin and Purdue Avenues. Families were so eager to have a church and a school in Oakland that in only two hours, on October 13, 1960, the men of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church and School Committee obtained \$350,000 in pledges from Catholic families for the building project.

Ground was broken on March 12, 1961. A little over a year later, on Saturday, June 16, 1962, 148 children received First Holy Communion in the new church and on Sunday, June 17, Sunday Mass was celebrated there for the first time. The new church, convent, and school were formally dedicated on September 8, 1962.



PARISHIONER LETTER –
Invitation to join the church sent by Rev. W. Gordon Byrne in April 1960

RENOVATING OUR CHURCH HOUSE

When OLPH parish was formed, one section of the school building was constructed as a gymnasium. The parish planned to use that gymnasium as a temporary Church House until a permanent one could be funded and built. A sacristy was added; confessionals were recessed into the walls; a solid wooden reredos was constructed; a sanctuary was set apart by a communion rail; an altar and ambo were installed; an organ was placed in a loft; pews were placed for the congregation; and statues and Stations of the Cross were installed. From 1962 until 2009, this had been the Church House of Our Lady of Perpetual Help; the school never did get its gym. Minor alterations in accordance with the liturgical changes of Vatican II occurred in 1967.

When it became clear that a new Church House would not be added, Father Robert A. Connors began to plan for the renovation of the “church in the gym” so that it would be a more appropriate place for the celebration of the liturgy. When the archdiocese placed a freeze on all construction for several years, his plan was deferred. After Father Thomas Paul Lipnicki arrived as pastor, he became the inspiration and the leader of a renovation effort called “Generations of Faith.” Father Lipnicki formed a Renovation Committee to advise on the design of the new interior, to manage fund raising, and to plan the eventual dedication and celebration when the renovation was completed. In 2004, the first of several open parish meetings occurred during which Father John Chadwick explained to parishioners the theological and liturgical requirements for appropriate church renovation. Finally, the architect presented to the parish community four design choices for the renovated church.

PLEDGES AND CONSTRUCTION

Members of the Capital Campaign Committee visited parishioners’ homes, bringing with them a DVD of the design of the new interior of the church. They explained the fund raising process and requested donations toward the estimated cost of \$1.5 million. Gifts and pledges of all sizes were made in support of our parish project. On Memorial Day weekend 2008, the doors of the Church House were closed and all religious services were moved to Connors Hall. At that time, Father Lipnicki wrote, “Being in a smaller venue with a lower ceiling, the responses seemed louder and the singing fuller and even seemingly more joyous! Any inconveniences were truly minor ones and everyone had a positive attitude as together we began this step on our Community’s journey of faith.” The demolition of the old Church House interior began. For six months Father Lipnicki and the building committee oversaw the progress being made toward the goal of being back in the renovated Church House before Christmas 2008.

DEDICATION

On Saturday, November 29, 2008, we came back home to our Church House. Our neighboring pastor, His Excellency, the Most Reverend John Walter Flesey, presided at the first Mass of the new liturgical year – the First Sunday of Advent – rededicating our Church House and consecrating our new altar. The clergy and lay ministers gathered in the open space at the entrance to the church, just behind the magnificent granite baptismal font. Clear water poured from a round glass bowl at its top and cascaded over the edge into a rectangular pool, and then on into a second larger rectangle that was the base. The gently flowing water’s delicate splash from one level to the next provided a refreshing and welcoming focus as people entered the building. As the ministers formed around the font, the congregation walked wide-eyed into the new place of prayer. Many saw first the striking new crucifix made of a tree trunk with bark still attached. High up on the tall cross, which reached almost to the ceiling, was the Corpus. The image of Christ that had been in the original church now hung on this rough-hewn cross. Other parishioners focused on the fourteen stained glass windows, seven on one side depicting events from the Old Testament and seven on the other side depicting events from the New Testament.



All, however, were drawn to the centerpiece of the entire space, the large granite and wood square table, the new altar. Set forward in the raised sanctuary, in front of a carved, open-work wooden reredos, the altar draws all eyes to the place of celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy. Together with a matching ambo for the proclamation of the word, this altar is the point of communion of the praying congregation. To the side of the sanctuary, facing the congregation, the choir sat in their new position ready to lead us in song.

The congregation took their places in the pews, angled around the altar, creating a sense of oneness among the people. As the Eucharistic liturgy began, the congregation and the choir rose together as a burst of powerful organ music rang from the magnificent new organ. Under the masterful touch of Dr. Carmen Scialla, the Church House filled with the stirring sound of the hymn, "All Are Welcome." The congregation faced the center aisle where the clergy and lay ministers began their joyful and dignified walk toward the altar. In the front of the procession, a cross bearer led four parishioners carrying colorful banners. Father Jerome Bracken, Father Thomas Paul Lipnicki, Father Thomas Dente, and Bishop John Flesey followed. One moving moment of the rededication liturgy was the careful and reverent anointing of the altar by Bishop Flesey. After the Mass, the evening's celebration continued with dinner, fellowship and dancing at Oakland's Portobello Restaurant.

BECOMING A PARISH FAMILY

The people who celebrate in the OLPH Church House have become a caring parish family as they have prayed, played, and ministered together for fifty years. From the start, the Rosary Altar Society, the Holy Name Society, the parish school, and the liturgy created a strong bond of community among the members of OLPH parish.

On May 12, 1960, only 12 days after the first Mass in the American Legion Hall, women of the parish gathered for the first meeting of the Rosary Altar Society. Men of the parish formed a chapter of the Holy Name Society. These parish societies called on the sick in their homes and in the hospital; raised funds for the Church House and the school; cared for the school building, the Church House and the altar; provided a place of caring community for the women and men of the parish; and fostered the spiritual lives of its members. The Rosary Altar Society held a monthly day of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament; hosted discussion groups on religious subjects in their homes; had communion breakfasts with invited speakers addressing religious subjects; maintained a religious library for its members; and provided religious books to the Oakland Public Library for the use of students in town. The Holy Name Society had benediction before each meeting; participated in nocturnal adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; held communion breakfasts; had regular discussions with the assistance of the priests on topics pertaining to religion and the church; and encouraged its members to make an annual retreat. In these varied activities, the Rosary Altar Society and the Holy Name Society planted the seeds of the many different ministries in which parishioners of OLPH have participated for the last fifty years. The Holy Name Society continued for a few years and the Rosary Altar Society existed until 1990.



FATHER KONEN & THE HOLY NAME SOCIETY – 1965

When the school opened in 1962, parents came together to staff the cafeteria for their children; monitor children on the playground during lunchtime; raise funds; clean the school building; drive the school bus; and serve as finance committee and school board members.

In 1972, Broadway came to OLPH. Bernice Kraus and Ted Swenson collaborated on the first parish musical called "The Riverboat Revue." The headliners in this modern white-face minstrel were backed by a 25 voice chorus that returned us all to days gone by. A very talented group of workers built a beautiful riverboat — paddle wheel and all — that served as the stage for the performance.

The show was such a success that Bernice wrote and Ted directed a second show in 1976 called "In One Year and Out the Other." Comedy topped the bill, and the chorus entertained the audience with favorite songs from years past. All this took place in a café called "Joe's Place," aptly named after Father Hearn.

Liturgical participation also drew the members of the community together. By 1965, there were 110 altar boys, 20 members of the adult choir, 100 members of the children's choir, and 18 men serving in the newly established role of commentator during the liturgy.



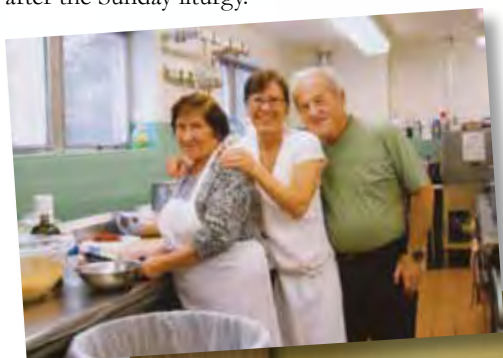
ROSARY SOCIETY – Circa 1980

BECOMING A PARISH FAMILY (CONT.)

After the groups that formed in the early years disbanded, others developed, continuing to build a sense of community in the parish. Today we have the M.O.M.S. group for mothers of young families, the Perpetual Red Hats for women enjoying their mature years, and men's and women's prayer groups and communion breakfasts. Father Lipnicki instituted a yearly gathering of the men of the parish for a St. Joseph's Day Mass and dinner. The Parish and Family Life committee brings us all together several times a year for social events. A traditional gathering is the parish picnic that has been held every September for at least 20 years. Adding to our spirit-building St. Patrick's Day parties of years gone by, we have recently had a Cinco de Mayo Fiesta, a Polish Night, and an Italian Festival Night. Young families enjoy an Easter Egg Hunt, a Halloween celebration, and Snacks with Santa. This year we have celebrated different groups within the parish at ten monthly brunches after the Sunday liturgy.



Our parish nurtures our bonding as a family through our efforts to remember those who have gone before us and who built this community. Since his arrival, Father Thomas Paul Lipnicki has made it a practice to name rooms and buildings in the parish after former pastors and parish ministers. He named the all-purpose room Connors Hall, dedicating it in honor of Father Robert Connors, our pastor for twenty years. He designated a large meeting room in the parish center, the Byrne Room, in honor of our founding pastor, Father W. Gordon Byrne. This room was originally a chapel in what was then the convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph. To honor the Sisters of St. Joseph, who served our parish community from its founding until 2004, Father Lipnicki called the present parish center St. Joseph Hall. Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, like the Church universal, is a communion of all who have ever been called here: those still here, those who have moved on to other communities and those who have preceded us in building this family of faith.



ITALIAN NIGHT



GRANDPARENT'S DAY



M.O.M.S. GROUP



FAMILY PICNIC
Pie Eating Contest Winner - 2009



PERPETUAL RED HAT SOCIETY

VATICAN II & THE PARISH

1966 Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish saw its first big change. Our founding pastor, Father Byrne, was transferred to Caldwell and Father Joseph A. Hearn became our new pastor. Father Hearn, along with his associates, Father Patrick Leonard and Father Robert Wyrwa, would guide us through the beginning of the changes introduced by the Second Vatican Council.

1967 We removed the traditional altar from the back wall of the sanctuary and installed an altar table farther out toward the congregation so that the priest could preside over the Eucharistic liturgy while facing the assembly.

1970 Father Hearn received permission to celebrate one of the Sunday Masses on Saturday evening.

1971 A 9 am children's liturgy, celebrated in the all purpose room, was added to the Sunday Mass schedule.

1972 The archbishop instructed all parishes that children would now receive the Sacrament of Penance in grade 4 instead of grade 2.

1973 Lay liturgy teams were formed to help prepare the liturgies for Sundays and Holy Days. These five teams met weekly to discuss the readings for the coming Sunday, to choose the penitential rite prayers, to write the general intercessions, and to confer with the music minister on the selection of appropriate music for that week's liturgy.

New forms of adult spirituality became part of our parish life. In 1973, Our Lady of Perpetual Help was one of the first parishes in the nation to pre-test the Renew program, a gathering of adults in their homes to pray together, share faith and discuss matters of faith and morality.

A charismatic prayer group began meeting in the parish. The charismatic renewal urged Catholics to reflect on and experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives and to open their hearts to the workings of the Holy Spirit within them. Of those who participated in a "Life in the Spirit" seminar, some subsequently joined the charismatic prayer group and engaged in enthusiastic prayer meetings, proclaiming that Jesus is Lord, speaking in tongues, teaching and prophesying as the Spirit led them. They practiced works of charity within the charismatic community and tried to live as the early Christians did in the Acts of the Apostles, sharing their wealth and bearing each other's burdens. In spite of the good intentions of all involved, there was tension



REV. W. GORDON BYRNE

between the members of the charismatic prayer group and other members of the parish over issues of authority within the parish. The group at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church met from 1973 until it was disbanded in 1978.

1974 The first Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist were trained and began distributing the Eucharist at Mass and bringing communion to those confined to their homes and in the local nursing home.

Lay teams were formed to provide baptismal catechesis to prepare expectant parents for the baptism of their children.

Leaders of song became part of the Sunday liturgy and the congregation was encouraged to sing during the liturgy.

1977 The first full-time lay youth minister, Frank McCann, was hired.

1978 Parishioners were granted permission to have Mass celebrated in their homes and many requested that the priests do this for them.

Father Robert Connors was assigned as pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church and Father Hearn remained as an associate, along with newly assigned Father William Hatcher.

1979 The first lectors were installed to proclaim the readings during the liturgy.



REV. JOSEPH A. HEARN



REV. ROBERT A. CONNORS

LAY MINISTRY



PRIME TIMERS



THURSDAY BIBLE GROUP



AFTERNOON W/ JESUS – 2009

From 1978 to 1985, Father Connors had the assistance of one or two priests on staff. In addition, our pastors have had the help of weekend assistants over the years. Father Jerome Bracken became our weekend assistant in September 1989 and still serves our community in that capacity twenty years later. However, in 1985 Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish became a “one resident priest” parish. This was true for Father Connors from 1985 until 1998, and has continued with Father Thomas Paul Lipnicki to the present day.

Father Connors, and after him, Father Lipnicki have led our parish without the help of another resident priest. In this situation, professional and volunteer lay ministry grew.

As we responded to the Vatican II call to live out our baptismal vocation to ministry, and as the number of priests assigned to OLPH Parish diminished, the ministries of the parish became organized in a series of circles around the pastor. Father Connors described the organization supporting our broadened involvement in ministry as follows: in the center was the pastor; in the first ring were the professional staff members -- lay people and religious sisters who had training and experience in various ministries; and in a ring around each of those staff people were the lay leaders

of various groups. Finally, within each group, each of us found a place to live out our call to discipleship and ministry.

Some of the professional staff ministers over the years served as:

- Directors of Religious Education overseeing the religious education of our children.
- Directors of Early Childhood Education providing care and education for children from 2 1/2 years of age through kindergarten.
- Youth Ministers serving the youth and young adults.
- Ministers of Social Concerns organizing outreach to those in need and advocacy for justice and peace.
- Ministers for Adult Faith Enrichment fostering the maturing faith of adults in the church community and representing OLPH in wider groups supporting adult growth in Christian faith.
- Ministers of Liturgy and Spiritual Life fostering the prayer life of the community.
- Music Ministers enhancing our communal prayer experiences by providing the music and training the choirs for our liturgical services.
- Ministers of Parish and Family Life organizing the celebration of our life as a family through social events.

Sister Harriet Corrigan, SSJ, who served first as Pastoral Associate for Liturgy and then for Adult Faith Formation, commented in August 2009 that the parishioners themselves, supported by the staff, have committed themselves to service of the parish; therefore, the various activities of the parish go on after staff members are replaced.

The acceptance of our call to responsible stewardship has been drawn forth by the invitation of the community. Around 1992, we conducted a stewardship drive in which a team of parishioners visited every home in the parish and invited us all to reflect on our gifts and make faith-filled commitments to share what we have been given of time, talent, and treasure. The following history of our ministries indicates some of the ways people have responded to such invitations over the years.



DR. CARMEN SCIALLA & MR. GUS SAULNIER
Music Ministry

EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN

From 1960 to 1962, Sisters of Charity of Convent Station came to Oakland each week to provide religious education for our children. When the convent and school were completed in 1962, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chestnut Hill taught religious education classes after the school day for students not enrolled in Our Lady of Perpetual Help School. Later, an Office of Religious Education was established and various lay people assisted in the faith formation of the children as volunteer teachers and as coordinators. We hired professional directors of religious education to oversee the program. By 1967, the Religious Education Department also assumed responsibility for the small group discussions held in the homes of the Rosary Altar Society members.

PARISH SCHOOL

On September 6, 1962, Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, staffed by four Sisters of St. Joseph of Chestnut Hill and by lay teachers, opened with 425 students enrolled. The new school had capacity for 800 students in its 16 classrooms, and was able to serve 400 children at a time in its cafeteria and fully equipped kitchen. By 1965, there were 720 students enrolled in the school. In 1968, the school opened its first kindergarten. In that same year, the parish added an annex to the school, which provided a library, 10 new classrooms, and expanded facilities for religious education students. Ten new teachers were added to the 17 already on staff. The parish planned the addition so that the school could accommodate 1000 students. The cost of construction was estimated at \$300,000.



OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP GRADUATING CLASS OF 1979

School enrollment peaked in the mid-1970s, with the graduating class of 1974 numbering 85 students. The school continued to be a center of parish life for many families who volunteered for the home school association, for the school board and the finance committee and who continued to volunteer time in the cafeteria, the gym classes, and the schoolyard. During the late 1970s and the 1980s, enrollment declined and in 1991, the school was closed. Since 1992, the school building has been rented by The Japanese Educational Institute of New York. Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, from 1991 until now, has subsidized the schools located at St. Elizabeth in Wyckoff and at Most Blessed Sacrament in Franklin Lakes, and our parish families may enroll their children in either of these two schools at a reduced in-parish rate.



1971 GIRLS TRACK TEAM HOLDING TROPHY AWARDED TO OLPH BY BERGEN COUNTY CYO

Sr. Robert asked volunteers to start a track team for students in OLPH School. With a few parent volunteers and several sisters who helped on Saturdays, Coach George Burns, in 1971, recruited 100 boys and girls for the school's first ever track team. After 3 months of practice, the team ran in CYO meets throughout Bergen County. At the last track meet of the season, the OLPH team marched out onto the field in perfect formation, 90 to 100 strong. The spectators cheered and Coach Burns was one proud coach as the team won first place in Bergen County CYO track.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

As enrollment in the parish school declined, the religious education program grew. Since 1991, the religious education of the vast majority of parish children has occurred within this program. Originally, each student was assigned to a class with students of the same age for a traditional classroom instruction experience. In the 1980s, some families provided instruction in their homes for groups of children of different ages. Today almost 600 children and their families participate in the religious education program from grades K through 8. Some choose to attend family based courses held on Sundays, and some choose traditional after school classes for children only. As Directors of Religious Education, Mrs. Eileen Morgan began a family based religious education program and Mrs. Colleen Jagde has expanded that option, offering families the opportunity to gather twice a month to grow together in the faith. Over 125 volunteers share their faith with the families in this program.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The education of very young children began at OLPH as a response to societal changes that led to families with both parents in the work force. Seeing a need, OLPH School added a pre-K class for four year olds. Then, in 1987, the school added an Early Childhood Program for two and three year olds. When the parish school closed in 1991, early childhood education, including kindergarten, continued as an independent school under the direction of Mrs. Jerilyn Keenan. Today this school provides a full-day kindergarten, as well as full-day and half-day pre-school programs, enrolling children from age 2 1/2 through kindergarten. The kindergarten program's major curriculum areas of reading, math, science, social studies, and language skills are updated every year. The full-day schedule provides ample time to balance learning experiences with play. The school also provides before- and after-care for children enrolled in the program.



MINISTERING WITH YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

Shortly after the parish was formed, Father Konen contacted a number of parishioners seeking their help in organizing a Boy Scout troop. Bernie Harrsch became the first Institutional Representative and the troop was chartered on January 1, 1963, with the names of 32 boys and 13 adults appearing on that first charter. Jack Frank was the first scoutmaster and Tom Houghton and Ted Swenson served on the committee. The cub pack was formed shortly thereafter. Engaging in high adventure wilderness camping and canoeing in the Saranac Lake area, the troop earned the name Pathfinders. The OLPH-sponsored Pathfinders were responsible for charting many trails and canoeing waterways, which are still used today. To date, 52 scouts have attained the rank of Eagle and the troop continues to thrive and fulfill Father Konen's dream.



BSA
TROOP #49

Understanding the importance of empowering young people, our parish Youth Ministry program assists them in determining the goals of their youth group and the programs they will initiate and carry out. Over the years, the youth of the parish have engaged in service projects, retreats, faith-sharing groups, discussion groups, and social activities. One youth group initiative that profoundly impacted our parish was their presentation of the Living Stations of the Cross for 25 years from 1981 until 2005. The youth of OLPH spent every Lent rehearsing the dialogue, actions, and music of a re-enactment of the Stations of the Cross. With the volunteer help of Anthony Russo, Adult Director; Rosemary Fuchs, Costume Designer; Lee Eilert, Musical Director and Organist; and Joyce Rockwell, the faithful driver of their old green bus, the youth group enhanced the appreciation of the passion of Jesus for the parish community and for members of other parishes in which they presented the Living Stations.

Today, the youth group has expanded to include a program for young people of middle school age, as well as a ministry

to young adults. Brian Salvatore, our current Youth Minister, said that he is very proud of the young people who have participated in the Antioch Weekend, a retreat that is wholly prepared and presented by the youth of the parish for the youth of the parish. For the last six years, from August through February, teams have met regularly to pray together and to plan the retreats for their peers.

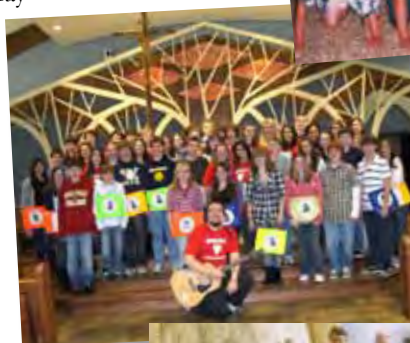
Michelle Hughes-Gray Hans, a former Youth Minister, said that the parish has always provided opportunities for young people to minister within the wider parish community. In fact, when they were in the fifth grade, she and her friends were lectors at the Sunday evening Mass and were altar servers by seventh grade. She said she is happy to see today's young people assisting with the religious education classes for younger children and volunteering to assist in Vacation Bible School and in the Children's Liturgy of the Word on Sundays.



LIVING
STATIONS



YOUTH
GROUP 1991



ANTIOCH 2010



KEARNY RETREAT CENTER

CELEBRATING LITURGY

CELEBRATING LITURGY

When asked what she thought significant in her memories of her time in OLPH, Sister Sandra De Masi, SSJ, said that she was impressed by the emphasis placed on the liturgy and the involvement of so many people in the liturgical life of the parish long before this became a reality in other parishes. In the late 1970s, we initiated liturgy planning teams and the various ministries of Cantor, Lector and Eucharistic Minister. In 1982, Father Connors hired Mrs. Marilyn Keller as Liturgy Coordinator and member of the parish staff. She and the ministers who followed in that position supported parishioner involvement in liturgical ministries. Today we have liturgy planners, cantors, altar servers, greeters, ushers, lectors, and Eucharistic ministers serving the community during the liturgy. Our greeters especially help to create the warm, welcoming atmosphere that so many parishioners mentioned as a characteristic of OLPH.

The ministry of Altar Server had an interesting development path at OLPH. Originally boys served as altar servers, and in 1987, adult men joined this ministry. In 1986, seventh grade girls obtained

permission to be altar servers during weekday funerals. When the parish school closed in 1991, we no longer had boys and girls in class who could be called out to serve at funerals. At that point, Sister Harriet Corrigan, SSJ, invited the men of the parish to be altar servers at these weekday funerals. Soon after the men began serving Mass, whole families started to minister together as altar servers.

In November 1994, girls received permanent permission to minister as altar servers. Today, men and women, boys and girls all minister as servers during Mass. Sister said that she was impressed with how accepting the parishioners were of the changes she saw take place during her time at OLPH, and she added that she thinks flexibility and a willingness to attempt new approaches are positive characteristics of the OLPH community.

The celebration of the Sacred Triduum has always inspired the deepest involvement of our community. Its liturgical events have been carefully prepared and reverently celebrated throughout the history of this parish, while reflecting



SISTER SANDY DE MASI
with students of the Parish, October 1990

the different gifts of the various liturgical ministers who served the parish. During the time Sister Celeste Mokrzycki, SSJ, was Pastoral Associate for Liturgy, the Easter Vigil was rich with sensory input, not only during the Service of Light but even during the Liturgy of the Word. Lights were darkened and God spoke to Abraham out of the darkness as he prepared to slay Isaac. The shofar was blown, and the story of the exodus from Egypt was told by Gus Saulnier leading us all in a rousing rendition of "Sing a song of freedom, God has won the victory; horse and chariot are cast into the sea." The readers and the sound and light crew practiced long before the evening came. Such drama caused all of us to reflect deeply on what we were hearing.



AND SHARING PRAYER

Music Ministry has always been a significant component of our liturgical celebrations. In 1960, under the volunteer leadership of Wilma Cammaro, 20 adults gathered to practice in her home. On Sunday mornings, they sang during Mass. Seated unceremoniously on empty wooden crates, they brought beauty to the worship of the community in the American Legion Hall. In 1962, when the original Church House was completed, they moved to the choir loft and enjoyed the accompaniment of Wilma on the new organ. When Wilma moved away, Sister Barbara Howard, SSJ, a teacher in the school, took over leading and accompanying the choir for a time. Around 1970, seeing that there was no organist, Lee Eilert volunteered to play for Sunday liturgies and soon became our Music Minister, working with the choir and the liturgy teams to create beautiful celebrations. Lee, relieved for short periods by other music ministers, served in this role until 1998. Today we enjoy the extraordinary talent of Dr. Carmen Scialla, composer, organist, and Director of Music for the parish. Our adult choir and our children's choir have presented an inspiring Advent Service of Readings and Song for over 10 years. When we renovated the Church House, one of our important additions was a new organ worthy of the extraordinary talents of our music minister and our choirs.



ROSARY ALTAR SOCIETY



SHARING PRAYER

Beyond the liturgical events and the Living Stations, we've also participated in another very moving spiritual experience during Holy Week. Since 2005, seven different parishioners each year have spoken to the community on the Seven Last Words of Christ. At the invitation of Father Lipnicki, and with his guidance, each of the seven parishioners spends Lent in prayer and reflection on one of the Seven Last Words of Christ as recorded in Scripture. During these weeks, they also meet and share their reflections with Father Lipnicki and with each other. Then from noon to 3 pm on Good Friday, the community gathers to listen as these, our brothers and sisters, drawing from their life experiences, speak about the meaning of the Seven Last Words. After each talk, the community reflects on the speaker's message as we listen to a song of the speaker's choosing.



OLPH HAS PRAYED TOGETHER IN VARIED WAYS OVER THE COURSE OF ITS HISTORY

- We began with novenas, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, Stations of the Cross during Lent, crowning of Mary during May, and days of adoration and nocturnal adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.
- In the 1970s, the charismatic prayer group prayed together each week.
- The Rosary Altar Society for many years prayed the Living Rosary every May and October. In 1990, after the society dissolved, the women of the parish continued this ritual. For 15 years, Cathy Carr took responsibility for this devotion and offered it to the Blessed Mother in memory of her parents. Until 2005, she gathered the women of the parish for a Living Rosary, in which over 60 women of the parish led the prayers during a candlelight recitation of the rosary.
- During the 1990s, we also gathered for Liturgy of the Hours praying Morning and Evening Prayer for the needs of the community.
- For several years, we had communal reconciliation services, during which the church filled with parishioners reflecting together on God's forgiveness, acknowledging their sins, and receiving general absolution from the presiding priest.
- Since 1982, parishioners have maintained a prayer chain. Those who volunteer for this ministry respond to requests for prayer from the community and spread the request to all members of the chain. They pray daily for the needs recommended to them.
- Today a group of parishioners gathers every morning to pray the rosary together before morning Mass.
- Separate groups of women and of men meet regularly to meditate and pray.

ENRICHING

SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES • RENEW

Adults seeking to deepen and enrich their faith began by forming discussion groups in their homes as soon as the parish formed in 1960. In 1973, when Renew was developing its program for small groups of adults to share faith, to explore teachings of the church, and to reach out in service to others, the co-founders, Father Thomas Kleissler and Father Thomas Ivory, chose OLPH as one of the first parishes in which to introduce the program. OLPH offered its already existing small faith-sharing communities as test groups for the Renew Program. Our first official Renew groups met during Lent 1979. Some of these early faith-sharing communities still exist today, 30 years later. They have participated in “Renew 2000,” in “Why Catholic?” and in “Healing the Body of Christ.” But more than this, they have continued as small Christian communities within the parish, with or without formal Renew programs.

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S CORNERSTONE

From 1962 until 1991, the parish school formed a natural center of parish life for school families and a pathway into the community for new families. When it closed in 1991, many new initiatives were introduced that, in different ways, continued to build community. One of the programs that invited parishioners to deeper spirituality and to stronger bonds with the community was the Cornerstone retreat program, begun at the request of Father Connors, with a Women's Cornerstone weekend prepared in 1996-1997. Each year from 1996 until 2003, teams of women planned and led an overnight retreat, during which they presented personal talks on aspects of the spiritual life and then joined the participants in roundtable faith-sharing discussions. Year after year, the women from one retreat gathered to plan and lead the next one. From these Cornerstone experiences, women's groups emerged that continue as small communities of prayer and sharing to this day. In 2004, women of the parish began to participate each year in a Journey retreat at Carmel Retreat House in Mahwah.

From 1998 to 2002, the men of the parish also planned and participated in Men's Cornerstone retreats. In celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the parish, both women's and men's Cornerstone retreats were held this year to invite others to reflect on their own spiritual lives and to enjoy the warm embrace of this community.

CURSILLO

For over four decades, members of the parish have made Cursillo retreats. Groups of cursillistas meet in Fourth-Day Groups and continue to live out the commitments they made during their retreats. They share their gifts with the rest of the parish community. One such group has taken responsibility for re-establishing Cornerstone this year.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

Since 1988, twenty adults and children of catechetical age have gone through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) and received Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist here at OLPH. Many more, coming from other Christian denominations, have been brought into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church, receiving Confirmation and Eucharist. The RCIA is a sacramental process by which those interested in becoming Catholic are gradually formed in the faith by the parish community. During the RCIA process, various rituals mark stages of conversion for the candidates, leading to the Easter Vigil when the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) are received for the first time.

As members of the RCIA team, parishioners have journeyed with these inquirers and catechumens. Through prayer, “breaking open” the Sunday Scriptures, and discussion of the Church's teachings and practices, the team helps the seekers to discern and welcome God's call to live life to the fullest and to serve the mission of Jesus in their own lives. In this way, the RCIA process nourishes the faith of the team and the parish, as well as that of the candidates.



WOMEN'S CORNERSTONE



ADULT FAITH ENRICHMENT



MEN'S PRAYER GROUP – 2010



CIRCLE OF LIGHT GROUP – 2010

ADULT FAITH

PREPARATION FOR BAPTISM OF CHILDREN

The Baptism Team at Our Lady of Perpetual Help assists new parents prepare for the sacrament of Baptism. Catechesis takes place in small group sessions where team members encourage new parents to renew their own baptismal promises, and assist them as they prepare to bring their new creations to rebirth in Christ. On Baptism day, team members are present to assist parents, families, and the presider.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

In the early days of the parish, the Rosary Altar and Holy Name societies brought in speakers to teach and to enrich their faith and understanding. Because OLPH was just down the road from the archdiocesan seminary at Darlington, the people of the parish often attended short courses there during Lent, keeping current on theological developments in the church. From 1986 through 2009, members of a Christian Book Discussion Group met monthly to discuss books they read on theological or spiritual themes. Parishioners still attend courses offered by the G.I.F.T. program, a cooperative ministry of local parishes that offers adult education in the faith. For a while OLPH was one of the sponsoring parishes in that group. The parish participated in "The Fig Orchard," an ecumenical initiative of local churches which provided adults with an opportunity to understand the faith of other Christian churches. Members of the OLPH community also participated in a series of presentations of an interfaith panel, "Legacy of the Peoples of the Book," taking place at the Jewish synagogue in town. They explored the beliefs and practices of Jews, Muslims, Catholics, and Protestants in the areas of morality, doctrine, roles of women, medical ethics, and education of children regarding other religions.

The parish has hosted many distinguished presenters during the years for Lenten programs, parish missions, and other events.



RITE OF ACCEPTANCE RCIA – 2009

SCRIPTURE STUDY

Our first Minister of Adult Faith Enrichment, Sister Margaret Michael Costello, SSJ, responded to the request of parishioner Rose Stenger and established the first Scripture Study group in 1985. Marilyn Gorman explained how the group has expanded their understanding over the 24 years they have been meeting, beginning with very simple materials and moving on to the Little Rock Series, always drawing more meaning from study and reflection on the Holy Scriptures.



BAPTISMAL FONT



BAPTISM TEAM – 2009



REACHING OUT SOCIAL CONCERNS MINISTRY

CARING FOR EACH OTHER AND THE PEOPLE OF OAKLAND

From its inception the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help has responded to the needs of the people of Oakland and to those beyond our town.

1964 A Helping Hands Committee assisted parishioners dealing with sickness or death in the family by shopping for them, preparing meals, doing household chores, and providing child care during the emergency.

1973 The Christian Services Committee joined with other churches and the synagogue in town to offer similar assistance to the people of Oakland.

1979 For a while, an "Emergency Supply Program" stored donated food, clothing, and small household appliances for the needs of people during floods, sickness, death or unemployment of a family member.

1980 – PRESENT Meals on Wheels volunteers from OLPH and other churches in Oakland deliver meals to those confined to home and unable to prepare their own meals.

1986 "Rainbows for All God's Children" reached out to children affected by the loss of a parent through death, divorce or separation.

Adopt-a-Grandparent reached out to residents at Oakland Care Center through a program, in which young people from the parish visited the elderly residents.

1986 – PRESENT The parish has served those facing bereavement through a variety of volunteer ministries which have lasted for different periods of time. In 1986,

the Bereavement Ministry provided trained volunteers to listen to grieving family members. It also surrounded the family with care during the funeral by preparing and delivering food to the house, preparing and serving a meal after the funeral service, house sitting during the funeral, taking care of young children during the period of wake and funeral, supplying transportation as needed, praying the rosary at the wake, and helping to prepare the funeral liturgy. In 2002, a Resurrection Ministry was initiated in which over 80 parishioners were notified of funerals and came to the funeral Mass to show the community's support for the grieving families. In 2004, a bereavement support group was re-established.

1991 The Friendly Neighbors Ministry was established to provide services in an emergency to anyone in Oakland facing a temporary need. Over 350 parishioners volunteered to perform services as varied as transportation, cooking meals, caring for children, shopping, providing general legal or accounting information, performing electrical, plumbing or carpentry work, and visiting someone confined to home for a time.

2000 – PRESENT The parish has reached out to those confined to home or to Oakland Care Center with a video of the 5 pm Mass each week, broadcast on the cable channel for Oakland.

2001 Father Lipnicki introduced a new professional ministry to coordinate our response to the social concerns needs of the parish. Mrs. Kate Unger became our first Parish Nurse. Kate visits the sick and the homebound, answers



SOCIAL CONCERNS MINISTRY – 2009

health care questions of parishioners, monitors blood pressure, and organizes blood drives. Kate fields calls for assistance and contacts Friendly Neighbor volunteers. Kate organizes the Ministry to the Homeless. She also represents OLPH on the Oakland Connections ecumenical committee serving the needs of Oakland residents.

2008 The parish Social Justice Committee called together all those in Oakland who were providing service to those in need in town. The five Oakland churches sent representatives, as did the Women's Club, the Knights of Columbus, Meals on Wheels, and Oakland Helping Oakland. The group met for six months and then created two new groups to work together to respond to needs of the people of Oakland. Oakland Connections is an ecumenical committee with representatives of all the Oakland churches that shares information about needs that surface and that discusses ways for the churches to work together to provide assistance. Oakland Cares, Inc., not affiliated with the churches, provides a central intake point, emergency funds, and referrals to available services provided by the government and by other institutions.



FAIR TRADE SALE – 2009

CARING FOR PEOPLE BEYOND OUR TOWN

MINISTRY TO THE POOR

In 1969, OLPH adopted a parish in Dover, NJ and sent them food, clothing, First Communion dresses and Easter baskets.

When Sister Mary Magdalen Yauch, SSJ, became our first Minister of Social Concerns in 1982, she introduced us to St. Mary's Parish in Newark, an inner-city parish that maintained a food pantry for the people of the community. She formed a Ministry to the Poor, and OLPH began collecting food for the people of Newark, delivering it once a month. In those early days of the ministry, our volunteers attended Mass at St. Mary's on the Saturday mornings they delivered food. The food pantry volunteers from St. Mary's Parish occasionally came to OLPH to celebrate liturgy with our parish. The position of Minister of Social Concerns has turned over several times since 1982, but the Ministry to the Poor, under the dedicated leadership of Bart and Dorrie Codd, continued until Bart's death in 2006. At that time, we named our food collection shelves Bart's Pantry, and Dorrie continues to guide this ministry.



When Father Lipnicki came to the parish, he brought with him his personal knowledge of the great needs of the people of Holy Spirit/Our Lady Help of Christians in East Orange. We now bring food to both this parish and St. Mary's in

Newark. OLPH also provides Christmas gifts to the children of the families in these parishes. This past Christmas over 400 gifts were sent. Father Lipnicki's ministry as pastor of Holy Spirit/Our Lady Help of Christians, as well as his time spent ministering in Haiti, and his service in the Haitian apostolate of the Archdiocese of Newark gave him a personal connection with many Haitian families. When an earthquake devastated Haiti in 2010, the people of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish experienced, through Father Lipnicki, a personal attachment to the people suffering there. We raised over \$15,000 in donations through our parish collection to provide immediate relief to the Haitian people and to rebuild the Church in Haiti.

Another disaster, Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans in 2005. It motivated four young people of the parish, Kevin Jacobsen, Keith Jacobsen, Neil Andrito and Brandon Baker to travel with others from St. Mary's in Pompton Lakes to New Orleans in June 2006 to help rebuild the lives of devastated homeowners. Kevin wrote, "I am so thankful I had the opportunity to be a small saving grace to a community in need." After leaving New Orleans, Kevin and Brandon went on to Mississippi for 10 months of replacing homes destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

Three other parish activities advocate against the injustices that contribute to poverty around the world. First, the parish has an e-mail network of people who respond to action alerts from the Catholic Campaign Against Global Poverty, Justice for Immigrants, Bread for the World, NETWORK (a national Catholic social justice lobby), and Catholic Relief Services. Second, every year the entire OLPH community holds an offering of letters for Bread for the World to support legislation beneficial to the poorest and

hungeriest people in our country and in the rest of the world. Third, the parish promotes the sale of Fair Trade crafts and Fair Trade coffees, cooperating with the self-supporting activities of people in developing nations, and raising awareness among us of the impact of trade policies on global poverty.



MINISTRY TO THE HOMELESS

In 1993, OLPH volunteered with the Interreligious Fellowship for the Homeless (IRF) to cook for the residents at St. Cecilia's in Englewood and to stay overnight there as hosts. This ministry cooperated with the members of Ramapo Valley Baptist Church in providing this service. After several years of serving the homeless in the shelter in Englewood, OLPH became a host shelter on Mondays in the summer for the overflow clients who could not be accommodated by the other shelters in Bergen County. This past year we housed homeless people on Monday evenings in both July and August in Connors Hall. Many parishioners served in this ministry by preparing food for our guests and by sleeping in the hall themselves as hosts for the homeless people. The Interreligious Fellowship ended this program late in 2009, and is in the process of establishing a family shelter program called Family Promise. OLPH hopes to continue its homeless ministry through participation in this new program.

REACHING OUT – SOCIAL CONCERNS (CONT.)

THE FORGET-ME-NOT STORY

In 1972, a young soldier from OLPH, Peter Cressman, wrote to Father Leonard asking for help for the children of the Sacred Heart Orphanage in Vietnam. Father Leonard published Peter's letter in the parish bulletin and the local newspapers, and formed a committee to organize the many offers of help that poured into the parish. Churches, businesses and individual citizens donated medicines, food, clothing, toys, bedding, and other items for what became known as Operation Forget-Me-Not. In a concert to raise shipping money, the children's choir from each Oakland church sang separately, and then all the children combined in a very moving experience of Oakland children singing for children on the other side of the world. A trucking company donated a truck to transport the goods to the west coast to connect with the Navy project "Hand Clasp" for shipment to Da Nang. When the last package had been loaded into the truck, there was still room to fill. The truck owner donated 13 mattresses, the truck was filled, and it left for the west coast in January 1973.

OLPH invited parishioners of all the churches in town to a Mass of Thanksgiving. Before it occurred, news arrived that Peter Cressman's plane had gone down over Laos, and Peter was listed as Missing in Action. The children in Da Nang were told and they prayed for Peter. His mother and grandmother flew from Florida to Oakland to attend the Mass of Thanksgiving which became a prayer for Peter's safe return. Oakland has honored Peter by placing a plaque on the West Oakland Avenue Bridge. His remains have never been found, but his goodness lives on in the memories of the people of Oakland and of Da Nang, Vietnam.

This project captures the spirit of the parish of OLPH and of the other people of this town, a spirit of generosity, of interfaith cooperation, and of empowerment of our children to accomplish good for others.



CONCLUSION

As the parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help moves forward from this fiftieth anniversary of its founding, we pledge ourselves to grow in the spirit of those who have brought us to this moment. We commit ourselves to providing a welcoming family to those who come to us. We open ourselves, as our ancestors in faith did, to the changes in the life of the Church that will evolve in the future. We continue to offer our time, talent, and treasure to ministries of education, spirituality, faith development and concern for others through service and advocacy. In these commitments, we rely on the call, the guidance and the strength of God's Spirit dwelling in and among us all.

The material in this summary, written by Bunny Mondare, was drawn from the parish archives maintained by our former parish secretary, Bernice Kraus, as well as from those who agreed to be interviewed concerning their memories of the parish.

Thank you to all the members of the Parish Photo Directory Committee who, under the gentle and effective leadership of Linda Jones and Betsy Moese, worked together to bring this work to publication.

Thank you to David Gilmour of David Gilmour Design, whose layout and graphic design enhance the beauty of our directory. Samples of David's work can be seen online at www.davidgilmourdesign.com.

PASTORS

Fr. W. Gordon Byrne, 1960 – October 1966
Fr. Joseph A. Hearn, October 1966-78
Fr. Robert A. Connors, 1978 – July 1998
Fr. Thomas Paul Lipnicki, 1998 – Present

TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATORS 1996-98

(During illness of Fr. Robert A. Connors)

Fr. William O'Brien
Fr. John Judge
Fr. Kevin Carter

ASSOCIATES

Fr. John Konen
Fr. Patrick Leonard
Fr. Matthew Dillon
Fr. Robert Wywra
Fr. Vincent Prestera
Fr. Daniel Matusiewicz
Fr. William Hatcher
Fr. Thomas Stanford
Fr. Edward Franklin
Fr. William Harms
Fr. Thomas Kunnath

WEEKEND ASSISTANTS

Fr. John Majka
Fr. Richard Asakiewicz
Fr. Francis Podgorski
Msgr. William Harms
Fr. Jerome Bracken

DEACON

Mr. Richard Francis Mohr

DIRECTORS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Mrs. Janet Miller
Mrs. Gloria McDermott
Sr. Sandra Patricia De Masi, SSJ
Sr. Patricia Ann O'Neill, SSJ
Sr. Sally Russell, SSJ
Mr. James Orgera
Mrs. Mary-Louise Schaffer
Mr. William Mascitello
Mrs. Eileen Morgan
Mrs. Colleen Jagde

EARLY CHILDHOOD SCHOOL DIRECTOR

Mrs. Jerilyn Keenan

SOCIAL CONCERNS

Sr. Mary Magdalen Yauch, SSJ
Sr. Mary Kathryn Quinn, SSJ
Sr. Barbara T. Kotzman, SSJ
Sr. Regina Consuela Kropp, SSJ
Sr. Elizabeth C. Bowdren, SSJ
Sr. Anne Marie Wood SSJ
Mrs. Annette Ziegler
Mr. Philip Brady

YOUTH MINISTERS

Mr. Frank McCann
Mr. Bruce Baumgarten
Ms. Mary Ann Hollenbaugh
Mr. Eric Callaghan
Mr. Randy Fuchs
Ms. Michelle Hughes-Gray Hans
Ms. Colleen Kelly
Mr. James Greene
Mr. Brian Salvatore

DIRECTOR OF WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY

Mrs. Kathy Pignatelli

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Sr. Joseph Eleanor Motzenbecker, SSJ
Sr. Robert Joseph Murray, SSJ
Sr. Charles Annice McFadden, SSJ
Sr. Ann Josepha Malloy, SSJ
Sr. Agnes Driscoll, SSJ
Sr. Marie Elizabeth Alspaugh, SSJ
Sr. Eileen Jude Wust, SSJ

GENERAL PARISH MINISTRY

Sr. Mary Anne Patterson, SSJ
Sr. Patricia Lee Murphy, SSJ

ADULT FAITH ENRICHMENT

Sr. Margaret Michael Costello, SSJ
Sr. Clare DiGregorio, SSJ
Sr. Harriet P. Corrigan, SSJ
Mrs. Annette Ziegler
Mr. Philip Brady
Ms. Carol Willis

LITURGICAL MINISTER/ SPIRITUAL LIFE

Mrs. Marilyn Keller
Sr. Sandra Patricia De Masi, SSJ
Sr. Harriet P. Corrigan, SSJ
Sr. Celeste M. Mokrzycki, SSJ
Ms. Carol Willis

MUSIC MINISTERS

Mrs. Lee Eilert
Mrs. Sue DiPalma
Ms. Nancy Kawich
Mr. Mark Starbinski
Ms. Diana Belkowski
Dr. Carmen Scialla

PARISH NURSE

Mrs. Kate Unger









OUR PARISH FAMILIES

