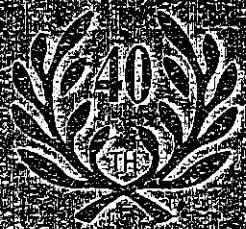


Saint Pius X Church

OLD TAPPAN, NEW JERSEY 07675



Our 40th Anniversary year

1954/1994

A HISTORY OF SAINT PIUS X R. C. CHURCH

FOREWORD

During the lives of people and nations, there are certain dates which stand out as milestones. Anniversaries always bring back memories of the original event.

On the threshold of our Fortieth Anniversary, we, Children of God, are blessed with many memories as we recall July 3, 1954 and the events that took place at the Old Tappan Fire Hall. Most Reverend Archbishop Thomas J. Boland officiated:

- Reverend Michael W. Dancak was installed as our first pastor.
- The name of our mission parish, "The Mission of Our Lady of Refuge", was changed to "Saint Pius X R.C. Parish".
- The Sacrament of Confirmation was administered.

To tell our story adequately, we must turn the pages of time backward and introduce you to Old Tappan, the way it was.

ORIENTATION

The land upon which Saint Pius X Church stands was part of a vast wilderness purchased by Dutch settlers from the Tappan Indians in 1682.

The family of John J. O'Connor, Sr. was among the early Irish migration landing in New York Harbor. About 1850, they arrived and settled in Old Tappan, becoming the first Roman Catholic family to reside here.

Additional families gradually settled in the Old Tappan area.

It was incorporated as a borough in 1894 and officially adopted the name of "Old Tappan". It was a farming community of about one hundred and two people.

INTRODUCTION

Peter W. Wise lived in Old Tappan with his wife, Anne, and family from 1941 to 1962. Encouraged by residents who were anxious to have a Catholic church in town, he interceded with the Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Newark, Most Reverend James L. McNulty. Reverend Thomas Curry from St. Joseph's in Oradell became Administrator of our Mission Church in Old Tappan. Peter Wise received permission for the use of the hall in the Fire House for Sunday Masses.

Father Curry and Peter Wise agreed "Mission of Our Lady of Refuge" was a fitting name.

Our parish was dedicated to Mary. On September 21st, 1952, Father Curry offered the first Mass celebrated in Old Tappan. The Fire House was filled to capacity with grateful parishioners.

October of 1952, The Rosary Society and The Holy Name Society were organized. Mr. Peter W. Wise was elected President of the Holy Name Society. Mrs. Camille Tuttle was elected President of The Rosary Society.

Jesuit priests celebrated Sunday Masses at The Mission until March, 1954 when the Franciscan Fathers began to serve our Parish.

Two masses were offered each Sunday. Confessions were heard before the masses! We had a Children's Choir and an Adult Choir.

Transportation for the Jesuit and Franciscan priests, who lived in New York City, was provided by parishioners. Mr. Joseph Tuttle built the altar and platform. There were many donations from parishioners to defray the expenses of our growing church.

Religious Education Classes began in November, 1952, directed by Mrs. Margaret Hanley and Mrs. Kathryn Koch. About thirty-five children were instructed in the Fire Hall after Sunday Mass.

Our first Baptism took place on November 30th, 1952 with Reverend Charles Reinhardt, S.J., officiating. The baby was Joanne Winifred Tuttle, daughter of Camille and Joseph Tuttle.

The first 'First Holy Communion' was on May 24th, 1953. The group consisted of two girls and eight boys. The celebrant was the Reverend Charles Reinhardt, S.J., assisted by Peter W. Wise. The two girls, Nancy Pearl Eggenberger and Linda Anna Cortez, crowned the Statue of Our Lady of Grace. So began our annual May Crowning Ceremony.



CHAPTER I

On June 15th, 1954, Archbishop Boland assigned Reverend Michael W. Dancak to be the first pastor of The Mission of Our Lady of Refuge and that the name of our church would be officially changed to Saint Pius X Roman Catholic Church, effective July 3rd, 1954.

A rectory was purchased. Father Dancak took up residence as our first pastor.

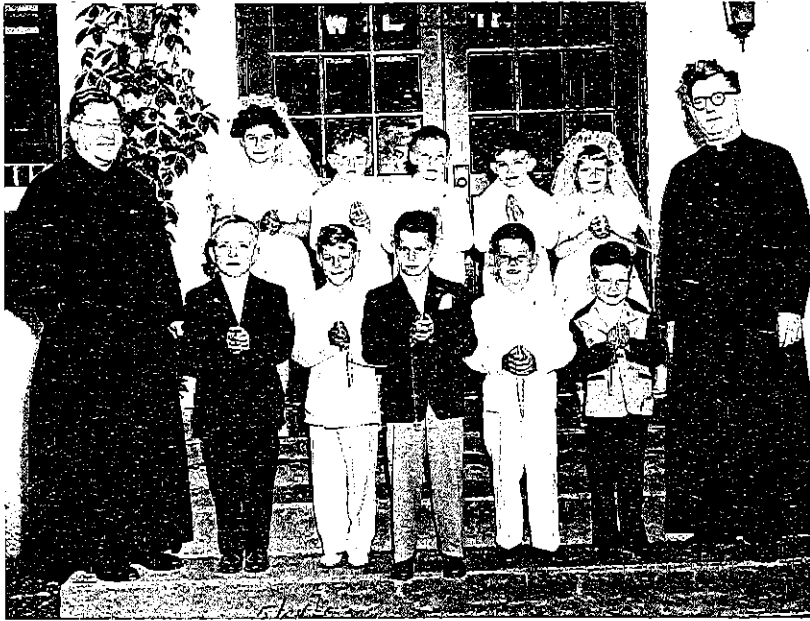
St. Pius X: His name was Guiseppe Sarto, the second oldest of ten children born to religious parents who were poor farmers. The family called him "Beppi".

When he was a little boy, he would take off his shoes and walk home barefooted on rough country roads for a long distance to save his shoes so that his poor parents would not have to buy so many shoes for him.

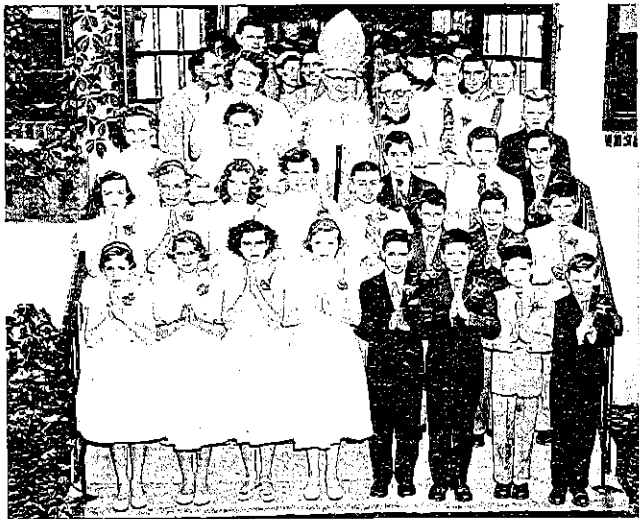
He wanted to be a priest; but his parents could not pay for his education. He studied very hard and won a free scholarship to the seminary. After he was ordained a priest, he spent all his money on poor children and their parents.

When he became a Pope, he not only fed little children with bread; but made it possible for girls and boys to receive Holy Communion at an early age, as soon as they knew enough catechism to understand that Our Dear Lord comes to them in Holy Communion.*

* Reference: "Saints to Know and Love", Chapter XVI, pg 170



Father Charles Reinhardt, S.J. and Father Thomas Curry with the first Holy Communion Class, May 24, 1953



Most Reverend Archbishop Thomas J. Boland with Celebrate Confirmation, July 3, 1954

July 3rd, 1954 was also the occasion of the first celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation by our parish. The Sacrament was administered by the Most Reverend Archbishop Thomas J. Boland to eleven girls and thirteen boys.

Harold Sunden and Peter Wise were appointed first Trustees of the new parish.

For the next sixteen months, daily Mass, reception of the Sacraments of Baptism, Penance, as well as parish devotions took place in the little "breeze-way" chapel at the rectory while Sunday Masses continued at the Fire House.

On August 22, 1954, an outdoor Shrine to Saint Pius X, erected on the grounds, was blessed.

CHAPTER II

The need for a permanent church facility grew and led to the purchase of our present brick building on Cripplebush Road on July 5th, 1955. During the Nineteen-Twenties, Ripple Creek Country Club was established in Old Tappan and a club house was constructed. The rolling green of its eighteen-hole golf course extended to where our rectory now stands and even beyond. It covered the area upon which many of our parishioners' homes have been built.



Fr. Michael W. Dancak
First Pastor



Fr. William McCauley
Assistant



Fr. James F.X. McManus
Assistant



Fr. Andrew Jensen
Assistant

Some senior residents recall events which took place here; they played golf on these grounds, attended dances in the swanky country club, and, often, observed young men take off in small aircraft on a runway that extended from Charles Place to Blanch Avenue, Norwood!

Purchased in the state of disrepair, on July 19th, 1955, the gigantic task of converting it into a church began.

The original statues, oaken pews and kneeling benches were donated from the old Sacred Heart Cathedral in Newark, New Jersey. Holy Name men worked hard transporting truckloads of church furnishings from Newark to Old Tappan.

Our first Ciborium was donated by the Longshoremen of the American Export Lines, Pier A, Hoboken, New Jersey.

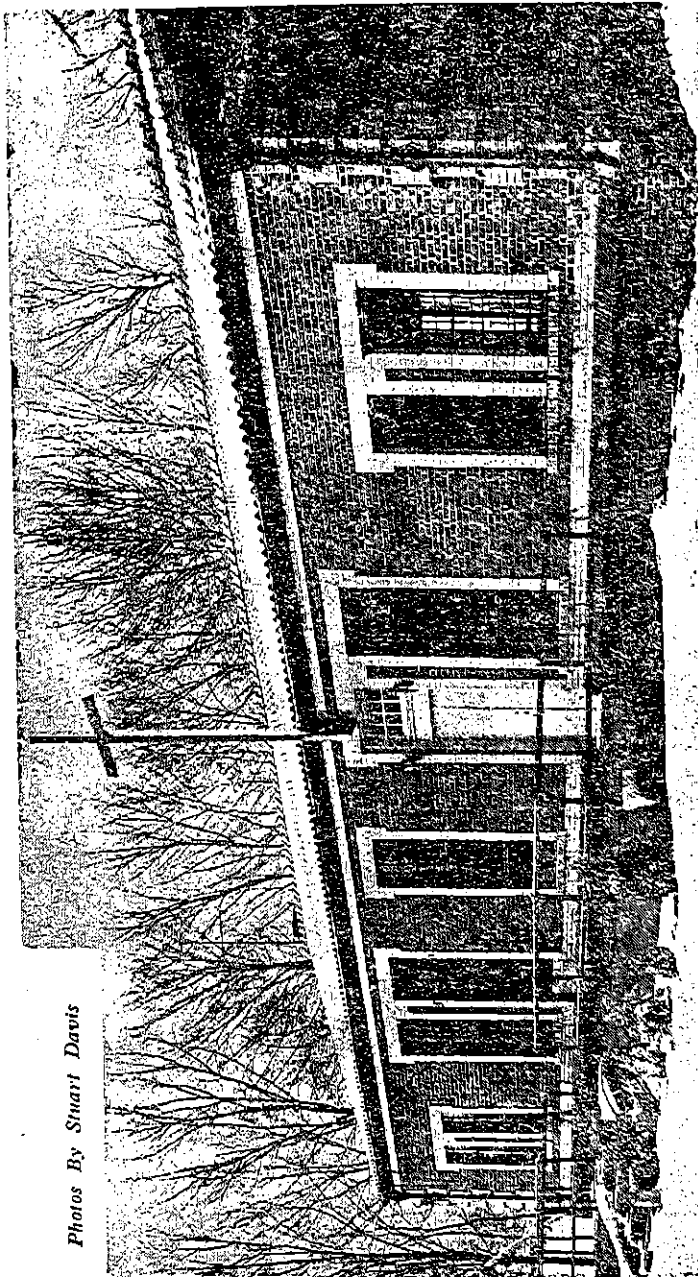
Our first organ was a gift from the Loyola House of Retreats in Morristown, New Jersey.

On November 6th, 1955, the Church of St. Pius X was blessed and dedicated by Archbishop Thomas Boland.

On November 13, 1955, the first Mass was celebrated here in the newly renovated building on Cripplebush Road.

During 1956, we were growing rapidly. On February 20th, Religion classes, which had temporarily been held at the rectory, were transferred to Charles DeWolf School and conducted after regular school hours.

Parish On The 13th Tee



Photos By Stuart Davis

On April 7th, 1956, Reverend Andrew Jensen was appointed our parish's first assistant priest.

The first First Holy Communion Class in our new church was on May 20th, 1956 with Father Dancak and Father Jensen officiating.

CHAPTER III

June 23rd, 1956:

1. The first annual "Country Fair" was successfully held on the grounds surrounding our new church.
2. Our dear first pastor, Father Dancak bid "Good-by" to Saint Pius Parish because his health was failing. He was transferred to Saints Peter and Paul in Hoboken, New Jersey.
3. Reverend Francis J. Ballinger became second pastor of St. Pius X Church.

In September, 1956, a census of the parish indicated we had grown to include over two hundred families! An extra Sunday Mass was added to our schedule.

Father Jensen continued to serve as assistant priest. Three lay teachers helped two nuns teach Religion to our grammar school children.

In October of 1956, two outdoor shrines were erected on the front lawn of our church. One shrine is a rustic, Alpine-style crucifix. The other shrine is a white, stone statue of our patron saint, Saint Pius X.



In Memoriam

Reverend William T. Lynch was appointed pastor of St. Pius X Church on July 1st, 1960, and served as our pastor until June 30th, 1977.

He was "retired in residence" at St. Pius X Rectory until February 1986, when he bid us "farewell" after almost twenty-six years of service to our parish community.

Father Lynch died on August 25th, 1993 in his 84th year.

He was laid in state at St. Pius X Church.

His pontifical funeral mass was concelebrated by Archbishop Theodore McCarrick and about twenty more priests.

During the autumn of 1956, the Cana Movement and a local Legion of Mary were introduced here. High school girls and boys were organized into a new "Sarto Club", our first organization for teenagers here at Saint Pius X Church.

In December, the Rosary Society conducted a successful Toy Sale and extensive improvements were made in preparation for Christmas.

Father Eugene Schwartz, O.S.B., came to us for Christmas, making possible a beautiful, solemn High Mass on Christmas Eve. A new inducement to the true spirit of Christmas was the rustic, outdoor crib erected on the front lawn of our church.

During 1957, the church and its grounds were further improved; an annex was added to the rear hall.

August was selected for the first Religious Vacation School. Lay teachers were trained during the summer to prepare them to teach Religion during the school year.

On June 12, 1958, the Sacrament of Confirmation was administered at the new Church of Saint Pius X. Most Reverend Walter W. Curtis, Auxiliary Bishop of Newark officiated. Forty-three children and six adults were confirmed.

CHAPTER IV

Reverend William T. Lynch was appointed our third pastor on July 1st, 1960 and served our congregation as pastor until June 30th, 1977.

In accord with the decisions of the Second Vatican Council convoked by Pope John XXIII, changes were introduced in the church's liturgy. The priest faced the congregation as he offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Lay lectors, men and women, were introduced to proclaim Sacred Scripture.

Improvements were made to accommodate our growth. A dormer was added to the rectory. The church parking area was expanded and repaved. The kitchen in the church annex was renovated. In 1962, a bell tower was constructed on the southwest corner of the roof on our church. The bell was tolled on June 3rd, 1963, the day Pope John XXIII died and on November 22, 1963, when President John Fitzgerald Kennedy died.

Father Jensen continued as Assistant Priest here until 1963, having served under three pastors: Father Dancak, Father Ballinger and Father Lynch.

As the years went by, several other assistant priests served our parish, including: Reverend Joseph Ward, Reverend William McCauley, Reverend James McManus, Reverend Edward Scandone, Reverend Francis Cunningham, Reverend Ronald Rozniak and Reverend Thomas Hayden.

During the 1960's, we were blessed by the advent of several religious vocations. One young man became a priest and celebrated his first Mass in Saint Pius X Church. Three young women became nuns, among them is Sr. Charlotte Maria Koch of the Franciscan Order, a nun for thirty-three years.

During the Sixties, our Religious Education Program flourished. The enrollment of our children expanded from less than one hundred to over four hundred!

Lillian Kasper served as Principal of the Religious Education Program from 1968 to 1973. The Church Hall was partitioned by means of folding doors to separate groups. Classes were now held on weekdays after school hours.

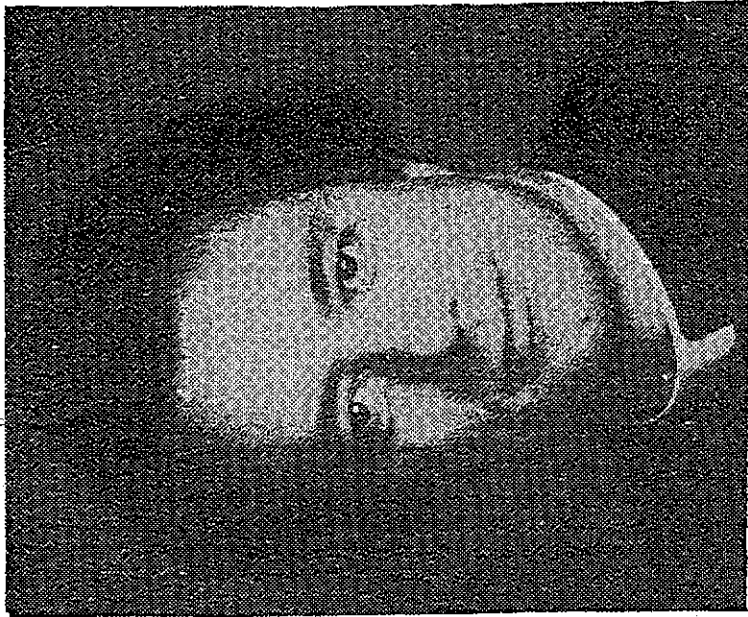
In 1972, there were thirty-nine teachers and a principal for children in Grades One through Eight. There were nine teachers and a principal, Nancy Tomcufcik, for the high school grades.

Sister Jean Whitley was our Religious Education Coordinator from 1973 to 1978. She strengthened the existing foundation with the aid and cooperation of additional teachers.

Father Lynch observed his Fortieth Anniversary as a priest on June 19th, 1975.

By 1976, there were forty-three teachers and five coordinators of grade levels and of sacrament programs. These men and women taught five hundred and thirty-five children, representing three hundred and three families in our parish community.

In the Sacrament Programs, they prepared seventy-five children for Confirmation, seventy-five for first Penance and fifty-six for First Holy Communion.



Father Francis T. Maione



Father Donald A. Cooper

The Religious Education Program is the largest activity in our parish. It is also an ongoing process, from childhood to adult education.

The Parish Council of Saint Pius X R.C. Church was founded 1976. It consisted of a group of parishioners elected by the congregation to serve in an advisory capacity to the Pastor concerning the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Church Community.

CHAPTER V

Reverend Donald A. Cooper was appointed our fourth pastor on June 30th, 1977 and was our pastor as we celebrated our Silver Anniversary in 1979.

Father Lynch continued to serve Saint Pius X as our Associate Pastor. Reverend Edward Biggane was appointed our Weekend Assistant.

During Father Cooper's Pastorate, in accord with present liturgical norms, the altar railing was removed.

Mass servers were increased and the Rosary Society donated white monastic cassocks for the altar servers.

In 1978, the method of Reception of Holy Eucharist was implemented by allowing Holy Communion to be placed in the hand of the receiver.

Ministers of the Eucharist, members of Saint Pius X Community, men and women, have been commissioned to help with the distribution of Holy Communion at Mass and to bring The Holy Eucharist to the sick and shut-ins.

Sister Jean accepted another position at Presentation Church in Upper Saddle River, New Jersey. Connie Heatley was employed at Religious Education Coordinator during 1978 and 1979.

There were now approximately four hundred and fifty children involved in the program. Eighty-two children were in the Confirmation Group and fifty-two children were in the First Communion Group.

Emphasis was placed on drawing parents into the preparation of their children receiving the Sacraments.

An Administrative Staff was appointed to administer the Weekday Programs. Audio visual aids and new films were purchased to facilitate the teaching of Religion. During the Lenten Programs, a Learning Center approach was introduced which centered on units.

Roberta Medalis was appointed our new Religious Coordinator effective in September, 1979. Father Donald Cooper hired Mrs. Rachel Lerch as our parish organist on February 8th, 1978. Volunteers were needed as Leaders of Song for the Masses and the first Adult Choir was formed. Mr. Robert Neukum, choirmaster and director, was hired in September, 1978. Kay Bollerman directed the Guitar group.

The Rectory of St. Pius X had a full-time secretary, Gertrude McIlveen and a part-time housekeeper, Mary Utvak.

A three-year Renew Program had been developed by a team of clergy, religious and lay people to help parishes be reborn spiritually by renewing individual lives who are the life of the church. The Renew Program began in November of 1978 and continued for the next two years.

About two hundred and fifty people responded to the call and met in small group meetings throughout our parish.

Jack Welby was the Coordinator of Renew.

CHAPTER VI

OUR SILVER ANNIVERSARY

July 3rd, 1979 marked a milestone! It was the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the incorporation of Saint Pius X R. C. Church as a parish!

Two hundred people were present at a gala Dinner-Dance on Friday evening, June 8th, 1979.

On Sunday, June 10th, 1979, about three hundred people attended a Mass of Thanksgiving for the many blessings bestowed upon Saint Pius X Parish. Most Reverend Peter L. Gerety, Archbishop of Newark, celebrated the Mass with concelebrants, our Pastor, Reverend Donald Cooper, Reverend William Lynch, our weekend assistant, Reverend Edward Biggane, Reverend William McCauley, Reverend James McManus and Reverend Ronald Rozniak.



A time to smile

Newark Archbishop Theodore McCarrick and Bergen County Bishop Robert Garner congratulate the Rev. Joseph Murphy after his

Staff photo by Jeffery A. Saller

installation as pastor of St. Pius X Church in Old Tappan. Father Murphy formerly served at St. Elizabeth's Church in Wyckoff.

An anniversary booklet was published, recalling the history of the past twenty-five years.

CHAPTER VII

Very Reverend Francis T. Maione was appointed our fifth pastor on February 7, 1981. After his appointment to our community, he built up his Parish Staff to aid him in meeting our needs. Reverend Stephen Feehan was his Weekend Assistant. Richard G. Hodges and Frank Rumolo were our Permanent Deacons. In April, 1981, Paul T. Reiser was named Pastoral Assistant.

Father Maione sponsored programs for ministerial renewal with Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, Altar Servers, the Choir, Folk Group, Childrens' Choir and our Parish Council. The Ministry of Altar Servers was opened to all boys and girls.

Bobbie Medalis served as Director of Religious Education along with Jim Ferry as Youth Minister while Rita Gillen was appointed Staff Associate for the Religious Education Program. Al Getler became Youth Minister temporarily until he was replaced by Mike Reiser in March, 1983. We now had over five hundred and fifty registered families in our parish community.

Mrs. Rita Gillen was renamed Religious Education Program Administrator, replacing Bobbi Medalis. In this capacity, she served Saint Pius X Parish for six years from September, 1979 to June, 1985.

Reverend William T. Lynch continued to serve us as Retired Priest in Residence.

In January of 1982, Thomas Guerriero, Sr. a parishioner for twenty-two years, volunteered his services to make a set of stained-glass windows for our church. The first stained-glass window was completed for The Feast of Corpus Christi, June 13, 1982. Tom continued his dedicated, creative artistry until his seventh window was unveiled on October 4, 1984, depicting the Sacrament of the Anointing of the sick.

In October, 1982, we celebrated our Rosary Society's Thirtieth Anniversary and had a booklet written and published about its history.

ROSARY SOCIETY
ST. PIUS X CHURCH
OLD TAPPAN, NEW JERSEY



Our Social Concerns Ministry has been active throughout the years due to the dedication and commitment of many wonderful volunteers. We have been blessed with the spirit of caring and sharing demonstrated in their many services to those in need.

Deacon Dick Hodges became a full-time paid member of our Parish Staff on March 1st, 1985 and moved into his Pastoral Care Office located in the rectory. He ministered in the areas of Pastoral Care to the sick, senior citizens, needy families, Baptismal and Marriage preparation programs. He also ministered by bringing the Eucharist to those confined at home, friendly visits to the lonely and was on call to provide food, clothing and shelter to the needy.

Mary Ann Fox was appointed Director of Religious Education in September, 1985.

On February 22nd, 1986, Reverend William T. Lynch bid us "Farewell" after almost twenty-six years of service to Saint Pius X Parish.

Growth had been achieved in both First Eucharist and Confirmation classes. Bishop Dominic Marconi and Bishop Joseph Francis confirmed sixty-two of our young people at Saint Pius X church on May 24th and May 25th, 1985. On Sunday, April 20, 1986, thirty-two children received the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist for the first time. Forty-six candidates celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation on May 17th, 1986, the eve of Pentecost and were confirmed by Bishop Pechillo.

On June 30, 1986, Father Maione bid "Farewell" to our Saint Pius X parishioners. He had been granted a Sabbatical Leave and returned to further his studies at The Theology Institute in Louvain, France.

CHAPTER VIII

Reverend Joseph H. Murphy was appointed Temporary Administrator of Saint Pius X Parish by Archbishop Gerrety on July 1st, 1986.

On July 25th, 1986, Most Reverend Theodore E. McCarrick was installed as the new Archbishop of Newark.

On August 31st, 1986, Father Murphy was appointed Pastor of Saint Pius X Parish Community by our new Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick.

On September 20th, 1986, Father Murphy was officially installed by Archbishop Theodore McCarrick as our sixth pastor. Mass was concelebrated by Archbishop McCarrick, Bishop Garner and ten priests, assisted by Deacon Richard Hodges and Deacon Frank Rumolo.

Over the years we have had many weekend priests assist us. Since 1986 we have been blessed with Father Leo Gariazzo who teaches at Queen of Peace High School in North Arlington.

Sister Regina Suplick joined the Parish Staff of Saint Pius X in 1987. Her ministry is R.C.I.A., Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

In September, 1987, there were three hundred children enrolled in our Religious Education Programs in Grades 1 - 8. Reception of Confirmation was moved to the spring of sophomore year. Religious Education classes were extended through Tenth Grade.

The Building Committee of our Parish Council has been studying and planning if a new church and parish center would fit into our future.

Father Murphy met with Archbishop McCarrick and submitted the Feasibility Study document prepared by members of our Parish Council for his consideration and further review by the Archdiocesan Administrative Staff. To date, church owned land, needed to be sold to generate funds to pay for a new structure, has not been sold.

The new Saint Pius X Parish Newsletter, "Dialogue" was begun in November, 1989. We are grateful to John DeBiasio, the founding Editor.

In 1987, our Pastoral Council, which had been founded and organized as successor of Parish Council, experienced a further transition to become Council of Ministries.

Council of Ministries spends more time in prayer and study, discerning the needs of the community concerning Word, Worship, Community Building and Social Service.

Mrs. Mary Ann Cassidy served as Director of Religious Education for two years, from September, 1989 to June, 1991.

Sister Emily McMullen, S.S.T., served as Minister of Liturgy and Music from 1988 to September, 1990. Mrs. Peg Lakin generously ministered to us and supplied the music from September, 1990 to March, 1991.

Roger Lakins became our new Parish Organist on March 17, 1991.

Deacon Richard G. Hodges retired from full-time involvement in our parish activities in 1992.

In 1992, extensive maintenance improvements had been made in our church which included: painting, new lighting, new fans, new carpeting, roof repair, a new sound system, speakers, a VCR and new television, etc.

In 1990, we formed a formal Parish Finance Committee. As it monitors the financial activities of our parish, it also instituted a "Wish List" consisting of necessary improvements and their costs. We have received generous donations from parishioners for items on our "Wish List", defraying cost of all improvements plus cost of vestments, decor improvements and the new parish organ.

Jan Clark became our parish Director of Religious Education in September, 1991. Our catechetical ministry includes grades 1 through 10 and Adult Education. As of September 1991, Saint Pius X Parish became co-sponsor with the St. Anthony Parish in Northvale, Our Lady of Victory Parish in Harrington Park, and Immaculate Conception Parish on Norwood for the Interparochial School of the Holy Family in Norwood. Presently eleven Parishioners of St. Pius Parish attend Holy Family School.

On October 10th, 1992, a Mass was offered to commemorate our Rosary Society's Fortieth Anniversary. Reverend Joseph Murphy was the celebrant of this Mass, assisted by Deacon Richard Hodges.

As we reminisce, a kaleidoscope of memories presents itself. Always in the background, is Our Lady of Refuge, Our Star of Hope, protecting us under her mantle.

Our story has been told through the determination and sacrifices of dedicated clergy and lay people who gave of their time and talents to lay the initial cornerstone and ensure the existence of their church by making its early humble beginnings of four decades ago blossom and grow through two generations, fulfilling the motto of our heavenly patron, Saint Pius X, "To renew all things in Christ".

This is our time, once again, to be thankful, to remember, to celebrate and look forward to our future, renewed by our faith, hope and love in God.

Our special "Congratulations! to each and all who have made this 'Ruby Anniversary' a reality".