

## ALL SAINTS HISTORY

1908-2008

### **In the past 100 years at All Saints Parish, there have been:**

5,026 Baptisms, the first being Gwendolene Callaghan, born October 18, 1908 to Patrick and Isabel (Trodden) Callaghan. She was Baptized on November 8, 1908 at St. Mary's Church in Leckrone.

1,326 Marriages, the first being Amos Helmick and Elizabeth Riley, both of Grays Landing, who were married on January 3, 1909.

2,745 Deaths, the first being Catherine Edith Reilly who died on December 29, 1908 at the age of 8 months, 10 days. She was buried in St. Mary's Cemetery in Leckrone, PA.

The first burial at St. Agnes Cemetery was that of Agnes Morgan, age 2 days, who died August 7, 1909 and was buried August 8, 1909. The Cemetery was named "St. Agnes" in her honor.

### **Building of the Church and Grounds**

Shortly after the turn of the nineteenth century, a vast influx of immigrants seeking out a living in the heart of the bituminous coal and coke region, settled in the Masontown area. In October of 1908, Bishop J.F. Canevin, Bishop of Pittsburgh, recognizing the need for the continuing spiritual development for these immigrants, assigned Father Francis J. Kolb, V.F., a young, energetic German priest from Delmont, Pennsylvania, to establish a parish in Masontown. Father Kolb had previously served for six years as an assistant pastor at St. Xavier's Church on the north side of Pittsburgh.

The first church committee consisted primarily of coal operators who worked tirelessly with Father Kolb to establish the new parish. The committee consisted of Father Kolb, President and Treasurer; Thomas Connell, Secretary; John Payton, J.W. Campbell, Patrick Mullen, Francis Rocks, P. Callaghan, John Smith, L.B. Callaghan, Patrick Walsh, Bryan McGinty, James McKenna and John Walsh. The first Mass celebrated by Father Kolb was offered at St. Mary's Church in Leckrone on October 25, 1908. The second Mass was celebrated at Sunshine in a company house owned by George Bartley. Services were then held in Sterling Hall in the Leroy Hotel on North Main Street in Masontown.

In the meantime, plans for the church and rectory were prepared by John T. Comes, a noted architect of national reputation in church building and one who had made a special study of religious architecture here and abroad. A Gothic Mission style was chosen for the new church that resulted in a structure of the grace and beauty of All Saints Church.

On May 10, 1909 an acre of ground on the corner of Church Street and Neff Avenue (now South Washington Street) was purchased from the Neff heirs. The cornerstone of the church was laid on September 26, 1909 by the Very Reverend M.A. Lambing of Scottsdale. Reverend Francis P. Ward of St. Francis Xavier's Church in Pittsburgh delivered the sermon. The church and the rectory were completed in March of 1910 and were dedicated on April 24, 1910 by Right Reverend J.F. Regis Canevin. All Saints Church and the Reverend Francis P. Ward delivered the homily at this Mass of Dedication. That same afternoon Bishop Canevin confirmed a class of 66 students. Father Aurelius of St. Vincent Archabbey was Master of Ceremonies with Father Graham as Deacon and Father Kolb as Sub-Deacon.

### **Establishing a Mission Church**

Since there was little or no transportation in the surrounding areas for parishioners to attend All Saints Church, a mission church was proposed and built in McClellandtown. St. Francis de Sales was completed in August of 1909. Bishop Canevin dedicated the Mission and delivered the homily on the occasion. Father M.A. Lambing sang the High Mass. On January 1, 2008 the Diocese of Greensburg closed all the mission churches (chapels of convenience). The building was sold on June 13, 2008. The statue of St. Francis de Sales and other artifacts may now be seen around All Saints.

### **Establishing a Cemetery**

In 1909, to complete the parish, Father Kolb purchased acreage from the H.C. Frick Coal Company to establish a cemetery in Leckrone, one and one half miles from Masontown. The first interment in the new cemetery was a two day old infant, Agnes Morgan, on August 9, 1909. Morgan was the daughter of William and Mary (Dryden) Morgan of Grays Landing, PA. The Cemetery was named St. Agnes in honor of this child as well as of the patron saint, Agnes, who was 13 years of age when martyred.

In 1936, an altar of native stone was built in the Cemetery. Masses were offered at this altar on special occasions. Father Kolb is buried under the altar. An additional 8.8 acres were purchased in 1982. In September of 1998, Father James F. Bump, along with men from the parish, constructed a chapel in the cemetery. It was completed in October of 1999. The Chapel was blessed by Msgr. Nicholas A. Mitolo and dedicated on All Souls Day, November 2, 1998 with Mass at the Chapel. Father Edward Higgins and Father Bump were the celebrants. A stained glass window of St. Agnes was installed in the chapel on February 14, 2001. Very near to the entrance of the chapel, one can see a headstone with an angel that reads "This Child Is Our Child Baby Mary." The baby girl was found in a duffle bag and left near a stream in Yauger Hollow in North Union Township near Uniontown. The estimated date of her birth is May 28, 2000. Sympathy and concern for this child was rampant throughout the county and monetary donations were made towards her burial. The blessing service for the interment was held by Father Bump on June 8, 2000.

## **Building of the Schools and Convent**

Once the church and rectory and the Mission were completed, plans were quickly laid for a grade school. Architect Comes was engaged to plan the school to blend in with the distinctive character of All Saints Parish. Construction work began on August 26, 1910 and the school was completed in March, 1911. The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Scranton were placed in charge of the school. The first day of class was held on September 25, 1911. The building consisted of five large classrooms to accommodate 300 students plus a second floor known as Lyceum Hall with a seating capacity of 525 people, with a complete stage and moving picture equipment. As years went on, the school increased in the number of students. Two lots adjacent to the parish grounds were purchased from Theodore Shoaf in either 1922 or 1923 for \$1,000 to serve as a playground for the school. In 1926, an addition of three rooms to the school was added. The student enrollment was 450. Both Catholic and non-Catholic students who attended the school were not required to pay a tuition fee.

Ground was broken on May 19, 1911 to build a Convent to accommodate the nuns who would teach in the school. The convent had 18 rooms and two bathrooms. The convent was completed in September of 1911. Three of the nuns were teachers and one of the nuns served as the principal.

Father Kolb and his parishioners worked diligently to establish and to maintain All Saints Parish. The parish was recognized as “A Miracle of Beauty” by the renowned Catholic Magazine, BEAUTY. Despite lean years, parishioners of All Saints and St. Francis de Sales, together with Father Kolb, celebrated a glorious event when they burned the mortgage in 1926. Bishop Hugh C. Boyle, Bishop of Pittsburgh, came for the occasion and spoke in glowing terms of the work that had been done.

Father Kolb and his parishioners were not going to rest. They recognized that education beyond eighth grade was not available to many students. There was no public transportation to the nearest high school in German Township. To rectify this problem, they immediately made plans to build a high school. The first class of the new high school was held in the grade school. The second and third years were also held in the grade school. During all this time, the high school was under construction. In September of 1929, All Saints High School opened and the first class of graduates marched forth in June of 1930.

Father Kolb became ill during one of the Lenten church services and died shortly after on March 2, 1952. His funeral was the first funeral Mass for a priest in the newly established Diocese of Greensburg. The first Bishop of the new Diocese, Bishop Hugh Lamb, presided at the Mass.

After the Second World War, unemployment was rampant due to the closure of the local mines and support business establishments. A huge number of the workers were forced to seek employment in other areas of the country. Since families were forced to move, student

enrollment in the local schools declined. Because of a declining enrollment, All Saints High School became a Diocesan-sponsored school in 1962 and was renamed Kolb Memorial High School. The school served 10 parishes in Fayette County. Student enrollment continued to decline and in 1970, the high school was officially closed. The high school was dismantled in 1988. In 1971, the Vincentian Sisters of Charity replaced the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the grade schools.

Beginning in 1998, the Vincentian Sisters of Charity no longer staffed the school. All Saints School continued to operate as a parish school with lay personnel staff. Student enrollment continued to decline, and in 2002, the seventh and eighth grades were no longer offered. In 2005, all Saints Parish School was renamed All Saints Regional School, operating under the auspices of the Greensburg Diocese. The school included pre-school and K-6<sup>th</sup> grades serving students from All Saints, neighboring parishes and Greene County. The regional school maintained the primary mission of the parish school, “to maintain an educational program that would provide for the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, social, and physical growth of students.” The school was accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. (Due to decreasing enrollment, All Saints Regional School closed at the end of the 2012-2013 school year.)

All Saints Convent was closed on June 30, 1998 and converted into a learning center, and was renamed St. Benedict Learning Center. The Center was renovated and dedicated on February 6, 2000 by the Archabbot of St. Vincent Archabbey, Douglas R. Nowicki. Brother Brian Boosel was the Master of Ceremonies. Father James Bump and Father Justin Winthrow, OSB, concelebrated. St. Benedict Learning Center played a central role in the life of the parish to provide facilities to the youth ministry, religious education, R.C.I.A., festival office, music and physical education for the regional school, and for various meetings. The Salvation Army operates locally from space in the basement of the Center, just one example of All Saints reaching out into the community.

### **Acquiring the Social Hall**

Since the high school was demolished, there was no area large enough to accommodate a large group for parish functions. All Saints Parish could not afford to buy or to build a building for a social hall. The parish was most fortunate when Mr. Harold Gitomer, former owner of Gateway Sportswear in Masontown, on December 21, 2000 donated the vacant shirt factory, a large parking lot, and a small adjacent house on West Church Avenue, half a block from the parish.

Father Bump, along with over 50 volunteers from the parish immediately removed unwanted pipes and wiring from the building. The volunteers continued to work, removing machinery and an elevator shaft, and cleaning, painting, and many other back-breaking projects. A new kitchen and restroom facilities were installed. The house was dismantled in January of

2001 to make way for a handicapped parking facility next to the church. The social hall is self-sustaining due to memorials, donations, volunteers, parish fundraising events and proceeds from the rentals for various events. The social hall serves as a social focal point to both the parish and the community. It can accommodate a seating capacity of 500.

### **School and Community Activities**

Christian faith and education have flourished at All Saints. Despite the many lean years, the church and school offered social development and entertainment for both young and old since transportation and money were almost nil. Parishioners remember the twenty five cents cover charge for the Saturday night dances in the gymnasium and the card parties on Friday nights. The twenty five cents cover charge was used to buy sheet music for the McArde Shamrock Orchestra. The orchestra was very popular in the area and was comprised primarily of All Saints parishioners. The All Saints football and champion basketball games were highlights in sports along with the tennis court matches. The school band, the drama club, glee club, the dramatic performances in Lyceum Hall together with the musicals, enriched the lives of students and adults. And who could forget standing at attention during the patriotic program at the local cemetery? Father Kolb initiated the parish festival. Every year, he moved the festival from Masontown to neighboring coal towns. The festivals not only helped All Saints financially, but served as community events. The church festival is still held annually on the church grounds as a Labor Day highlight for the community.

### **Pastors, Associate Pastors, and Sisters**

All Saints Parish has been blessed with pastoral assistance from Saint Vincent Archabbey, the Franciscan Friars from Uniontown and Morgantown and the successive Pastors and Associate Pastors following Father Kolb's death. The following Pastors and associate pastors have continued to develop the enrichment of our faith and answer to the spiritual needs of the parish.

#### **Pastors and the years they served the Parish**

Fr. Francis J. Kolb, 1909-1952  
Fr. Andrew J. King, 1952-1959  
Fr. William J. Donnerbauer, 1959-1960  
Fr. Andrew J. Schneider, 1960-1965  
Fr. Andrew J. Charnoki, 1965-1986  
Fr. Leonard W. Stoviak, 1986-1992  
Fr. James F. Goldberg, 1992-1994  
Fr. John A. Sedlak, 1994-1996  
Fr. Edward J. Tajc, 1996-1997  
Fr. James F. Bump, 1997-2006  
Fr. John M. Butler, 2006-2013

### **Associate Pastors and the years they served the Parish**

Fr. Richard Molnar, 1954-1956  
Fr. Edward V. Curry, 1956-1957  
Fr. John H. Burke, 1957-1959  
Fr. Robert J. Shuda, 1959-1960  
Fr. George R. Pierce, 1960-1963  
Fr. Gregory J. Flohr, 1964-1968  
Fr. Ernest P. Kish, 1968-1969  
Fr. Leonard McAlpin, 1969-1970

All Saints has been blessed with assistance from Saint Vincent Archabbey, most recently Father Philip M. Kanfush, OSB and Fr. Justin Withrow, OSB. Much assistance over the years has been provided by the Franciscan Friars of Uniontown, including Father Matthew R. Brozovic, OFM, Fr. Bart Koltner, Fr. Richard Portasik, and Fr. Joseph Portasik and Franciscan Friars of Morgantown, WV, including Fr. Jude Mili and Fr. John Agapito.

All Saints Parish has been blessed with many religious vocations. Following are priestly vocations:

Msgr. Joseph Fabbri, Diocese of Pittsburgh  
Msgr. Francis A. Glenn, Diocese of Pittsburgh  
Fr. Henry McArdle, Order of St. Augustine  
Fr. Christopher Petrosky, Order of St. Francis  
Fr. Daniel L. Blout, Diocese of Greensburg

Following are vocations to the Sisterhood:

Sister Paulina Glenn, Sister of Charity  
Sister Carmelina Fabbri, Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sister Henrita McArdle, Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sister Alverna McArdle, Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sister Ann Teresa McArdle, Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sister Michael McArdle, Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sister Catherine Ambrose, Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sister Dorinda Daugherty, Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sister Katrina Kondzer, Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sister Jeanette Abi-Nader, Order of the Holy Spirit  
Sister Evelyn Diamond, Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sister Cathy Luznor, Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sister Mary Edith Ralston, Immaculate Heart of Mary

Over the years, All Saints Parish has offered membership in the Christian Mothers, the Altar and Rosary Societies, the Young Ladies Sodality, and the Holy Name Society as well as membership in the Inter-Parochial Society of the Catholic Daughters of America and the Knights of Columbus. The Christian Mothers, the Holy Name Society, and the Knights of Columbus are still active within the parish, along with the Ladies of Charity who assist with the spiritual and personal needs of parish members. The Religious Education, Youth Ministry, and R.C.I.A. programs provide spiritual development for the children of the parish and initiation to the church for adults.

As we celebrate the centennial of All Saints Church throughout the year and renew its history, one cannot help but perceive the wisdom, fortitude and guidance of the clergy and the parishioners to build and maintain All Saints. All Saints has always been a central part of our lives and it is embedded in our souls. We thank God on this occasion to realize the gift He has given us.

### **Outdoor Shrines of All Saints Church**

The following beautiful prayer sites surrounding the church offer opportunities for those seeking solace and quiet areas for prayer and for meditation.

Father Leonard W. Stoviak orchestrated the placement of a shrine of a beautiful Italian white carerra marble of the Blessed Virgin Mary holding the Child Jesus as they look lovingly at each other. The shrine, located on the east side of the church, was dedicated by Bishop Anthony G. Bosco on Mother's Day, May 14, 1988. The Shrine was initiated as a Special "Marian Year" Project. The Marian Year ended on August 15, 1988. The Shrine is used as a focal point for parish and school functions.

A beautiful status of St. Therese de Lisieux is a focal point of a shrine on the west side of the church. Benches are provided to those who choose to rest, pray, or just spend some time with the Saint. This Shrine was donated by Joseph Tassone, a former parishioner of All Saints, in memory of his mother Mary. Members of the All Saints Construction Company helped to prepare the base for the statue.

Immediately in front of St. Benedict Learning Center is a status of St. Francis of Assisi, a favorite saint of Spc. Gregory Cox, who died in a Humvee accident in Iraq on September 27, 2004. His parents, John and Mary Anne, and his sister, Nicole, donated the status of St. Francis. Greg was an altar server for many years at All Saints. He attended All Saints Grade School and graduated from Geibel High School in Connellsville. St. Francis, who is the patron Saint of animals, is flanked by a statue of a deer on his left and a wolf on his right. Father John Butler dedicated the Shrine on September 27, 2006 and the students from All Saints Regional School participated in the dedication.

On the south side of the rectory front is an impressive 8 and a half foot statue on a 2-foot base inscribed “Saint Anthony, Doctor of the Church, Pray for us! Born 1195 Lisbon, Portugal Died June 13, 1231 Padua Italy.” The carrera marble statue, valued at \$23,000 was formerly a focal point for the former Franciscan Friary in Ben Avon. Father Bump was able to purchase the statue for \$200 in 2001. Men in the parish: Don Beck, George Homa, John Andrews, and Gildo (Chic) Santella prepared the pedestal and the footer. A friend of Father Bump, Jim Donatelli of Claysville, delivered the statue and engraved the writing on the front. People passing by can easily say the following silent prayer to St. Anthony, especially those who intercede for help to find lost or misplaced items.

“Great Saint Anthony, who has received from God a special power to recover lost things help me that I may find that which I am now seeking. Obtain for me also, an active faith, perfect docility to the inspiration of grace, disgust for the vain pleasures of the world, and an ardent desire for the imperishable goods of an everlasting happiness. Amen.”

Nestled between the front of the rectory and the side entrance to the church, surrounded by flowers, is a status of St. Padre Pio. Padre Pio was born Francesco Forgione on May 25, 1887 in Pietrelcina, Italy. He died at age 81 on September 23, 1968 in San Giovanni Rontondo. Padre Pio bore a stigmata depicting the wounds of Jesus on his hands, feet and sides for 50 years. He was canonized St. Pio of Pietrelcina on June 16, 2002 by Pope John Paul II. His feast day is celebrated on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. He is the patron of civil defense volunteers, Catholic adolescents, and is the unofficial patron of stress relief and New Year’s blues.