THE STIGMATINE NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCE



Volume II
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Churches:
Springfield, Pittsfield & White Plains

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Rev. Joseph Henchey, CSS Tereza Lopes [Lay Stigmatine]

On the Feast of our Holy Founder, 2014

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The Our Lady of Mount Carmel Churches

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PRESENTATION

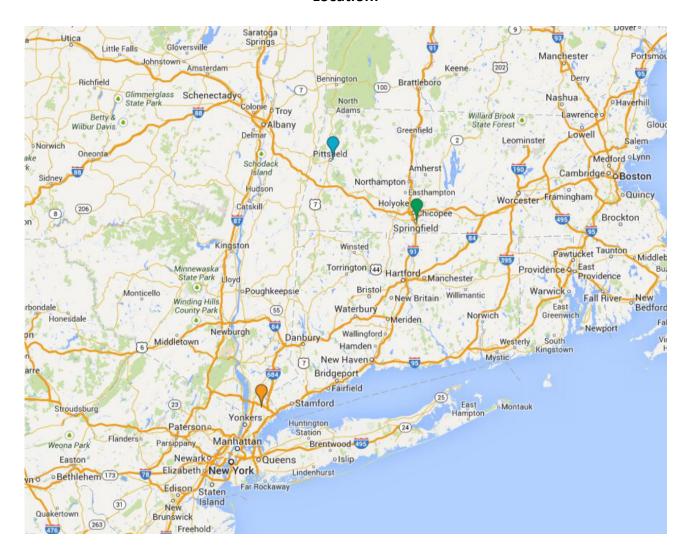
In this volume, we will go through the history of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Churches in Springfield and Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and White Plains, in the state of New York — and their mission churches [excepting the Sacred Heart in Feeding Hills, which will be covered on next volume, along with all the other Sacred Heart Churches].

The only of all these Churches covered in this volume that still remains as Stigmatine is the centenary Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Springfield, Massachusetts, under the pastorate of Father Robert White, CSS.

Follow a chart with the Mother-Churches covered in this volume, and afterwards a map with their locations as well:

		Our Lady of Mount Carmel	Springfield MA
		St. Ann	West Springfield MA
Volume II	Chapter 3	St. Anthony of Padua	Agawam MA
OLMC		St. Joseph	East Longmeadow, MA
Churches		Assumption	Ludlow MA
	Chapter 4	Our Lady of Mount Carmel	Pittsfield MA
		All Souls	
	Chapter 5	Our Lady of Mount Carmel	White Plains NY
		Assumption	

Location:





Springfield, MA

OLMC Church
Founder:
Rev. Anthony Dalla Porta,
Springfield, MA 01105

C.P.S.
1907

Including the following mission Churches:

- St. Ann, in West Springfield, MA;
- St. Anthony of Padua, in Agawam, MA;
- St. Joseph, in East Longmeadow, MA and
- Assumption, in Ludlow, MA.



Pittsfield, MA	OLMC Church	Founder:
	51 Pembroke Avenue	Rev. Peter Torretta, C.P.S.
	Pittsfield. MA	1948

Including the following mission Church:

- All Souls, in Pittsfield, MA.

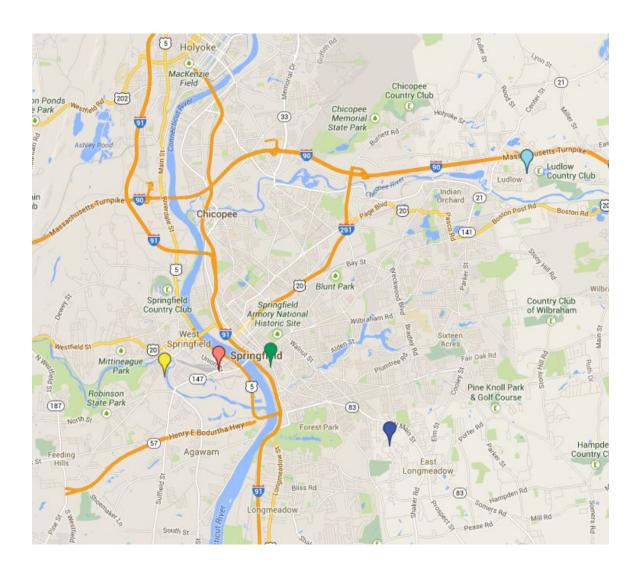


White Plains, NY	OLMC Church	First Pastor:
	92 S Lexington Avenue	Rev. Joseph Marinaro (1902)
	White Plains, NY 10606	Stigmatines: 1922 - 2013

Including the following mission Church:

- Assumption, in White Plains, NY.

CHAPTER THREE: OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH in SPRINGFIELD, MA and Mission CHURCHES



	Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church	Springfield, MA
	Saint Ann Church	West Springfield, MA
\bigcirc	Saint Anthony Church	Agawam, MA
	Saint Joseph Church	East Longmeadow, MA
\bigcirc	Our Lady of the Assumption Church	Ludlow, MA

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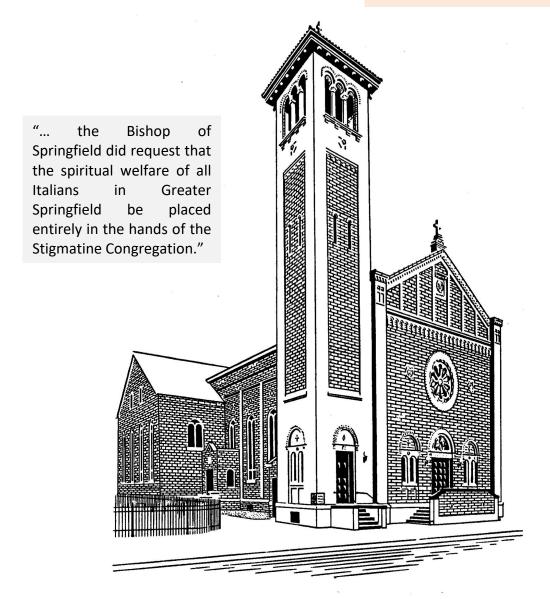
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PART ONE

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Springfield, MA

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Springfield, MA

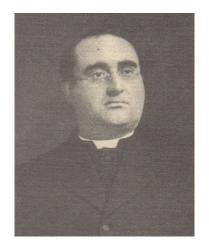


"The pioneer of the Stigmatine Fathers in Springfield was Rev. Anthony Dalla Porta, then a newly ordained priest. He arrived in the month of May, 1906."

I. Historical Background

In the late 1800s, as increasingly more families arrived in Springfield from Italy, the spiritual welfare of the Italian population became of prime concern to a group of prominent Italians.

The Roman Catholic Church was extremely important to many Italian immigrants. They wished to continue some of the religious traditions from their homeland and therefore had established groups such as the Mt. Carmel Society and Our Lady of Grace Society. The latter organization was based on a festival that honors the patron saint of Quincini, Italy. A statue of Our Lady of Grace was brought over to Springfield in 1907.



Father Anthony Dalla Porta Founder and 1st Pastor [1907 – 1924]

Although the spiritual needs of this growing community were ministered by two priests of St. Michael's Cathedral, with services conducted in Italian in the basement of the Cathedral, there grew a desire to establish a separate church in Springfield's South End, the area where most of the immigrants had settled. Yet the Italians had no church of their own.

[We have to point out here that those two priests, Father B. Conaty (later on Vicar General of the Diocese), and after him Father Kelley, both speaking Italian, did a good work among the Italian residents of Springfield, who would remember them with affection and gratitude.]

During the early 1900s, first attempts at establishing a church were unsuccessful. However, the Bishop of Springfield did request that the spiritual welfare of all Italians in Greater Springfield be placed entirely in the hands of the Stigmatine Congregation. He asked for an Italian priest to administer to the Italian people, especially those, who, having just left their native land could speak little or no English. So, Father Anthony Dalla Porta was sent to Springfield, in 1906; he was the pioneer of the Stigmatine Fathers at that area.

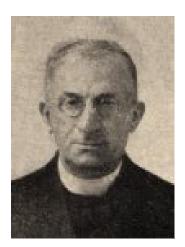
Father Dalla Porta received his education and training as a priest in Northern Italy, before coming to the United States, in 1905. He was accompanied to Springfield by Father Alfredo Balestrazzi.

As the size of the Italian colony continued its growth, it became evident that a church was necessary. It would soon become a reality. In 1907, Our Lady of Mount

Carmel was officially designated by Bishop Thomas D. Beaven, who assigned these two priests of the Stigmatine Congregation to attend to the new parish's needs.

The Sacraments continued to be administered at St. Michael's until an edifice in their own area could be found.

We can easily imagine Father Dalla Porta, a young man, not yet used to the arduous and painful trials of pastor, working in the midst of his flock. He had no church. To remedy this defect, a small chapel was erected. But even then, where was he to live? Humility, though, is the keynote of all greatness; he went to live as a guest in the rectory of the Cathedral.



Father Alfredo Ballestrazzi

Think of all the hardships and laborious duties this priest had! Think of his struggles to secure a foundation for his congregation in North America! Time, however, rewarded his efforts.

As an illustration of the beginnings of Mount Carmel, an article by The Observer is reproduced at Appendix 3.1.

II. From Foundation to Dedication [1907 – 1912]

a. The efforts of Fr. Dalla Porta and the community

In the history of the Catholic Church of Springfield, the birth of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel parish is set officially in the year 1907, when, by Right Rev. Bishop Beaven, the Italian Catholics of Springfield and vicinity were placed entirely in charge of the Stigmatine Fathers.

Some years after his arrival at Springfield [that was in 1906], this worthy son of Bertoni started a church. Everything - personal needs, necessities of life – was forgotten and sacrificed in his efforts to build a worthy edifice, which would be a suitable dwelling for the Celestial King and an ideal home, a meeting place, a house of worship for the members of his flock at the same time.

Springfield's Italians enthusiastically supported Father Dalla Porta and immediately began the arduous task of creating their own house of God. A great many fund-raising events were held, culminating with a gala ball and fair in Turn Hall.

The proceeds of these events were used to purchase two houses, in 1907: the Wilcox Street house served as a rectory and parish house, and the one on Union Street was converted into a chapel where, in 1908, the Italians of Springfield first gathered as a parish, and, in 1909, first received Holy Communion and Confirmation in a church they could call their own.

Father Dalla Porta succeeded only too well, for it soon became clear that the chapel was much too small to meet the needs of the parish. At this juncture, Father Dalla Porta's talents as an organizer combined with the contributions of wealthier members of the parish, such as Nicholas Zeo, to build a new church.

With this in mind, property and a house were purchased on William Street in April, 1911. The new church was designed by a noted local ecclesiastical architect, John William Donoghue. The design of the edifice followed the lines of churches in northern Italy. The building of the church was begun almost immediately.

At ceremonies to dedicate the cornerstone of the structure, held on July 16, 1911, Bishop Beaven addressed the crowd. He said that, by building this church, the Italian community proclaim(s) also to the city of Springfield that there has come into it, a new element which will make new strength in her municipality."

Built of red sandstruck brick with trimmings of gray sandstone, the church cost its parishioners \$35,000.00.

By December 24, 1911 the doors of the new church were officially opened. The following May the Bishop dedicated the new church to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. As the Springfield Republican noted, the new Italian church fulfilled a long felt need in that community. Even religious leaders were not aware of the extent of the sentiment of their people. The new church could accommodate 500 people at a time for masses. Yet Our Lady of Mount Carmel soon had more than 1,000 families listed on its membership roles.

b. Columbus' holiday institution is celebrated by the Italians

Symbolic of the growing acceptance of Italians by the state was the declaration of Columbus' birthday as a legal holiday beginning in 1910. In Springfield, this holiday was celebrated with much pageantry by the local Italian community.

More than 700 members of local Italian societies participated in a parade to honor the achievements of the Italian explorer. Two hundred members of the Societae Unione Fratellanza marched, wearing red, white and green sashes. The hod carriers

union, Local 36, had an equal number of men in the parade, dressed in white shirts, khaki pants and red caps.

In the evening, the Italian societies were addressed by several distinguished speakers, including Mayor Lathrop and the president of American International College, R. Dewitt Mallory. The mayor complimented those present on becoming "good and true citizens" of the United States.

Columbus' Day holiday is celebrated in the U.S. at the second Monday of October.

III. The Growing of the Italian Community [1912 – 1918]

a. The 'Americanization'

Father Dalla Porta's concern for the growing Americanization of second generation Italians was not necessarily viewed as a problem by some members of the Italian community, who saw it was a very positive step. As Silvio Martinelli¹ wrote in 1913: "The Italians will be hampered greatly in becoming personae gratae so long as a distinct Italian quarter exists with all its foreign features and law breakers. When the new generation will make "Little Italy" a word of the past, then the disparaging public opinion, created and voiced by the press, will change."

Martinelli felt Italians should try to divest themselves of their association with the South End of the city. Whether Martinelli would have favored a neglect of Italian language, literature and culture is not known. But some Italian Americans must have felt they would be better off if they put more emphasis on the American rather than the Italian aspects of their background.

Even as World War I² ravaged in Europe, the parish continued to grow and flourish, and many of the parishioners adopted American ways and customs. When the United States joined the war effort in 1917, the parish, though maintaining its strong Italian heritage, proudly sent men to fight for America and its tradition.



Silvio Martinelli

¹ Silvio Martinelli, born on August 3, 1883 in Italy, was a pleader before the courts at Springfield. He represented the highest interests of his profession, and in civic matters was proven a capable and popular official. [4]

² The World War I lasted from July 28, 1914 to November 11, 1918. More than nine million combatants were killed. It was the fifth-deadliest conflict in world history, paving the way for major political changes, including revolutions in many of the nations involved. [5]

b. The organization of the Italian colony

After the dedication of the Church, the next tremendous task was that of organizing the people of the Italian colony, so in 1915 the census of the parish was taken.

Two years later, to keep our people abreast of the undertakings of their church, a parish bulletin (L'Amico della Verita') was started. This bulletin was later known as the Parish News, and in the 1980's decade was sent to some 3000 families of the parish.

c. The Built of the Wilcox Street Hall

The building of a permanent house of worship was an important contribution to the Italian community, but Father Dalla Porta had other plans as well. He turned his attention to another construction project which was completed and opened on Columbus Day, 1915. This time, the end result was a hall, built on Wilcox Street, with a seating capacity of 800.

The purpose of the new structure was, according to Father Dalla Porta, to unite the Italian population and give the young people a place for entertainment. Fr. Dalla Porta said he was upset that so many of the children with Italian parents had not been taught Italian. He hoped to remedy this situation by offering classes in Italian at the new hall.

IV. The Development of the Community [1919 – 1932]

a. The Post-War Period

Post-war America offered many opportunities to returning veterans, including Italian-Americans. In the years following the Second World War members of the second generation in Springfield's Italian community distinguished themselves in a variety of fields. Local Italian-Americans were elected to posts in the city and county government with greater frequency. More young people entered the professions. Italians who began life in the United States as ditch-diggers now saw their sons or grandsons become well-known contractors.

The local community also took time to acknowledge those Italian-Americans who gave their lives for the United States in the Second World War. A series of memorials were dedicated to these slain veterans.

In the next several decades America did not treat the Italians under its protection like "good and true" citizens. The advent of World War I and its aftermath forced many Italian immigrants to take hard choices about their allegiances to Italy and their adopted land of the United States.

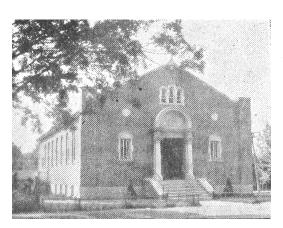
b. Significant help comes [1919]

Two significant events took place in 1919: more priests were assigned to the parish, and five Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy arrived from their mother house in Savona, Italy.

Two houses were purchased on Margaret Street for the use of the Nuns: a day nursery, sewing classes and children's catechism instruction were held in one house, while the other served as a convent. Thus settled, the Daughters of Mercy began serving in their new home and helped Father Dalla Porta and his contingent of priests care for the parish.

The wonderful work these Sisters began was continued by their followers, who performed their teaching duties with admirable patience and kindness, until 1998, when the remaining sisters were assigned to Pennsylvania and left Mount Carmel. But the quality of the teaching they established is deeply rooted in the parish school and is still giving fruits nowadays.

c. The Built of Mission Churches



St. Anthony's in Agawam

As the Italian population of the city and its surrounding communities of Agawam, West Springfield and Feeding Hills³ grew, it became necessary to divide the parish into separate mission parishes.

In 1921, Father Dalla Porta purchased a portable frame church in North Agawam. Father Raymond Dalla Porta, brother of Father Anthony, became its first rector. In 1925, under the direction of Father Charles Zanotti, a permanent church was built and dedicated to Saint Anthony on October 4.

³ The history of Sacred Heart Church in Feeding Hills will be covered in Volume III, along with the other Sacred Heart Churches.

In order to serve the large number of Italians who had moved to West Springfield, construction of the Church of Saint Ann was begun in 1923. The project was started with Father Louis Fontana, and completed and dedicated under Father William Ludessi in 1924.

The portable chapel which had served as the first St. Anthony's Church in Agawam was moved to William Street in Feeding Hills in 1926 to accommodate the increased number of Italians residing there. It became the new Sacred Heart parish. The Stigmatine priests who served St. Ann's also served the parishioners of Sacred Heart Church until 1946 when Father Leonard Della Badia became its first pastor.



St. Anne's in West Springfield

St. Anne's in West Springfield is one of the finest in the locality, while St. Anthony's is noted for simple beauty.

Father Ludessi becomes Pastor and builds the Rectory [1924 – 1927]



Father William Ludessi 2nd Pastor [1924-27] [1932-52]

In 1924, Fr. Dalla Porta was summoned to Rome as General Councilor of the Congregation, and Rev. William Ludessi assumed the task of shepherding Mount Carmel Parish.

Things prospered well under him, and the rectory was constructed during the three years he served as pastor, before becoming Provincial and moving to the Stigmatine Seminary in Waltham, Massachusetts.

e. Father Lona undertakes the First Major Renovation [1928 – 1932]

When Father Ludessi became Provincial, and was removed to Waltham, Father Erminio Lona took his place.

Father Lona, since the first year of his pastorate, seeing that the old church was not large enough to accommodate the ever increasing number of parishioners, worked out a plan to enlarge and beautify the church. The property adjacent to the church was purchased. Then the new pastor invited to a special meeting the most prominent and influential members of the parish, asking their moral and financial assistance to carry out the plan of enlarging and beautifying the church. The answer of the people to the appeal of Father Lona was wonderful.



Father Erminio Lona 3rd Pastor [1928-32]

The Building Fund drive was started immediately with \$14,000 being subscribed on the very first night. Within a short time \$25,000 was collected and the Right Rev. Bishop Thomas M. O'Leary gave his full approval to the plan of building the addition.

On June 1, 1931 the new edifice was started under the wise guidance of Roy & Son, general contractors. Just as the major portion of the renovation was underway, the Depression struck, but, under Father Lona's energetic leadership, the determined parishioners struggled and persevered and the expansion continued as planned.

The entire front portion of the church was added, and more than doubled the size of the original structure. The new sanctuary was twice its former size. The original altar was retained and enhanced with the addition of angel candelabra. The new paintings which graced the ceiling of the renovated church made it one of the most beautiful places of worship in the city of Springfield. It was a great contrast to the humble chapel on Union Street, first home for the parish.

In 1932, exactly one year since the work had been started, the new church, complete in every detail, beautiful and imposing was ready for the solemn dedication.

Now the Italian Catholics of Springfield can feel proud of their church. All in all, Springfield has proven worthy of the trust put in it by the Stigmatine Fathers. It has been a fertile field.

V. The Silver Jubilee: time for rejoicing and grief [1932]

The newly enlarged and redecorated church was reopened to celebrate the silver jubilee of the parish in 1932. It was a time for rejoicing, but there was also occasion for grief. One of the first services held in the new church was the funeral of the Rev. Anthony Dalla Porta, founder of Our Lady of Mount Carmel parish and the main responsible for the first church structure.

Father Dalla Porta had been transferred to Waltham to serve as rector of the Stigmatine Seminary, and in consequence of his death Father Lona was called to Waltham to succeed him.

Fr. Lona, the zealous and beloved pastor who did so much for our people, could not peacefully enjoy the wonderful completion of his work.

Father Ludessi returned to Mount Carmel as pastor, and under his leadership the renovations were completed.

The church was blessed and rededicated by Bishop Thomas O'Leary on June 5, 1932 — the Silver Jubilee of the parish.

VI. The Silver Years [1932 - 1957]

a. The Challenges of the Third Decade

As the parish entered its third decade, many parishioners were struggling to survive the years of the Great Depression.



Even as they were recovering from the severe economic blow, nature herself overpowered man with the Connecticut River overflowing its banks in a 1936 flood and 1938 hurricane. Much of the South End of Springfield—including Mount Carmel Church—was under water during both disasters.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and the flood in 1936

In West Springfield, it was the third time within a decade that St. Ann's Church had fallen victim to nature's fury. Rallying together each time, parishioners mounted a major clean-up operation, restoring both churches to their former beauty.

After these traumatic years, the main goal of all parishioners was to pay off the debt incurred during the renovation and expansion of 1931-32. It was during this time period that many clubs and other church organizations began to flourish within the parish and through their combined efforts—fund-raising card parties, picnics, communion breakfasts, fairs", etc—the debt was finally liquidated in 1946.

b. The Silver Jubilee of the Pastor, Father Ludessi [1941]

This is an excerpt of his biography:

"After years of hard study the time was at hand.

Each evening drew him nearer to the altar where he would offer himself up to God through the hands of Mary, his heavenly Mother," to be another Christ.

December 21, 1915, the Deacon, ascending the altar where Christ continues as the invisible High Priest, William Ludessi was to be invested as His visible representative:

- a priest of God,
- a priest for his own santification and salvation,
- and a priest for the santification and salvation of all the souls whom God entrusted to his care,

not merely to be chosen and appointed,

but to be consecrated by a sacrament which imparts to him a share in the priesthood of Jesus Christ;

the character not to be something merely attached to his personality as an office,

but to enter into and form a feature of his very soul never to be effaced in time and eternity."

With great joy, the community at Mount Carmel celebrated the Priestly Silver Jubilee of their dear Pastor, Father William Ludessi, C.P.S., on February 23, 1941.

Illustrative documents on the Silver Jubilee of Father Ludessi can be found in Appendix 3.2.

c. The Celebrations of New Priests' First Solemn Masses [1945]

On June, 1945 the just-ordained Stigmatine Fathers Rev. Carmen T. Russo and John C. Saracco returned to Mount Carmel for their first solemn High Masses.

The Masses were celebrated on June 16, 1945. A well—filled church at Sacred Heart and more than 1400 parishioners at Mount Carmel witnessed the ceremonies.

At that same occasion, Rev. Father William Patrick Evans, from the Congregation of the Holy Cross, returned to Sacred Heart Church in Springfield also for his first solemn High Mass.

The Berkshire Eagle newspaper published an article about this matter on June 17, 1945, and it is reproduced here on Appendix 3.3.

d. The built of St. Joseph Church in East Longmeadow [1947]

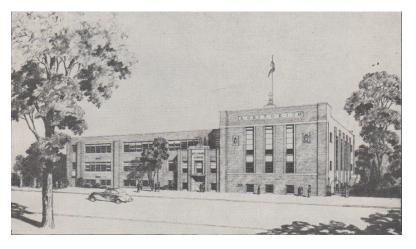
Meanwhile, plans were being formulated for a mission church in East Longmeadow and Mass began being celebrated there in a club-house in 1945. In 1946, property on Vineland Avenue was purchased and construction of a church building was started, and in January 1947, the first Mass was celebrated in the new St. Joseph Church. In February, Father Francis Mackin became its first rector.

e. The built of the Parish School and Auditorium [1947 – 1948]

Not willing to stop the parish's expansion, Father Ludessi ambitiously planned the construction of a parochial school, and proposed that the parish hold a fund drive in order to finance the new school building.

With a large and very helpful committee, the drive was launched throughout the parish and on June 1, 1947 ground was broken on Margaret Street for the new school.

On September 8, 1948, Mount Carmel School opened its doors to 146 students, kindergarten through grade three. The school was staffed by the Daughters of Mercy.



Mount Carmel School and Auditorium



From left to right: Sr. Corrine, D.M., Sr. Michael, D.M., Sr. Veronica, D.M., Sr. Immaculata, D.M. and Sr. Christina, D.M.

[Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy nuns serving at O.L.M.C. School in 1948]

On December 12, 1948, the cornerstone was laid and the school was blessed and dedicated by Bishop O'Leary. Five hundred people attended the banquet held to celebrate the blessing of the building. The new school was described as a "living memorial" to the sixty men of the parish who lost their lives in the Second World War. As one of the speakers at the banquet said, "Mt. Carmel will not forget."



Memorial Plaque in School Lobby

A plaque in the lobby, given by the Catholic War Veterans of Mount Carmel Church, reads:

Sacred to the memory of the men of Mount Carmel Church who made the supreme sacrifice in World War II 1941-1945 and in honor of the men and women who served for country and world peace.

Illustrated documents on the Parish School and Auditorium can be found in Appendix 3.4.

f. The built of Assumption Church in Ludlow [1950]

In 1947, to answer the needs of the growing Italian population in Ludlow, property was purchased, and on Palm Sunday 1948 the first Mass was celebrated in a temporary chapel by Father Ludessi. In June 1949 ground was broken for a permanent church and in January 1950 St. Mary of the Assumption Church was dedicated. Father Carmen T. Russo was appointed its first rector. It is only during recent years that these mission parishes have become separated from their parent church. The spiritual needs of the parishioners in Agawam, Feeding Hills and West Springfield are still administered to by the Stigmatine Congregation, while the Diocesan priests now serve the parishes in Ludlow and East Longmeadow.

g. Fourth and Fifth Pastors in the same year [1952]



Father Zanotti 4th Pastor [1952]



Father Torretta 5th Pastor [1952-67]

Father Ludessi's term as pastor ended in 1952, after 20 years of service to the people of Mount Carmel parish. He was transferred to White Plains, New York and on September 12, 1952 Father Charles Zanotti became his successor.

After only one month's residence as pastor, however, Father Zanotti asked to be relieved of his duties due to ill health, and Father Peter Torretta was appointed pastor on October 13, 1952.

h. The Construction of a new Convent [1953]

Father Torretta set to work immediately on several new projects, among them the construction of a new convent. Until this time, the Sisters had occupied their original house on Margaret Street.

After months of planning and saving, the parish was able to purchase the former Margaret Street fire station and, with great ingenuity, renovated it to serve the needs of the Sisters. On December 13, 1953, Bishop Christopher J. Weldon blessed and dedicated the new convent.

i. The School continues expanding [1953 - 1954]

Throughout this time period, the enrollment of Mount Carmel School continued to increase and by 1953 the School served students from kindergarten through grade eight.

Plans were made for the first graduation, and on June 15, 1954, thirty-two boys and girls received diplomas from Bishop Weldon. As a major event in parish history, the ceremony was attended by Father Ludessi and the Provincial of the Stigmatine Congregation.

VII. The Golden Jubilee: gratitude to the Italian settlers [1957]

In 1957, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and the Italians of the Springfield area celebrated the 50th anniversary of the founding of the parish by Father Dalla Porta.

A week of activities, including a lavish dinner at the Municipal Auditorium, highlighted the Golden Jubilee, which culminated with a Solemn Pontifical Mass on May 26, 1957.

During this anniversary period, parishioners of Mount Carmel were asked to remember their past to thank God for the strength and forbearance of the early Italian settlers who had started this great parish.

Now a large, flourishing and prosperous parish, members of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church looked toward the future.

Illustrative documents on the Golden Jubilee of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish can be found on Appendix 3.5.

VIII. The Golden Years [1957 - 1982]

a. Fr. Torretta undertakes the Second Major Renovation [1959]

In 1959, the second major renovation of the church took place. The church closed its doors for a period of three months and the building was stripped of its original pews, altar rail, pulpit, confessionals, woodwork and flooring. Workmen replaced these original dark pieces with light wood furnishings and flooring, which had been donated by members of the parish.

After many weeks of displacement in the school auditorium, Sunday Mass was again celebrated in the new, bright, warm church. Under Father Torretta's supervision, the renovation continued until the entire ceiling had been cleaned and the main altar repainted.

b. The 100th anniversary of the Unification of Italy [1961]

Throughout the years, the Italian community had grown considerably in the City of Springfield.

In October 1961, the entire community gathered together to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Unification of Italy and for the whole week preceding the annual Columbus Day parade, Italian culture was featured in the city. Special events, such as Italian craft fairs, took place, and Italian food was spotlighted in many restaurants. Italian flags waved throughout Springfield, stressing the heritage of Italian-Americans and their contributions to this community.

The week was important in both Italian and Springfield history, for it had been the first time that the City of Springfield highlighted a specific culture. In less than 100 years, the Italians of Springfield had become a vibrant and moving force in the city.

c. New renovations [1962 - 1963]

During the 1960s, two additions were made to the parish complex. In 1962, Father Torretta asked the Bishop for permission to move the Baptismal font from the church vestry into a new Baptistry which would be built in back of the main altar with a separate entrance facing Margaret Street. Permission was granted, the new Baptistry was constructed, and an imported baptismal font of white marble was placed in the new addition.

In 1963, a new chime system was installed to replace the church's original bell which, through many years of use, had lost its tonal quality. The chimes were installed in the Sacristy and, to this day, are amplified through the belfry for the entire South End to enjoy.

d. The Third Major Renovation and a the 6th Pastor [1967]

During the years of Vatican II, the parish remained stable and secure and the early 1960s were relatively uneventful.

However, in 1967, in order to comply with the new directives from the Vatican Council seeking simplicity in worship, the third major renovation of the church took place. The parish had adjusted to and supported all previous expansions and renovations, but there was much heartache and disagreement when the original altar, dedicated 60 years earlier, was removed from the church, and when, as part of the repainting of the entire church, the exquisite ceiling paintings were obliterated.

In the midst of this upheavel, Father Torretta was transferred, and, on Labor Day 1967, Father Paul Zanini assumed the office of pastor. Under his supervision, carpeting was installed throughout the church and a new altar of sacrifice was placed in the sanctuary.

In startling contrast to its ornate predecessor, the new altar, with its Italian hand-carved statue of the Risen Christ hanging above, was simple and created a feeling of austerity within the church.

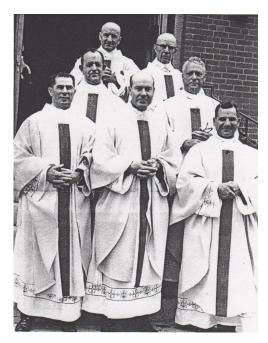


Father Zanini 6th Pastor [1967-69]

e. The 60th Anniversary and Rededication [1967]

On December 3, 1967, the church was again dedicated as the parish celebrated the 60th anniversary of its founding.

f. The Celebrations of Golden and Silver Jubilees [1968]



In the back row, I. to r.: Fr. Victor Formolo and Fr. Louis Fontana. 2nd row: Fr. William Collins and Fr. James Shea. Front row: Fr. Joseph Morgan Fr.

George Linse and Fr. Vito Cannizzo.

On May 24, 1968, seven Stigmatines celebrate Golden and Silver Jubilees in Mount Carmel, Springfield.

Rev. Louis Fontana, C.S.S. and Rev. Victor Formolo, C.S.S., celebrated Golden Jubilees. They were ordained Priests in Rome, at St. John Lateran Church, in 1918.

The Silver Jubilarians are: Rev. George A. Linse, C.S.S., pastor, Sacred Heart Church, Feeding Hills, Mass.; Rev. Vito Cannizzo, C.S.S., rector, St. Ann's Church, West Springfield, Mass.; Rev. James G. Shea, C.S.S., assistant pastor, Sacred Heart Church, Feeding Hills, Mass.; Rev. Joseph R. Morgan, C.S.S., Stigmatine Mission Band; Rev. William J. Collins, C.S.S., vice—rector, Stigmatine Students' House, Washington, D.C.. All were ordained at the Sacred Heart Church, in West Newton, MA. By Bishop Richard J. Cushing, who, at the time of their Silver Jubilee celebration, was Cardinal-Archbishop of Boston.

g. Father Santini becomes the 7th Pastor [1969]

During the next few years, the parish continued on its path with no major changes until June 30, 1969. On that date, Father Zanini announced his resignation as pastor due to ill health, and on July 1, Father Camillo Santini became the seventh pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church.



Father Santini 7th Pastor [1969-81]

h. New Improvements under Father Santini [1969 - 1973]

A number of improvements were made to the parish facilities after the arrival of Father Santini. The choir loft was renovated and a new organ installed with funds all donated by members of the parish as memorials for deceased parishioners.

In 1973, a new lighting system was installed in the church thanks to funds raised by a very successful "Festa Italiana" bazaar, now a major yearly event.

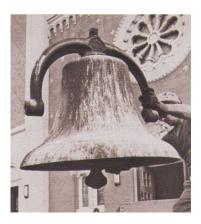
i. The Silver Anniversary of Mount Carmel School [1973]

Another historic event was noted in 1973—the Silver Anniversary of Mount Carmel School.

From the time its door opened in 1948, the school's quality of education has continued to improve, making it one of the finest parochial schools in the area.

The newly redecorated library boasts one of the largest collections of literature and resource material for an elementary school in the city. This was accomplished through the generosity of parishioners who continue to donate books in memory of family and friends. These donations, and those for classroom equipment, the sewing room, and science laboratory, continue to help improve the educational resources of Mount Carmel School.

j. The Memorial Bell Installation and Rededication [1975 - 1976]



During 1975, a Holy Year dedicated to Renewal and Reconciliation, a lasting symbol was installed within the church.

The Memorial Bell, inscribed "Holy Year 1975," serves as a reminder of the past as it rings from the church steeple dedicated early in the century by people who struggled to build it, and it serves as an impetus for the future. The bell was rededicated on July 4, 1976 as a bicentennial memorial to those who helped create the future.

k. The Preparations for the Diamond Jubilee [1976 - 1982]

As the parish began plans to celebrate its 75th anniversary, a general "sprucing up" of the church was initiated. Necessary cleaning and repairs to the exterior walls and repairs to the roof were made. The church's interior was repainted and recarpeted. The painting above the altar was freshened and new, velvet drapery—gold and rose—was hung behind the wooden statue of the Risen Christ. The pulpit was lowered, and the altar rail was removed, giving a greater feeling of spaciousness to the front of the sanctuary.

Once again, the people of the parish made it all possible. Funds for this renovation were raised through the generosity of the parishioners whose names are recorded in this jubilee Book. The names of those who gave \$1,000 or more were also enscribed on a bronze plaque which was placed in the church.

The renovation neared completion and the Jubilee year approached.

I. Father Russo becomes the 8th Pastor [1981]



Father Russo 8th Pastor [1981-87]

As the renovation neared completion, and the Jubilee year approached, there were mixed emotions among the parishioners—delight at the new parish look, but sadness as it was learned that Father Santini was to be transferred after 12 years as pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church.

In September 1981, Father Carmen Russo, a Stigmatine formerly assigned to the parish, returned as its eighth pastor.

IX. The Diamond Years [1982 - 2007]

a. The Parish, towards the new Century [1982 – 2000]

[1] The Cantata's presentation [1986]

It is 1982, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church has entered its diamond years. With Father Russo's leadership and spiritual strength, the parish will move ahead with pride, looking forward to continued growth and its centennial celebration.

The Choir's twenty-fifth and final Cantata was presented in the sanctuary in 1986. Fifty-five adults and thirty-five school children participated in the acclaimed Christmas concert, accompanied on piano by Mary Mastroianni, and directed by Albert Mastroianni. Spiritual advisor of the choir was Rev. Anthony Nuccio, also a tenor. The Cantatas filled the church with devoted and reverent audiences for a quarter of a century. Each performance was followed with a reception by the Women's Guild. Changes in transportation and youth sports schedules made rehearsals difficult, and contributed to the demise of this treasured event. Years later, in 1997, forty-year choir director Albert Mastroianni, who was also an area operatic and classical music lecturer, died. His wife Mary continues as organist and choir director.

[2] Father Scioli becomes the 9th Pastor [1987]



Father Richard Scioli 9th Pastor [1987-2001]

In 1987, a new and young pastor takes place: Father Richard Scioli, CSS, ordained in 1979.

Mass schedules changed. Weekly St. Anthony devotion remains steadfast. That novena culminates in the June 13 Feast Day Mass and distribution of St. Anthony's Bread.

The parish has continued to flourish in many new ways.

[3] New Ministries and new Fundraisers [1987 – 2000]

Still in 1987, Lynda and Vinson Scicolone began a new ministry in our parish: engaged couples meet with married couples in a series of home discussions about spiritual and practical aspects of Matrimony. Those engaged also meet with a priest for canonical and liturgical preparation. Lynda has initiated a prayer ministry in which 93 volunteers and all our school children pledge daily prayer for an assigned engaged couple. This ministry became common throughout the Church.



Sr. Elizabeth Matuszek, S.S.J.

In 1991, the new position of Pastoral Minister, open to a qualified non-ordained person, was filled by Sister of St. Joseph Elizabeth Matuszek. Sr. Betty has helped us creatively renew many dimensions of parish life and ministry.

Adults seeking Confirmation took classes from Rev. George Linse until 1993, and then from Sr. Betty Matuszek. Currently, they enroll in a diocesan program. Parent and godparent classes for infant Baptism are held monthly in the parish.

Adults prepare for Baptism or a Profession of Faith with Confirmation and Communion in RCIA. The Rite of Christian Initiation was revived in the diocese in 1983. Our first parish team was formed in 1991. That team of 8-12 parishioners has guided scores of inquirers to learn about Catholic life. Many have become Catholic through the Rites of Acceptance, Election, and the sacraments at Easter.

The Taste of Italy, first held in 1992, became a new social focus and important fundraiser. "Bring your best Italian foods to serve at least 100" was the request. And so it is. Hundreds come to affirm and enjoy the culinary achievements of dozens of Italian cooks. There are lines of diners selecting their favorite foods.

"There are desserts.

There is music.

There are prizes.

There are elders, children, and babies.

It is a time for families and friends to reunite and join in the fun."

Our Lady
of
Mt. Carmel Parish

The Taste has become an awaited event each October, the month of Columbus Day.



Parishioners continue their fundraising efforts in an age of rapidly escalating financial costs. Bingo was a lucrative source of funds, dating back to 1967. However, due to the increasing difficulty in soliciting staff for its weekly games, Bingo closed in 1997. We owe much gratitude to Bingo Committee Chairpersons for their tireless efforts.

Current Youth Ministry was directed by diocesan leadership formation in 1991. That new group proudly donated a replacement tree to the church, started neighborhood and nursing home Christmas caroling, did Bible study, and fundraising with homemade chocolates. Later members added a Youth Choir, diocesan Youth Days, and a contingent to the Catholic Youth Conference in St. Louis in 1996. They raised funds with Yule Logs, Memorial Logs, and Mason Jars. They gave Global

The 100th Italian Festival procession

Harmony week end camperships. They donated half of their treasury to the Centennial Renovation Fund.

For the parish 90th anniversary in 1997, we brought our founding document out from the archives. It is signed May 20, 1907, by now Saint Pope Pius X. Rev. Scioli initiated a \$300,000 capital campaign to restore the church slate roof and stained glass and alabaster windows. The windows were rededicated. New entrance doors were subsequently installed.

From July 10th to 13th, 1997, there was held the 100th Italian Festival, that drew an estimated 50,000 participants in 4 days. It included booths offering a wide sampling of Italian foods, a fireworks display and a performance by Italian tenor Vittorio Marciano. The article published by The Catholic Observer on August 1, 1997 is reproduced here at Appendix 3.6.

Still on late 1990s, our mission church, St. Anthony of Padua in Agawam, merged with St. Theresa's and became All Saints Parish. St. Joseph's in East Longmeadow closed. St. Ann's in West Springfield, with Rev. Joseph Massaro, CSS as rector, remains the only mission church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

The Holy Name Society hosted the last of its many coffee hours for their members and the parish in 1999.

b. The School, towards the new Century [1982 – 2000]

The quality of education which the Daughters of Mercy established in 1948 has kept the school open as one of five Catholic schools left in Springfield.



Father Richard Scioli and Mrs. Claire Cote

In 1988, Rev. Linse and Rev. Scioli, with an initial gift of \$200,000, from Joseph Deliso Sr., set up a school Endowment Fund to support the parish mission of Catholic Education.

In 1991, the refined OLMC School Governance Manual was approved by the diocese.

Our first lay principal was Mrs. Claire Cote, an experienced Catholic school teacher and administrator, who started in our school in 1997.

Just next year, with the then pastor Rev. Richard Scioli, she opened a Pre-School, in the former parish convent.

In that occasion, the *Catholic Observer*, a newspaper in Springfield, MA published an article about the Mount Carmel pre-school, reproduced here at Appendix 3.7.

After 90 years of serving our parish and school community, the two remaining Daughters of Mercy, Sister Bernadette Borelli and Sister Anne Tieuli, were reassigned to Pennsylvania in 1998. For the first time in its history, Our Lady of Mount Carmel School was without its founding religious order.

The community at Our Lady of Mount Carmel offered a Mass in thanksgiving for their 90 years of faithful service in our Parish and School on June 28, 1998. The booklet of this Mass is found in the Appendix 3.8.

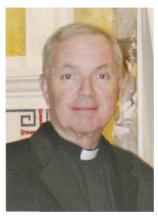
In 2000, Mrs. Cote initiated a process for accreditation of the school, and also began an after-school program, and a computer laboratory.



The convent building, just before to be adapted for the parish pre-school.

c. The Parish, towards the Centennial [2001 – 2007]

[1] Father White becomes the 10th Pastor [2001]



Father Robert White, the 10th Pastor [2001 – Present]

Beginning the new century, Father Robert White, CSS became the new pastor, in 2001.

Lay ministry has expanded, and enriched our prayer life as well as our educational programs. Begun in the previous era with our first certified lectors and special ministers of the Eucharist, we have garnered a long list of lay ministers since 1983. They have become certified through appropriate classes in theology and practicum sessions.

Lectors proclaim the first and second Scripture readings and the intercessions at Mass. Some lead an adapted Children's Liturgy of the Word.

Special ministers of the Eucharist distribute Holy Communion at Mass in the absence of priests sufficient for the size of the congregation. Some bring Holy Communion to the homebound.

Cantors lead acclamations, responses and hymns at some liturgies; women and girls have joined men and boys as altar servers. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops affirmed this change as a diocesan option in 1994.

Preparing candidates for sacraments has become an increasing role of the laity.

[2] **New Technologies are incorporated**

Many clerical tasks in the parish offices became computerized. A database was added to duplicate the census list of members and to facilitate Centennial communications. The publication begun at the start of our hundred year history, known as the monthly Parish News, was combined into quarterly mailings.

Liturgical scripts and ministers' schedules are word processed. Diocesan messages and the weekly bulletin are now electronically transmitted.

We have a website sponsored by the St. Gaspar Bertoni Knights of Columbus, at: http://www.olmcspringfield.org.



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Improvement in Religious Education [3]



Mrs. Dorothy Santamaria, **Director of Religious Education**

Religious Education for our public school students also underwent changes in this era. Following the staff leadership of Rev. George Linse CSS, parishioners contributing their services to coordinate the CCD program included Linda and Paul Kingston, Lee Benedetti (Daniele), Dorothy Santamaria, and Carla Grimaldi. Diocesan meetings and forums multiplied with new catechetical directives and Child Protection Policies.

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Many CCD volunteers were Pius X Medal since the inception minimum of 5 years of service to



awarded the diocesan St. of this honor, given for a the program.

Rev. George Linse, C.P.S.

Intergenerational Religious Education began with leadership training in 2005, funded in our diocese by the Lilly Foundation. Then a Design Team planned and implemented the Centennial Year Generations of Faith gatherings. Families with children, and adult households, come together for religious formation. Additional weekly classes prepare children for First Penance and Communion, and high school students for Confirmation.

[4] New Organizations in the Parish

Clubs and Societies have adapted to new memberships. They remain a consistent base of spiritual, social, and economic vitality.

The Women's Guild, formerly the Christian Mothers and the Blessed Mother Ladies' Sodality, retains as its purpose, "to promote the goals of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church and to provide for the spiritual life of its members by encouraging and fostering a spirit of mutual concern for one another, and by promoting social programs to further these goals."

The Guild Board of Directors develops a yearly calendar of religious and social gatherings so that, through monthly meetings, Christmas and Installation banquets, and fundraising, members remain a large and important body of support for the church.

The St. Vincent DePaul Society has extended their good works as the renewed Ministry of Caring of St. Vincent DePaul. They visit nursing homes and subsidize mail to the homebound by the school children. They have filled virtual Thanksgiving baskets with grocery gift certificates, and dozens of school supplies backpacks for homeless children. They support our school. They have given respite to caregivers. They respond to unique needs. They knit prayer shawls for people in medical treatment. They celebrate elder birthdays, and express parish condolences at the death of every person buried from our church.

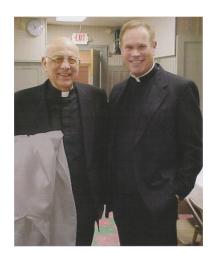
The Men's Retreat League underwent a major change when the Passionist Retreat House in West Springfield closed. Annual weekend retreats still take place in the fall, but fewer attend at the new site, Holy Family Retreat Center in East Hartford, CT. Meanwhile, a diocesan Men's Conference is building up its attendance roster in this, its fifth year 2007, attracting men to hear the faith witness of speakers of national fame in an annual one-day program.



The Knights of Columbus in our parish are the St. Gaspar Bertoni Council 5037. With the national K of C focus on "Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism through projects that directly benefit the Church, family, community, and youth", they are our local Catholic organization of men providing support for fellow brothers, their families, and the Church. They meet monthly, host frequent coffee socials, and have established a memorial Salvatore Maurizio Scholarship.

[5] Father Corigliano celebrates Golden Jubilee

In 2005, parish native Rev. Corigliano was honored as a Golden Jubilarian of the Stigmatine Congregation.



Rev. Anthony M. Corigliano, CSS, OLMC native, gets Golden Jubilee wishes in June, 2005 from Very Rev. Gregory Hoppough, CSS, Superior Provincial

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[6] The Centennial Renovations [2005 – 2007]

Rev. Robert White's first building project was the installation of air conditioning in the church.

Centennial plans began in the second year of his pastorate and became visible in 2005. Committees formed for spiritual renewal, communications, a capital campaign, and design and physical renovation and restoration.

The capital campaign with a goal of \$1.6 million began in earnest under the leadership of Cunneen Fundraising of Connecticut and continued under the General Chairman, Joseph E. Rueli, Jr. Canvassing for contributions and pledges consumed countless meetings and mailings.

Weekend volunteers maintained reams of records.

Our design committee's search for the desired architect ended with Peter Zorzi of Studio One Architects, of our South End parish neighborhood. His response to being asked to consider this project was, "I can't count how many Sundays I sat at 8:30 Mass imagining what I would do to restore this church!"



The Architect Peter Zorzi, his wife Madeline and son Gregory



With his well established competence and experience, he has brought an enduring enthusiasm, evident from the first planning meeting. It is the guidance and expertise of Peter and his son Greg Zorzi and the Studio One staff, especially their young associate Chris Novelli, which made our restoration/renovation hopes possible. They identified and screened bidding contractors and subcontractors. They supervised progress. They tirelessly attended to the myriad details of this major undertaking. Peter's wife Madeline was also very visible with her encouragement and support. Our gratitude for their services, all donated, is beyond measure.

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We installed the beautiful Verdin Singing Tower Carillon. Its seasonal hymns resound throughout the South End three times daily.

The Carillon came to us from nearby St. Joseph Church, which closed. We dedicated it to their former organist and choir director, Mr. Henri Gagnon. On May 7, 2006 fifty St. Joseph members, with Mr. Gagnon, presented it to us, in a moving transfer. As St. Joseph's was only 2 streets over, the H. Gagnon chimes continue to fill the neighborhood with dally seasonal hymns.



Mr. Henry Gagnon with Fr. White

The pews were removed for restoration and resizing.

Weddings and funeral Masses were celebrated in area churches by our priests.

Weekend Masses were held in the auditorium, and weekday Masses in the lower church.



Scaffolding was erected for the restoration of the sanctuary fresco and ceiling paintings; the pillars were covered with faux marble.









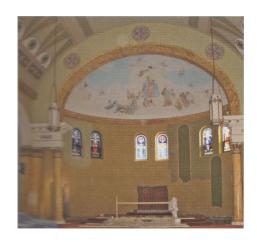












Architects redesigned the sanctuary space, adding handicap accessibility.

A restroom was added adjacent to the main entrance.

The area under the choir loft was enclosed in safety glass to make an expanded and somewhat soundproof vestibule.

Rev. Robert White and committee members traveled to St. Polycarp Church in Somerville which closed, and purchased their marble altars, reredos, pulpit, baptismal font, railings, and doorway fonts.









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d. The School in the new Century [2001 – Present]



Father Robert White and Mrs. Carol Raffaele

As a result of a process for accreditation initiated in 2000 by Mrs. Cote, OLMC School received, in 2002, the maximum ten-year accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Mrs. Cote began an after-school program, and a computer laboratory.

Mrs. Carol Raffaele, also an experienced teacher and administrator, succeeded Mrs. Cote in 2003. With her vibrant leadership, the school completed its 2 year interim evaluation for accreditation in 2004. The computer lab went state-of-the-art wireless. Library cataloging was computerized, and offices were connected to the Internet.

A federal Reading First Grant updated programs, and funded accelerated teacher training. Three teachers have been awarded the new and select Grinspoon Teaching Excellence Award for outstanding classroom performance.

Our Preschool continues to flourish. Extra-curricular programs before and after school hours continue. Generous volunteers staff the library. A Parent Organization plans fundraisers and many student activities and field trips. A School Board evaluates and advises policy.

OLMC graduates consistently score in the top percentile in standardized tests. They thrive in high school, college, and beyond. The value of education at our parish school is unsurpassed.

The newly established Board of Trustees, the commitment to rebuilding the school's Endowment and the establishment of an independent group of adults to market the school, are all signs of a growth in financial solvency and enrollment, the current challenges.



Our Lady of Mount Carmel School Staff and Students – Centennial celebrations picture

X. The Centennial [2007]

[1] Spiritual Preparation

The spiritual preparation began with our Centennial Prayer:

Renewing for our Future Campaign Prayer

Our Lady of Mount Carmel,
you stand be ore us,
leading us to choose life
in God, given to us in your Son, Jesus
We new seek to beautify our church,
the home of our worship,
which is dedicated to you
In the strength of the generations
who have come before us,

grant that will be generosity, so May we r for everyon in our pari Lady of Mount

Ten families united in a preliminary year of weekly Scriptural reflection. We



The Festival of Breads

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prayed the rosary on all the Marian feasts of the year. We honored sacraments celebrated here in the past.

The Ministry of Caring of St. Vincent DePaul hosted an ecumenical Festival of Breads with our area community of special needs people and their families.

The Women's Guild extended their annual Memorial Mass to commemorate the 60 deceased Stigmatine priests and brothers and the 37 Daughters of Mercy who have been assigned here, as Well as all parish members whose names were submitted, for a candlelight presentation and litany.



Women's Guild Centennial Year Officers and Committee Chairpersons with the Pastor, Father Bob White, C.S.S.

In our 100th Lent as a parish, we reflected on our important relationships with God, community, family, and ourselves in a series of suppers and presentations. In an international outreach, Stigmatine missions in the Thailand Province are producing and will benefit from our distribution of 2007 Centennial Christmas ornaments.

[2] The restored Church

First sign of the church building changes to come was the restructuring of the front entrance. The brick exterior was painted.

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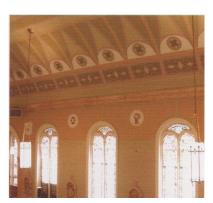
The Church in the Centennial, and nowadays

Follow some pictures of the interior of the restored Church:





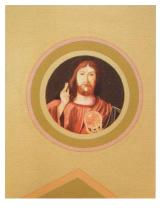














CHAPTER 3 – SPRINGFIELD OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL 51



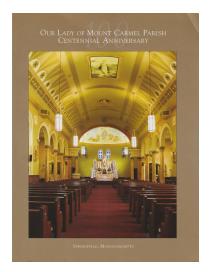


Artists Salvatore Degli Atti, Salvatore Rossi, and Franco Spedicato of Italy achieved the acclaimed renovations.

[3] The Centennial celebrations

We mailed and illustrated a Christmas-to-Easter Centennial greeting to nearly 1,000 parish members and friends.

Fifty travelers journeyed together to Italy in honor of the Centennial.



The Centennial Book

Communications Committee Sylvia Forastiere, Sr. Betty and Rose Costa reached out to our most senior members, inviting those who are 80 years of age and older to submit memories and photos for the Anniversary Book. The committee aligned messages of congratulations, family tributes, and business sponsorships, for the Book.

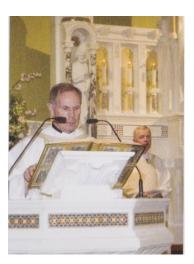
The Communications Committee then developed an extensive ad campaign to offset printing expenses. With the generous guidance and contributions of Aucella Associates, Inc. of Westfield, this publication was completed. It was blessed and distributed on the parish Centennial Feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, July 16, 2007.

A Mass of Thanksgiving for the Centennial was celebrated in the renewed church on June 10, 2007. Invited as Principal Celebrant and Homilist was Most Reverend Timothy A. McDonnell, Bishop of Springfield, the Most Reverend Joseph F. Maguire, Bishop Emeritus, as well as many concelebrating Stigmatine and Diocesan priests.





Most Rev. Timothy A. McConnell, Bishop of Springfield, MA



Very Rev. Gregory J. Hoppough, C.S.S., Superior

CHAPTER 3 - SPRINGFIELD OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL 53









Greetings and thank letters may be found in Appendix 3.9.

XI. The Current Years [2007 - present]

Since the 1907 South End origin of the parish, highway reconfiguration has dispersed members to surrounding cities and towns. Blessed with their heritage of Catholic faith, a festive Italo-American spirit, and strong and extended family, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel parishioners continue to bring these gifts to the community of all God's people.

Today Our Lady of Mount Carmel remains a vibrant and proud witness to their heritage and faith in Springfield's South End!

PART TWO

Saint Ann Church in West Springfield, MA

Saint Ann's Church West Springfield, MA Founder: Rev. Louis Fontana, C.P.S. 1924



"The Church of St. Ann, West Springfield, was built in 1924 and solemnly blessed for religious services in the month of November of the same year. At the time, Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta, of the Stigmatine Fathers, was the Pastor of the Italians in Springfield and its environs."

I. Historical Background [1920 - 1924]



Father Louis Fontana, Founder

The idea of constructing a church in West Springfield for the Italian element of the section had been preconceived a few years before its construction and dedication. In fact, close to the end of 1920, the priests went about looking for a site which was central enough and yet adaptable for the purpose.

Hence, in 1921, a parcel of land was acquired on New Bridge Street whereupon to construct a filial church of the Mt. Carmel parish of Springfield.

However, somewhat later, in the year of 1922, to be precise, the Fathers, having become aware of the proposed project to construct a large bridge between Springfield and West Springfield, decided to purchase terrain for the new church in another locality, not far distant from the first piece of property, yet adjoining the proposed highway leading to the bridge. Therefore, it was momentous that the church would be built with its facade directed toward the principal thoroughfare, later named Memorial Avenue.

The first Priest engaged to approach the parishioners of that area, and to interest them in the erection of a new church was Fr. Louis Fontana. Although residing at the Mother-house in Springfield, he began immediately to organize many activities solely for the purpose of raising funds for the new church; the results were so gratifying that, in 1923, excavations were started for the foundation of the church.

During the rapid course of the construction, Fr. Fontana, due to the situation of personnel changes of the churches, was assigned to a position of greater rank, and Fr. William Ludessi arrived to substitute him. He continued on and brought about the



Fr. William Ludessi 1st Rector [1924-25]

successful completion of the work which had been so well begun by his predecessor, becoming, at its termination, the first Rector.

II. Dedication and Early Times [1924 – 1930]

The Church awaited November 9, 1924, for its opening and solemn blessing for worship. On that morning, His Excellency the late Bishop O'Leary blessed the edifice

and celebrated solemn Pontifical Mass, and in the afternoon of the same day administrated the Sacrament of Confirmation.



Father Joseph Costa 2nd Rector [1925-28]

The initial step of Fr. Ludessi's administration was to acquire a none-too-pretentious dwelling which was to serve as a rectory for about twenty-five years.

With his encouragement and blessings, the first women's society of our parish formed on January 11, 1925. Twenty-two members assembled to elect their first President, Clementina Lamborghini (1925 – 1928). A brief history of St. Ann's Society can be found on Appendix 3.10.

At the time, Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta was the Pastor of the Italians in Springfield and its environs.

The parochial activities of the new church were administered by Fr. Ludessi with

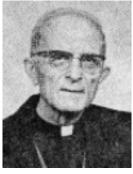
much zeal and success until December 25th of 1925, whereon he was proclaimed Pastor of the mother-church in Springfield.

His successor, Fr. Joseph Costa, stayed on as Rector a little less than three years until November 26th, 1928.

It was during this period that St. Ann's was inundated by the flood of November 1927. Fortunately, the damages were not too considerable, the water-mark reaching the level of the Church-pavement. (At this time the cellar-diggings had not as yet been converted into a hall.) However, the damages proved serious enough, for work of a laborious and patient kind was required before normal appearances were restored.



Fr. Michael Madussi 3rd Rector [1928 – 30]



Fr. Humbert Zampieri 4th Rector [1930-32]

Among the labors of Fr. Costa which were noteworthy, the chapel of St. Theresa stands out as unique, having been erected as a small shrine in her honor.

Fr. Costa's successor as Rector was Fr. Michael Madussi. Under his guidance, the church continued on with notable progress. Among other things, St. Ann's Sanctuary was enriched by a beautiful marble-altar imported from Italy being graciously donated through the munificence of Mr. Peter Fossa and family.

On December 26, of 1930, more changes and substitutions of Stigmatine personnel occurred, and included among these was Fr. Madussi, who was instructed to take over the Pastorate of Mt. Camel Church, White Plains, New York. Fr. Humbert Zampieri became his able successor, administering the affairs of St. Ann's with patience and a tenacious zeal for a period of two very critical years, those of the depression.

III. Spiritual and material progress; the big flood [1930 – 1943]



Fr. Emilio Baretella 5th Rector [1932-33]

Again, on October 26 of 1932, the direction of St. Ann's changed hands, with Fr. Emilio Baretella becoming Rector; his charge was not for long since, on August of 1933, he was transferred to Waltham in the capacity of Pastor of the Sacred Heart Parish there. Thereupon, Fr. Raymond Dalla Porta was named Rector.

Fr. Dalia Porta was destined to remain at St. Ann's for ten years and, under his capable direction, progress of a spiritual and material nature prevailed. His first task was to transform the cellar-diggings of the Church into a spacious hall wherein

parochial activity might take place. Moreover, while still at St. Ann's the interior of the Church was embellished with rich artistic decorations and paintings; a modern Hammond organ was also installed.

Another tragic day in the annals of St. Ann's was March 19, 1936, recording the beginning of a disastrous flood and hurricane, striking most of the New England States, and in this inauspicious occurrence, West Springfield suffered terribly.

At the height of the flood-crest, the water line leveled off six feet above the floor of the church-interior. Needless to remark, the church-damage was exceedingly great, leaving conditions so bad that no services could be held for several weeks.



Fr. Raymond Dalla Porta 6th Rector [1933-43]

During the interim, Fr. Dalla Porta and his confreres of Mt. Carmel found hospitality and lodging at the Mercy Hospital of Springfield. Finally, the flood-stage passed but not without leaving remains of a very obvious and damaging nature for much time thereafter. With courage and patience, the task of restoration commenced,

but not exclusive of obstacles and delay, since the majority of the parishioners were unable to offer any aid; they too were found to be in the like-circumstance.

It was not astonishing to realize how Fr. Dalla Porta, amid such circumstances, found the task of reestablishing matters to their normalcy and former appearance a difficult one. However, buckling down to work, and with his customary constancy and effort, he restored things again in a very relative short time. Towards the end of his rectorship, Fr. Dalla Porta was assisted by Fr. Seraphino Piazzi.



New Rectory and a Shrine are built; the Silver Jubilee [1943 – 1949]



Fr. Victor Formolo 7th Rector [1943-52]

II World War, which was raging in all its violence, the Major Superiors were also asked to furnish their quota of Chaplains for the Armed Forces. Once more there arose the necessity of a change of personnel. Fr. Dalla Porta was named Pastor of the Sacred Heart Parish of Milford, Massachusetts, and in his stead, Fr. Victor Formolo, up until that time assistant at Mt. Carmel, Springfield, took over the rectorate of St. Ann's. At the same time, the newly ordained, Fr. Vito Cannizzo, was assigned as curate.

The first thought of both these priests was to bring matters up to date, resulting in a general census of the Parish; both being of accord, it was decided to continue with the works already established by Fr. Dalla Porta seeking at the same time the gradual extinction of the impendous Church debt, without, however, retarding further improvement on the church itself.

Owing to the wonderful generosity of the parishioners, it was during this interval, that the Church's beauty was enhanced the more by several works of art, among which

worthy of mention are a magnificent Carrara marble statue of St. Anne; new stations of the Cross; many illustrative stained-glass windows; and an artistic pulpit of historical value, the same having been originally installed within the first Catholic Church, Sts. Peter & Paul of New York city, in the year 1785.

Parish events continued along their normal course until August of 1946, when Fr. Vito Cannizzo was transferred to White Plains, N. Y.; his position being taken over by Fr. Gerald Goggin.

Another work of notable improvement occurred in 1948 with the erection of a small but attractive shrine dedicated to the Blessed Mother of God, under the title "Queen of the Holy Rosary." The entire expense of this project was defrayed from donations of the faithful. On the feast of St. Ann, this little grotto was solemnly blessed by Fr. William Ludessi.

In August of 1948, upon the behest of superiors, Fr. Goggin, together with other Stigmatine Priests, volunteered for the mission-field of far away Guam, an islet of the Pacific. The purpose of this pioneering group was to staff the seminary and higher schools of learning of the island. The vacancy created by Fr. Goggin's leave was filled by Fr. Francis Tronconi.

The problem of thinking about a decent habitat could not be solved without considering the case of the rectory. The old frame-house which served as a rectory was in a very deplorable condition under every aspect. The costly repairs, which were demanding and if ever executed, would never have removed the many inconveniences so apparent in the present situation, and in its relation to the church. His Excellency the Bishop was much aware of this, and the parishioners themselves were more than convinced. As result, there was nothing astonishing for all concerned to become pleased upon the Bishop's announcement that his approval had been granted for the construction of a new rectory, and the design itself as presented by the Architect, Mr. Anthony De Pace.

Immediately, there began a campaign to raise the necessary funds and all went well, with the good parishioners cooperating enthusiastically, and without further delay, construction began on the new rectory by the general-contracting concern of Angelo Quatrano & Sons. Blessed with ideal weather, the work proceeded swiftly, barring all interruption, so much so, that on December 7th, 1949, the eve of the Immaculate, Conception, Mr. Quatrano was able to consign the keys of the beautiful edifice to Fr. Rector. According to the opinion of all, this project was accomplished with fullest satisfaction. Although of modest proportion, the new Rectory is very presentable, and at the same time its design adds no little prestige and beauty to the Church itself. So it

is then, that this work happily carried out to its completion and the new year well on its way, the cycle of the first twenty-five years of the history of St. Ann's Church is terminated.

In 1949, another group of young women banded together to form the "Holy Rosary Sodality". They also were to find satisfaction in their service to the Church and to God. They have from that time on been instrumental in providing not only socially successful activities, but have donated their time and energy, not to mention their money, in helping toward the educational goals of our youngsters through scholarship funds.

And still in 1949 St. Ann Church celebrated solemnly the Silver Jubilee of its dedication. Some documents related to this celebration can be found on Appendix 3.11.

I. The Silver Years – The Golden Jubilee [1950 – 1974]

Now that the major endeavors of our Church were complete, it would seem we



The Renovated Church [1972]

could sit back and relax somewhat. We found, however, that not only must we build the edifice, but once built, we must keep constant vigilance that it will not crumble through neglect. We applied this to both the spiritual and physical aspects of Church activity.

Our priests and parishioners were again updating their educational horizons. As the religious classes grew, so did participation of lay teachers. More and more of our adults were asked and/or volunteered to devote some part of their week in helping to teach the CCD classes. We also became more modern in that we now had classes wherein boy and girl were to share their ideas — no longer the strictly all boy or all girl classes. Along with this, we started a less rigid curriculum. Where once only memorized rote answers were accepted as proper responses to

religious teachings, the young people were encouraged to read more widely on their religion and participate in class by giving their own views on what they had learned.

In 1952, Father Formolo was transferred and Fr. Joseph Rosa, long time Pastor at Mount Carmel Church, White Plains, New York, was sent to St. Ann's Church. He was to spend the rest of his official years in the Service of God with us here at St. Ann's. He also stayed on as unofficial guide to his flock after his retirement. During those first years he again took up the cause of renovating and improving the church.

Fr. Leo Geraci was to join us in 1953 as Curate. He was a great help to Fr. Rosa during his stay at St. Ann's.

In 1955, the Church Hall had again been updated by the renovation efforts of Fr. Rosa and Fr. Geraci. A banquet to celebrate this event was planned and the public was invited to attend. Judge Daniel M. Keyes, Jr. was the principal speaker for the evening.



Fr. Joseph Rosa 8th Rector [1952-69]

In 1956, another joyous occasion occurred. One of our own boys, Fr. Gilbert G. Fini, was appointed Superior General. In recognition of this honor, St. Ann's sponsored a banquet to

commemorate the event. Fr. Fini was to further distinguish himself when in November 1956 he was appointed as the first American ever to hold the office of Provincial of the Stigmatine Fathers of North America. In this position, he was asked to travel to Rome where he was to take up his duties at the Vatican.



Fr. Gilbert Fini

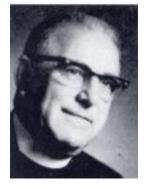
During these next few years, we continued our struggle to keep abreast of the times. Our choir, which had been active since the start of masses here at St. Ann's, was to continue its efforts in bringing strong vocal support to our devotions. Under the direction of Mr. Joseph Pernice, an adult choir was formed and was soon performing a wide selection of musical pieces for our pleasure with the added talents of Mr. Edward Girotti as guest soloist. Our organist, Margaret Russo LaFond, who has been a mainstay of our choir, provided the needed accompaniment for our singers and gave invaluable help in organizing their first efforts. Although not formally active as a group today, we still enjoy the musical

enrichment of Mrs. LaFond's talents at our week-end masses, as well as the equally appreciated accompaniment of Mrs. Mary Girotti.

It was in the 1950's that John Borelli first turned his attention toward providing athletic outlets for the youthful energies of our boys and girls. He spearheaded an effort to establish softball and basketball teams for the Parish. These teams were very active for a number of years. Eventually, participation did vane. However, in 1971 a group of parents once again organized to support an athletic program, this time including a hockey team. The children of our parish have distinguished themselves in several championship categories within their own age levels and have also learned the valuable lesson of self-support. Their efforts in fundraising have ranged from spaghetti suppers, to paper drives, to donut sales. It is to the credit of the parents behind these teams that

their efforts have provided the basis for other parishes in le area to establish athletic programs of their own, and their teams now compete with ours in inter-parish leagues.

In 1962, with Father Guido Mespilli as their mentor, a group was quietly organized to serve certain special needs within the church community. They united in an effort to efficiently and unobtrusively bring id to the people who needed "something extra" at certain times of their lives. They are called the men of the "St. Vincent de Paul Society."



Fr. Guido Mespilli



Fr. Vito Cannizzo
9th Rector [1969-72]

In 1969, Father Vito Cannizzo, new Rector of St. Ann's, assembled the first Parish Council. It was the intention of Father Cannizzo not only to go along with the newer tenets of the Church that encouraged an integrated team of priests and laity, but he also realized it was an excellent opportunity to further stimulate the enterprising talents of our people.

Father Cannizzo called the first Council to order on December 19, 1969. Mr. John Borelli was elected its Chairman, with Emilio Tassinari as Vice-Chairman and Mrs. Margaret Balestri, Secretary.

After proper establishment of the rules and by-laws, the group addressed itself to the business at hand. It became quite evident, by decree of Vatican II, that the new requirements in the liturgy and general layout of the church would necessitate some renovation.

With this as impetus, investigation of the general needs in our church was initiated by a special committee set up by the Council. The committee consisted of Father Canizzo, Arnold Boido, Leon Pernice, Raymond Borelli, Andrew Tranghese, Al

Manchino and Emilio Tassinari. Their investigation disclosed that many repairs heretofore neglected due to lack of funds must now included in a general renovation. As they related their findings to the Council, it became evident a large sum of money would be a priority item.

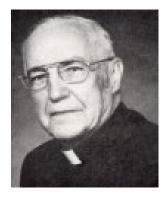
It was agreed that permission would be obtained from the Bishop proceed with efforts to renovate the church. Leon Pernice and Associates were asked to prepare layouts the renovation for acceptance by the Bishop. Mr. Pernice and his people presented a "first" in church assign for West Springfield by submitting plans for the church interior using the semi-circle concept in formation of the pews around the altar.

In 1970, a concelebrated Mass announced commencement of the current Renovation Drive conducted by the parish lay council and its volunteers.

Both the Bishop and the parishioners were enthusiastic about the integrative ideas presented and a drive was on to raise the necessary capital. Successfully organized by William Girotti, our drive far outreached our wildest dreams and by January 1972 a renovated church was ready for use.

On January 23, 1972 Bishop Weldon presides at a Mass of Thanksgiving upon completion of a comprehensive renovation of the church's interior.

Later, a gala dinner-dance was held at Chez Josef's to further celebrate the event. It was during this dinner that Mrs. Mary Gallerani was cited for many contributions to the Church and St. Ann's Society. She was awarded a special certificate by the Bishop in behalf of St. Ann's Parish.



Fr. Adolph Ferrari 10th Rector [from 1972]

Proud of our past accomplishments, we glided toward our 50th year as a parish. With Father Adolph Ferrari as our new Rector, ably assisted by Father Dino Giampaolo as Curate, we continued to achieve new goals.

In 1973, our CCD Program, with the guidance of Father Giampaolo, further reconstructed their teaching precepts. They knew that the young adults of our parish were becoming dissatisfied with a too "roux" approach to their religious training, and class attendance was seriously affected. With this in mind, high school CCD program was completely scrapped and a new concept adopted. Classes were limited to one three-hour session



Fr. Dino Giampaolo

per month. During these meetings professional speakers were invited to present views on the religious aspects of the curriculum. The format was successful and has been continued, the scope enlarged upon during the current school year.

In the elementary grades, having gone the full scope of a more liberalized curriculum, it was decided that dogma in its fullest form must again be presented to the children. The basics of a religion must be taught in the beginning so that experimentation of ideas can be successfully explored at a later age. With this in mind, textbooks were purchased in 1975 which, in the opinion of the CCD Board and Father Giampaolo, combined the best of several approaches.

As the 50th Anniversary year of St. Ann's Church arrived, the parish decided to again make a positive contribution to the church in celebration of the event. They adopted a motto for the year — "Debt Free Golden Jubilee" — and encouraged the congregation to pledge financial support toward clearing any outstanding debts of the parish. As the Rectory had not been refurbished for the past 25 years, this became one of the primary goals.

We also participated in many and varied social events which helped to mark our 50th year as a parish. We had special tortellini sales by the St. Ann's Society, a highly successful fashion show by the Holy Rosary Sodality, a Tag and Bake Sale for the parishioners to enjoy.

On November 3, 1975 we topped of the celebration with a special Mass on November 3, 1975. Bishop Christopher J. Weldon was our honored guest and chief celebrant of the Mass. We were happy to have many former priests of our parish participating with the Bishop. The parishioners then enjoyed a dinner dance at Chez Josef's. In special recognition for service to the parish and its people, Mr. Robert Bonfitto was presented a certificate by Father Ferrari and Bishop Weldon.

As we look ahead now to the future, we thank God for his gifts to our parish and hope He will continue to bless our Church and its people.

The following words made part of the Golden Jubilee commemorative booklet:

"These are the major dates concerning the church's construction, additions, furnishing, etc. However, these are the least important in the history of the parish, as whole family, past and present, retains its own unique memories of Sacraments administrated, special Masses attended, particular priests, events, etc, so much so more comprehensive chronicle of this and every other parish would require volumes.

For this reason we limit our tributes here to the members of the various societies, which have been of tremendous moral and financial assistance over the years, and of the members of the recently formed parish lay council who themselves shouldered the initiation, organization and fulfillment of practically the entire renovation program.

So, as agreed upon by all, the success of St. Ann's renovation is substantially due to the interest and cooperation of hundreds of parishioners on the grass roots and who have contributed most generously to this cause. Without them, the fact of renovation would still be but a fancy dream instead of a proven reality."

Some documents related to the Golden Jubilee can be found on Appendix 3.12. Our community also honored the natives 'who chose to dedicate their lives to God's Word': Father Philip Gallerani, Sister Bernadette and Very Rev. Gilbert Fini, as shown in Appendix 3.13.

I. Stigmatine closing in 2007



Fr. Joseph Massaro, last Stigmatine Rector

Fr. Joseph Massaro, Rector of St. Ann, passed away on March 18, 2007. He suffered a massive brain hemorrhage soon after celebrating the Sunday Vigil Mass a day before.

Fr. Peter Burns, Stigmatine, continued to offer a single Sunday Mass until the end of that year, as Interim Rector.

Closing and Demolition [2007 - 2012]

Bishop Timothy A. McDonnell of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield closed the church on Dec. 31, 2008, after a struggle with parishioners who wanted the diocese to keep it open.

St. Ann parish was combined with Immaculate Conception and St. Louis de France parishes to create St. Frances Xavier Cabrini parish. St. Louis de France Church was also closed, and the new parish worships at the former Immaculate Conception Church.

As church membership has declined in recent years, bishops around the country have closed church buildings, an oftentimes controversial and emotional development for worshippers.

Since 2000 (and up to January, 2012), the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield closed about 70 parishes.

The Church was demolished on February, 2012. Press reports on closing up to

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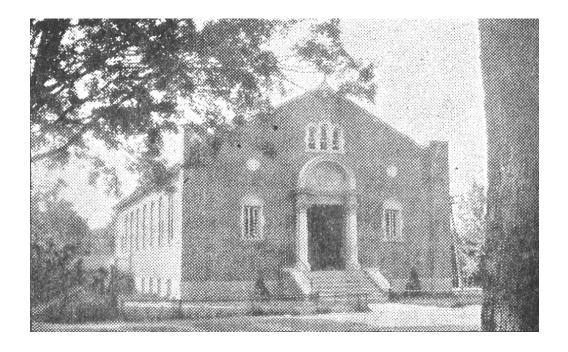


St. Ann's Church and Rectory, at 560 – 576 Memorial Avenue in West Springfield, MA, after closing.

Source:

Mass Live – powered by *The Republican* – Jan. 27 and Feb. 7, 2012: http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2012/01/former_st_anns_church_in_west.html http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2012/02/photos_demolition_of_st_anns_c.html

PART THREE Saint Anthony of Padua Church in Agawam, MA



Saint Anthony of Padua Church Agawam, MA Founder: Rev. Raymond Dalla Porta,

. C.P.S. - 1921 "In 1921, at the direction of Bishop Thomas M. O'Leary, a mission church of Mt. Carmel of Springfield, Massachusetts was founded in Agawam, Massachusetts by Rev. Anthony Della Porta of the Stigmatine Fathers, Pastor of Mt. Carmel Church. Rev. Raymond Della Porta, C.S.S. brother of Father Anthony, was appointed as its first Rector."

I. Historical Background [1921 – 1925]

In 1921, at the direction of Bishop Thomas M. O'Leary, a mission church of Mt. Carmel of Springfield, Massachusetts was founded in Agawam, Massachusetts by Rev. Anthony Della Porta of the Stigmatine Fathers, Pastor of Mt. Carmel Church.

Rev. Raymond Della Porta, C.S.S. brother of Father Anthony, was appointed as its first Rector.

Property on Walnut Street was purchased for \$1.00 from the Perusse estate. A temporary, portable wooden church heated by a wood burning furnace, was erected. Thus began St. Anthony of Padua of Agawam.

1923 - The growth of this young mission church necessitated a larger and permanent structure to be built. Under the supervision of Rev. Charles Zanotti, C.S.S. a building committee was organized, a building fund was started and a search for a new property site was begun. Land at the corner of Maple Street and Bridge Street was donated by Michael Fitzgerald to the Roman Catholic Bishop. This transaction can be found registered on May 15, 1924 in Registrar Book 1274, Page 346.

Ground breaking for the new church took on place April, 1925 and the Lacey Construction Co. was named building contractor. The construction cost was \$35,000 and a \$30,000 mortgage remained.

II. Dedication and Early Times [1925 – 1932]

The first Mass in St. Anthony's Church was celebrated by Father Anthony Della Porta, C.S.S. on the occasion of the dedication of the church, on October 4, 1925.

From the very beginning, a weekly novena in honor of St. Anthony of Padua began on each Tuesday and these devotions continue to this present day, high-lighted by a solemn triduum preceding the feast of St. Anthony on June 13th.

The first to be baptized in St. Anthony's Church was Viola Bongiovanni, who died in infancy. The ceremony was performed on April 19, 1926 by the Reverend Michael Madussi, C.S.S.

The first First Communion was held on June 13, 1925, also performed by Father Madussi, C.S.S.

The first marriage ceremony was between Desolina Montagna and Oreste Luccardi, performed on January 2, 1926 by the Reverend Charles Zanotti, C.S.S.

The first funeral Mass was celebrated for Angelina Biardi, by the Reverend Charles Zanotti, C.S.S. on October 20, 1925.

1926 - A \$3,500 pipe organ was installed. This organ donated by Horace A. Moses, President of the Strathmore Paper Company in honor of his Italian employees.

III. Church and Rectory are built [1933 – 1950]

- 1933 A parcel of land on Maple Street, adjacent to the church, was donated by Mario and Ida Rovelli to the Roman Catholic Bishop. This transaction can be found in Registrar Book 1514, Page 358. Today this property is our very attractive church lawn.
- 1941 The estate of the Rivers family sold property on Bridge Street to the Roman Catholic Bishop at a cost of \$3,500. This is recorded in Registrar Book 1718, Page 320, on July 28, 1941. On this site is our church Rectory.
- 1942, June 11 Father Camillo Santini, C.S.S. became the first priest to sleep in the new Rectory. The first housekeeper and cook, serving for ten years, was Antonio Ferrarini. For the following 18 years this position was held by Louise Broggi.
 - 1948 The church garage was built by contractor Carlo Sapelli.

IV. New Bishop and Renovations [1950 – 1976]

- 1950 Bishop Christopher J. Weldon, under whose leadership St. Anthony's would prosper both spiritually and financially, was appointed Bishop of the Springfield Diocese.
- 1954 The sacrament of Confirmation was conferred for the first time at St. Anthony's on May 13, by Bishop Christopher Weldon.
- 1963 A building fund for church renovations was begun by Rev. Dominic Ruscetta, C.S.S. Plans were drawn by architect Leon Pernice and approved by Bishop Weldon in mid-1968. The construction was started in September, 1968 by Petrangelo Contractor and completed in three stages.

First to be renovated was the sacristy, then the sanctuary and finally the main church. The work was completed for Easter 1969 at a cost of \$90,000.

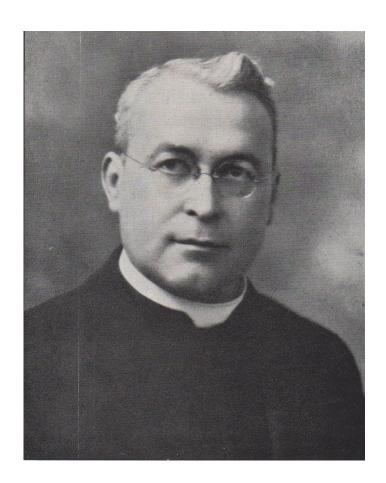
1975-1976 - Recent renovations have been made in the rectory and space over the garage was made into a serviceable conference room.



I. Closing [2009]

The Church was closed on January 1, 2009. Press reports on the closing are presented on Appendix 3.15.

PART FOUR Saint Joseph Church in East Longmeadow, MA



Speaking silently is the gentle vision of a Father, Friend, and Counselor, Father Ludessi, Pastor and Founder of St. Joseph's.

From the booklet of St. Joseph's Hall inauguration on December 7th, 1947.

I. Early Times [1946 – 1947]

1945 — plans were formulated for a mission church of Mount Carmel in Springfield in East Longmeadow, and Mass began being celebrated there in a clubhouse.

1946 – property on Vineland Avenue was purchased and construction of a church building was started.

1947:

- January 12th First Mass at the new Church:
 Father Ludessi, founder and beloved pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel's in Springfield, intoned for the first time the "Gloris in excelsis Deo" in the new St. Joseph's church;
- February 2nd Father Francis Mackin, C.P.S. came to St. Joseph's and became the first rector;
- March 9th the four new Statues were blessed for the church;
- All the Lenten services were well attended;
- Holy Week was observed with all the pomp of the liturgy of the church;
- The first coat of paint was given to all the inside of the church by the boys of the parish;
- The month of May was ushered in by special devotions every evening with the Rosary recited by a man of the parish — every family man was proud to do this;



Rev. Francis Mackin, C.P.S.

- The First Communion Class received for the first time;
- The First-Communion Class Breakfast was held at Mrs. S. Santaniello's home;
- The cellar of the Parish Hall was dug... the beginning;

- June the new outdoor Statute of St. Joseph -- gift of Natale and Philip Bongiorni was dedicated. The grounds surrounding it were landscaped by the men of the parish;
- The first lawn party was held and proved to be very successful;
- A group of the parishioners chartered a bus and went to St. Ann's Shrine for the feast of St. Ann;
- The month of October was a whirlwind of religious and social activity;
- The first Sunday of November the St. Ann's Society donated the outdoor statute of the Sacred Heart;
- The St. Joseph's Society and St. Ann's Society are pillars of the church;
- The altar boys are known for faithfulness;
- The debut of the children's choir promises a great deal of added spirituality to religious services.
- December 7th St. Joseph's Parish Hall is dedicated.

II. 10th Anniversary Celebration [1956]



REV. JOSEPH MASSARO

The 10th anniversary of the founding of St. Joseph's [that would occur on January, 1957] was observed beforehand with a solemn high Mass on December 8th, 1956 at 10:00 a.m., presided by Rev. Peter Torretta, C.P.S., pastor of Mount Carmel Church in Springfield. The concelebrants were: Rev. Joseph Massaro, C.P.S., pastor of St. Joseph's Church, deacon, and Rev. John Saracco, C.P.S., sub-deacon. Benediction will follow. Mrs. John Lanzillo will be organist and Mrs. Thomas Woods will direct the choir.

A dinner was served at 6:30 in the church hall to 160 parishioners and guests. Among the invited guests were: Very Rev. Gilbert Fini, C.P.S., provincial of the Stigmatine Fathers of the North American Province; Fr. Toretti, Fr. Saracco and Rev. John R. Wolohan, pastor of St. Michael's Church.

The guest speaker was Atty. William Canfield of Hampden, who had an outstanding war record in World War II. Following the hostilities, he was prosecuting attorney of war prisoners in North Bavaria and he had many interesting experiences in the European countries, both during and after the war. Lucian Rinaldi will serve as master of ceremonies at the dinner. The kitchen in the church hall, modernized by men of the parish, will be dedicated during the observance.



The picture shows members of the committee in charge of arrangements of the banquet in celebration of the occasion.

In front, from left to right, were Mrs. Joseph Mascaro, Rev. Joseph Massaro, the pastor, and Victor DeAngelo. In back are Joseph Grinaldi, left, and Raymond Busi.

III. Closing [2003]

In 2003, the Diocese of Springfield yoked St. Joseph of East Longmeadow with St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Springfield. The diocese sold off the property at St. Joseph's and allowed \$500,000 from the proceeds to be escrowed in St. Paul's name for future endeavors.

Source:

http://www.masslive.com/living/index.ssf/2011/12/how_st_pauls_parish_with_its_bilingual_pastor_is_becoming_a_strong_family_together.html

PART FIVE

St. Mary of Assumption Church in Ludlow, MA



The new Church, at 499 East Street

"On Palm Sunday, 1948, Fr. Ludessi celebrated the First Mass in the house at 12 Cedar Street, temporarily arranged as a Chapel. Fr. Carmen Russo, CSS."

"On June 12, 1949, the ground for the new Church was broken at 499 East Street, next to the temporary Chapel. Clergy, town officials, parishioners and friends attended the breaking of the ground, and it was a happy day for all."

"... Mr. John C. Parker was our architect. He took a great interest in the plans and in due time he had designed the building. He designed a good and strong building, one which will be a monument to the Italians of Ludlow. ..."

Fr. Carmen Russo, CSS

I. Early Times [1947 – 1949]

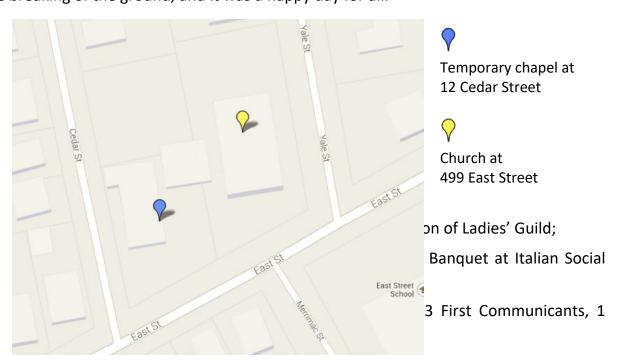
On November, 1947, the property between Cedar and Yale Streets was purchased for the purpose of erecting a Church to serve the needs of the Italian population in Ludlow.

On Palm Sunday, 1948, Fr. Ludessi celebrated the First Mass in the house at 12 Cedar Street, temporarily arranged as a Chapel. The first year saw the parishioners of St. Mary's struggling hard, making immense sacrifices, and above all remaining faithful to the newly founded Church. The Italian people of Ludlow have proven that with a few much can be done, and much more will be done.

Still in 1948:

- On October, there was created the Holy Rosary Society;
- On November, the Holy Name Society;
- Along the year, St. Mary had: 7 Baptisms, 4 First Communicants, 7 Confirmations, 1 convert, 2 deaths and 7 marriages.

On June 12, 1949, the ground for the new Church was broken at 499 East Street, next to the temporary Chapel. Clergy, town officials, parishioners and friends attended the breaking of the ground, and it was a happy day for all.



II. The Construction of the new Church [starting in 1949]

In mentioning names we are bound to omit someone. We do not do so intentionally, and if any name is omitted, we are truly sorry.

Mr. John C. Parker was our architect. He took a great interest in the plans and in due time he had designed the building. He designed a good and strong building, one which will be a monument to the Italians of Ludlow.

Upon completion of the plans, Mr. Carlo Guerci took over the job. The man worked hard and diligently. Many days and nights did he spend in designing and seeing to it that no flaws would occur. Omitting many of his own duties, he put his all in the new church.



View from the other side of the Church

Mr. William Hennessey surveyed the land for us. He gave his time and his service free as did these others: Albert Bonavita & Sons in excavating the cellar and Frank Nowak in excavating the service line. We must remember that these men were not asked to donate their service and equipment. They did this out of the abundance of charity that they possess.

We can never forget Mr. Owen P. Clifford, the plumber, coming up to us and, after introducing himself, offering to do the plumbing work. Nor can we forget our heating men, Abair & Cairns, generously putting in the heating system. Mr. Walter Eisold was in charge of the electrical work. He worked hard by day and sacrificed his

nights at the church. Can we forget Vic Zabek, who donated so much fine loam to help us beautify the land about the church? What of our painters, the Pope Brothers? Can one say that they did not do a wonderful job? Our masons and plasterers, who, on their free days, accomplished what seemed impossible, deserve a great deal of credit. Names like Manoni, the Marianis, the Marinis, Gino Sorcinelli, the Bruschi brothers, and the Sorcinelli brothers will not be forgotten nor will those of our carpenters, Joseph and Gino Guerci.

Men who devoted the major part of 1949 in constructing the new edifice, who at any time were willing to leave their homes to help, are a major part of the church. They are men like Felix and Erminio Cristina, Joseph Diotalevi, Bruno Focosi, Santi Manoni, Gino Marini, Gildo Pancotti, Dario Pasquini, Enrico Ricardi, Alfio and Joseph Sorcinelli, and Joseph Ventura.

Can we forget the assistance of A. Boilard & Sons who always had the material on the spot when needed, who generously donated a great deal of the materials?

Then there are the men who donated some of their time in building:

Abrahamson, Herb.	Cristina, Raymond	Pasquini, Raymond	
Alessandroni, Alfio	Fioramanti, Angelo	Petrolati, Raymond	
Arcobello, Frank	Fioravanti, Philip	Quaglini, Eugene	
Casagranda, Walter	Gasparini, Gino	Richardson, Francis	
Casagrande, Joseph	Henriques, August	Segneri, Henry	
Casagrande, John	Lavatori, Ponziano	Sorcinelli, Anthony	
Casagrande, Louis	Luzi,	Spadoni, Lindoro	
Casagrande, Louis	Marconi, Louis	Tebaldi, Amilcare	
(Brimfield St.)	Mei, Attilio	Torretti, Gino	
Connelly, Charles	Mei, Enrico	Tranquilli, Aldino	
Conti, Dino J	Mei, Paul	Tranquilli, Eugene	
Crescentini, John	Pancotti, Joseph	Tranquilli, Walter	
Cristina, Louis	Pasquini, Mario	Wallace, Edward	

We cannot forget our Societies which ran so many affairs to obtain money to see the project accomplished, nor the wives of the men who often sat alone at their dinner table and on into the evening - because their husbands had a job to do. We cannot forget our friends, non-parishioners, whose names we cannot recall off-hand, who helped to build, who attended our social affairs. Nor those who donated money whose names can be found in this program.

Now you can understand why our history is unique. Now you can understand why we love to be considered one of your own.

We, who received so much cooperation, can we forget you? Can those who come after us forget you? Will God in whose honor this church is being built forget you? The answer is evident.

So as we close the first year of our history let us remember that we have not finished the job, we have just started. We will go on and in due time we will complete what we started. Until that day, let us pray for one another, let us unite closer, let us become one big happy family.

We are proud of you. We will never forget you and we will pray daily that God shower his blessings upon you and those dear to you. God bless you now and forever.

FR. RUSSO.

III. Closing [2010]

St. Mary of the Assumption Church closed in January 2010, but early in 2008 the parishioners made a protest against the announced closing. This can be seen on Appendix 3.16.

In 2012, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield sold the former St. Mary of the Assumption Church at 499 East Street to the Church of the Nazarene for \$750,000. The Church was sold after the diocese made a decision to merge the church with St. John the Baptist Church in Ludlow. The two parishes became the new parish of St. Elizabeth Church. This can be seen on Appendix 3.17.

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Appendix 3.1: About the Beginning of Mount Carmel

Italians overcome divisions to build Catholic community

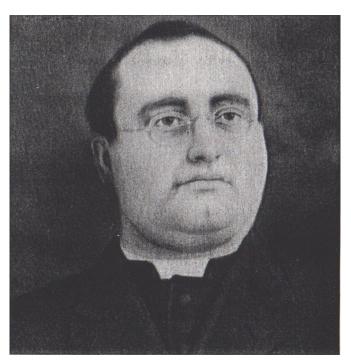
By Father Bill Pomerleau

Observer staff

(Nineteenth in a series)

SPRINGFIELD — In the eyes of some, the more they moved into the neighborhood, the worse things had become:

"This filth in the Italian quarter is often so thick that one stumbles over it in passing through the section. There are yards in the foreign quarters with dirt in piles; cellars filled with refuse; alleys which defy description. And this in our city of homes."



Father Anthony Dalla Porta, C.S.S.

The description of Springfield's South End around Water (now Columbus Avenue), Wilcox and Union streets was given in 1913 by an Italian immigrant to the city, Silvio Martinelli.

Martinelli, a lawyer who became the city's first Italian city councilor the next year, blamed the living conditions in the overcrowded South End on negligent land-lords and the Board of Health, which he believed was not enforcing sanitary laws.

An agent for the board, who was under pressure to resign by Martinelli, confirmed that the neighborhood, which had at first large homes for Yankee inhabitants, then boarding

houses for Irish and French-Canadian immigrants, was going downhill. But he told the state Immigration Board that the "whole trouble is being caused by people who are ignorant of the ordinary laws of sanitation or who are lazy to observe them."

A decade earlier, a series of stabbings had led the Springfield Republican to call for more police in the neighborhood, where the newly arrived immigrants "have come to take advantage of their freedom, and as soon as they have drunk a little liquor, begin romping about in a reckless way and become mixed up in fights, with more or less serious results."

It was little wonder that Stigmatine Father Anthony Dalla Porta once took a long vacation in what a history of Our Lady of Mount Carmel delicately called "a moment of discouragement."

Small numbers of Italians, who worked in a variety of industries and established small businesses in various locations, had come to western and central Massachusetts by the 1880s.

Despite a Republican account that the occupations of the mostly "transient" Italians in the area ranged "from the traditional peanut vending and organ grinding to digging on the streets for the city," the first immigrants actually brought entrepreneurial skills they had acquired in various regions of their native land to Springfield.

By 1896, there were two whole-sale fruit firms, 23 other fruit and grocery stores, seven bootblacks, a barbershop and a liquor store catering to Springfield's Italian population. There were also several social clubs and the Mount Carmel Society, which sponsored a festival on the community's patronal feast day.

But as late as 1905, there were still no Italian parishes, or even native Italian-speaking priests, in the Diocese of Springfield.

By 1893, there were more than 2,000 Italians in Springfield alone. In church law if not entirely in practice, they were nearly all members of St. Michael's Cathedral Parish, where Father Bernard Conaty was struggling to serve his new parishioners.

Father Conaty, an Irish-American who studied in France, spoke some Italian, but the first big breakthrough in the diocese's efforts to minister to the new wave of largely poverty-stricken and uneducated immigrants from southern Italy came in 1897, when Father Michael Kelly became the parochial vicar of the cathedral parish.

Father Kelly celebrated a mass with an Italian homily, each Sunday morning, in a makeshift space called "St. Augustine's Chapel" in the crypt of the cathedral. But the relatively low attendance at the sole Italian Mass and meager amount of money raised to establish a separate parish earlier in the 1890s were signs that the diocese was failing to reach many of its newest members.

Father Kelly, who had studied in Rome, accompanied Bishop Thomas Beaven on a visit to the Eternal City in early 1905. With the support of the bishop, Father Kelly looked up a former Stigmatine professor, Father Peter Tabarelli, who lobbied his order to send priests to Springfield.

The Stigmatines, founded in parish ministry in Italy as part of their commitment to serve bishops in whatever ministry was asked of them. But the community was initially cool to the idea of ministry in the U.S.

Father Dalla Porta, a native of Trent in northern Italy, was interested in Springfield, but was not allowed to come to the diocese, despite the lobbying of Bishop Beaven and Father Kelly.

But, a year later, a group of Italians from Trent emigrated to Hazleton, PA. The community, which was dominated by priests from northern Italy, decided to send Father Dalla Porta and another priest to help the Bishop of Scranton.

Once in the U.S., Father Dalla Porta was able to convince his superiors that a second mission in the Springfield diocese was worth their support. He left Scranton for Springfield, where he was joined by another Stigmatine, Father Alfredo Balestrazzi.

In May, 1906, Father Dalla Porta took over the Italian ministry at the Cathedral, while Father Balestrazzi ministered to Italian Beaven created Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, although it did not yet have a separate place to celebrate Mass and its pastor still lived in the Cathedral Rectory.

On January 2, 1907, the new parish bought two pieces of property between Wilcox and Union streets for \$ 6,800. Bishop Beaven's diary in the Springfield diocesan archives reveals that the purchase was only possible when the bishop took out a \$ 5,800 mortgage at the Springfield Institution for Savings. In seven months, Father Dalla Porta had only raised \$ 1,600 towards the building of a new parish complex.

"Yes, there was anti-clericalism back then", said Stigmatine Father Carmen Russo, a former pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel who has researched the history of his religious community in the United States.

While most Italian immigrants at the turn of the century were Catholic, some had been influenced by the nationalist fervor which led to the unification of Italy and the loss of temporal power of the Vatican. Continuing political debates about the abolition of the Papal States sometimes made relations between the Italian clergy and laity tense.

But, more important, Father Russo believes, was the difficulty of forming a parish made up largely of poor parishioners from southern Italy with a pastor from the North.

By 1908, a home on the Union Street half of the parish property had been transformed into a chapel, while the house on Wilcox Street became the parish rectory. This modest achievement was hailed by the *Republican*, which knew about divisions within the community.

"He (Father Dalla Porta) was by no means welcomed with open arms by even his own people and so besides the burden of building up a parish and ministering to the spiritual life of the parishioners, he was beset with the depressing task of having to show many that he was here to give freely of his soul and mind and body for their benefit."

(date of publishing unknown)

In our next issue: Ethnic...

Appendix 3.2: The Silver Jubilee of Father Ludessi [1941]

In Honor of the

Twenty-fifth Ordination Anniversary of the

Rev. William J. Ludessi, C.P.S.

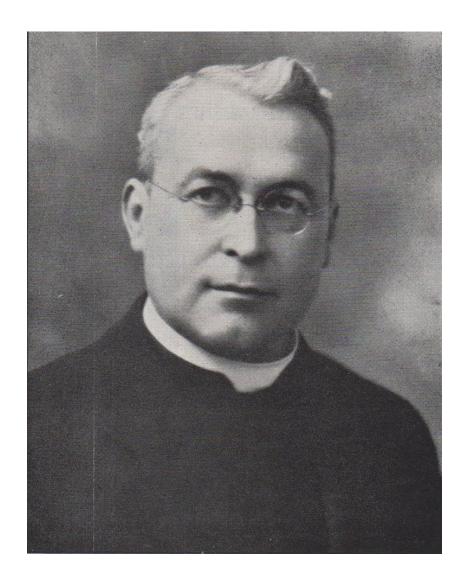
Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church

Springfield, Massachusetts

Technical High School

Auditorium

February 23, 1941



Our Beloved Pastor

REVEREND WILLIAM J. LUDESSI, C.P.S.

SPIRITUAL BOUQUET FOR REV. LUDESSI

	Girl Scouts	Altar Boys	Y.L.S.	Children of Parish
Mass	150	73	75	7,391
Communions	112	34	65	569
Rosaries	250	25	110	904
Stations	50	12	10	
Ejaculations	5,200	1,300	700	119.473
Benedictions	51	17	24	
Visits to Blessed	55	27	50	2,032
Sacrament				
Prayers	1,000	455	150	16,537
Special Devotions	5	4	4	

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General Chairman, Joseph A. Serafino
Co-Chairman, Mrs. Clementina Lamborghini
Secretary, Miss Erma Zonin
Treasurer, Reverend Louis Bonan, C.P.S.

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APPRECIATION

To our Friends:

The committee wishes to take this opportunity to thank all those who have in any way contributed to the success of this affair. We requested your support, and most graciously did you respond.

Our program tells its own story of the generous cooperation of our advertisers. We thank them, and we ask you to keep our advertisers in mind when in need of their services.

May God bless those who made this celebration a success.

REVEREND LOUIS BONAN, C.P.S.,

Honorary Chairman.



His EXCELLENCY MOST REVEREND THOMAS M. O'Leary, D.D.

My dear Father Ludessi:

I offer you my sincerest congratulations on rounding out twenty-five years of faithful, supremely useful service in the Priesthood as an Ambassador of Christ.

Your devotion to duty and your untiring zeal in the interests of our Holy Faith find due appreciation with your Bishop.

May it be given to you to labor yet many years and to energize the work of the Stigmatine Fathers among the Italian people of the Springfield Diocese.

Please accept my blessing on this happy occasion.

With sentiments of sincere respect and regards I am,

Your humble servant in Christ,

THOMAS M. O'LEARY,

Bishop of Springfield



Superior General VERY REV. JOHN B. ZAUPA, C.P.S.



Provincial VERY REV. CHARLES ZANOTTI, C.P.S.

To dear Father Ludessi, who on the same day happily celebrates the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination and fifteenth anniversary of his appointment as Pastor of Our Lady of Mt. Camel Church in Springfield, I want to sincerely express my fraternal sentiments of congratulations for the great success wrought by him, through the grace of Cod, as an exemplary priest, valiant missionary, zealous pastor, and in the Congregation of the Stigmatine Fathers, as local and provincial superior, with the fervent desire that God may bless him and keep him in the loving affection and esteem of his friends, admirers, and confreres.

VERY REV. JOHN B. ZAUPA, C.P.S. Superior General

To the Rev. William Ludessi, C.P.S.:

Formerly his companion in the ministry as a pastor, now his successor as Provincial of the Stigmatine Fathers, always his devoted -friend and ardent admirer, I welcome this opportunity to extend to him my most -cordial felicitations on the occasion of his Silver Jubilee. United in spirit with me are all the Fathers, Brothers, and students of the North American Province.

VERY REV. CHARLES ZANOTTI, C.P.S.

Stigmatine Major Seminary, Elm Bank, Wellesley, Mass.



HIS HONOR ROGER L. PUTNAM

I am glad to join this testimonial and tribute to my friend, Father William Ludessi. His many great qualities have brought the respect, the admiration, and the love of all who know him.

ROGER L. PUTNAM Mayor of Springfield

Congratulations to Rev. William Ludessi

+

Dear Father Ludessi:

I have been told that you are to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of your sacerdotal ordination together with the fifteenth anniversary of your appointment as pastor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church. I have had the pleasure of enjoying your amiable hospitality and that of other Stigmatine Fathers who affectionately care for the Italo-American population of your parish.

As Cardinal Protector of your institute I gladly unite my sentiments of gratitude and congratulations to the many other demonstrations of affectionate esteem which you will receive, hoping for a future ever increasing in success for yourself and the people committed to your care.

May God bless you and preserve your health, your zeal, and the love of your people.

Devotedly yours,

♣ PETER CARDINAL FUMASONI-BIONDI, Cardinal Protector

Dear Father Ludessi:

It gives me great pleasure to send you my congratulations and sincerest best wishes on the happy occasion of your Silver jubilee of ordination to the Sacred Priesthood.

It is my earliest hope and prayer that Almighty Cod will bless and reward you on this day and that He will grant you many more happy years in His Service.

With my blessing and best wishes to you, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

₩ W. CARDINAL O'CONNELL, Archbishop of Boston Rev. and dear Father:

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that the Holy Father has graciously deigned to impart to you his paternal Apostolic Blessing for the Silver jubilee of your priestly ordination, a token of appreciation for the twenty-five years of faithful service rendered to the cause of Christ. I am sure that nothing could please you more than this participation of the Vicar of Christ in the happiness and joy of your anniversary celebration. To the benign message of His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, I desire to add my own congratulations on the accomplishments of these years; and I pray that the Blessing of the Sovereign Pontiff may be a token of heavenly favor in your regard and a lasting pledge of God's choicest graces.

With sentiments of esteem, and renewing my felicitations, I remain, Sincerely yours in Christ,

♣ A. G. COCOGNANI, Archbishop of Laodicea, Apostolic Delegate

Reverend Father:

I am glad to associate myself to the numerous friends of the Rev. Father William J. Ludessi in sending him my heartiest congratulations on the happy occasion of his Silver Jubilee.

I should like to express also my sincere appreciation for the co-operation of Father Ludessi in opening the first Houses of the Stigmatine Fathers in Canada, where they are diffusing their apostolic activities with an edifying zeal for the faithful entrusted to their care.

I pray God to bless the dear jubilarian and may his pastoral works prosper and afford him much happiness for many years to come.

With my cordial regards and best wishes, I am, Yours sincerely in Christ,

> ♣ ILDEBRANDO ANTONIUTTI, Archbishop of Sinnada, Apostolic Delegate

Dear Father Ludessi:

I am pleased to know that you are to observe the Silver Jubilee of your ordination to the priesthood on February twenty-third and I offer you my heartfelt congratulations on your fruitful years in the priesthood, and assure you of my prayers that the Lord will bless your labors for many years to come.

With very best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours in Christ,

♣ F. J. SPELLMAN, Archbishop of New York

Reverend and dear Father Ludessi:

I have learned with pleasure that on February 23rd, 1941, you are celebrating your Silver Jubilee as a Priest of the Most High.

May I be permitted to join your many friends and the members of your great community on this great occasion and offer you the expression of our sincere felicitations and good wishes in Christ.

We remember, with gratitude, your great charity and understanding in making possible the Foundation of your Fathers in the Diocese of Vancouver where, since they came, their Apostolate has -been so fruitful for souls and for the glory of the Church.

With kind regards to all the members of the community and assuring you of a memento in Holy Mass on the great day of your Jubilee, I beg to remain,

Devotedly yours in Christ,

₩ W. M. DUKE, *Archbishop of Vancouver*

Dear Father Ludessi:

Accept my sincerest wishes on your twenty-fifth anniversary of the priesthood. May your happiness today be that of twenty five years ago. With a prayer and a blessing, I remain,

Faithfully in Christ,

♣ CHARLES DE FERRARI, C.P.S.,

Bishop of Carpi

Dear Father Ludessi:

Accept the most cordial felicitations on your twenty-fifth anniversary. May the years to come be as fruitful as the years gone by. With a prayer and a blessing, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

MSGR. TARCISIO MARTINA, C.P.S., Prefect Apostolic in China

PROGRAM

Introduction	- DR. FRANCIS A. TETA				
Selections:	Northern Lights Overture	Weidt			
	Triumphal March from Aida	Verdi			
	Pizzitola Plectro—Sy	mphony			
Speaker – Ho	ONORABLE ROGER L. PUTNAM, Ma	yor of Springfield			
Selections:	Italian Airs Medley	arr. Lang			
	Golden Sceptre Overture	Schlepegrell			
	Pizzitola Plectro—Sy	mphony			
Speaker - RE	V. E. LONA, C.P.S.				
Poem - Prese	entation of Roses	Lucy Fiorentino			
Selections:	Czardas (Mandolin solo)	Monti			
	Rose Helen Pizzitola, Helen Down	ing at the piano			
	Yo te Amo (Tango)	Rolfe			
	Pizzitola Plectro—Sy	mphony			
Principal Speaker - ATTORNEY JOHN J. FIGONI					
Selections: Sibonez (Accordion solo)					
	Helen Newel	II			
	Guitar Trio	Selected			
Prose - Gift of the Children of the Parish A. Salva					
Italian Speaker - REV. HENRY ADAMI, C.P.S.					
Selections: Lutspiel Overture					
Semper Fide	lis March	Sousa			
Pizzitola Plectro—Symphony					
Selection Mount C		Mount Carmel Drum Corps			
Presentation of Gift		Mr. Robert Pezzini			
Presentation of the Chalice Very Rev. C. Zanotti, C					
Guest of Hor	nor - REV. WILLIAM J. LUDESSI, C.P.	S.			

A BIOGRAPHY OF REV. WILLIAM LUDESSI

In a little town north of Verona, where the beautiful mountains slope down to fertile fields, the inhabitants were anxiously waiting to celebrate the feast of Saint Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church. March 19, 1889, was particularly significant to the Ludessi's household, for on that day God had blessed the happy and virtuous couple, Joseph and Anna Ludessi, with a baby boy. It was in this happy and God-fearing environment that little William learned the fundamentals of Christian piety and virtue.

At the tender age of five, the boy showed remarkable signs of everything pertaining to the supernatural office of the priesthood. It was not an uncommon sight for the parishioners to see the little boy accompanying the parish priest to the houses of the sick. And he boasted that he was the only one able to help the pastor on sick calls. His daily meetings with the pastor resulted in a warm and lasting friendship that Fr. Ludessi considers as one of his most cherished memories of his early childhood.

But it was at the death bed of his grandfather that the boy manifested his desires to the pastor, stating that he "wished to learn to become a priest". The priest considered the request for a moment, then smiled down at the little tot and replied, "You see, William, learning to be a priest is different than learning to be a carpenter or a blacksmith. A priest must study and study hard for many years". But to encourage the boy the pastor promised him that when he would be of age he would instruct him to be an altar boy. This gave the lad new enthusiasm and the days were counted until he would reach the minimum age - six years old.

His kind mother besides caring for the other children and her domestic work was then commissioned by the neo-altar boy to help him overcome the intrigues of the Latin language. Every night when the school work was put aside, mother and child, together, studied the Latin responses. Thus in a short time he was initiated into that select group called upon to help the priest offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

At the age of thirteen he confided to -his mother his desire to become a priest. His mother told him that she was very happy and she would do everything within her power to help him along his chosen field of work. Nevertheless, she instructed; the father must be told of this and he must abide by paternal decision.

The father noticed that the boy was passing through a mental crisis and asked him offhand if he could help. Being encouraged by this informal way, the youth sputtered out, "You see, dad, I would like to become a priest. I thought things over and I am sure it is God's calling". The father, of course, knew this, for he had seen in the boy a special aptitude for the priesthood. Perhaps, though, the boy needed a little trying before he took the all-important step. One day he walked with William through their

beautiful estate and said to him, "You see, William, all this land, house, and fields were handed down to me from my father, and, of course, when you shall be of age the place shall belong to you. Consider this before you make your final decision". The boy understood the gravity of the situation and replied to his father, "Dad, I appreciate what you are doing, but what would you say if I gave everything to my brother." Mr. Ludessi immediately understood that the boy's vocation to the priesthood was not an emotional impulse but really the work of God.

After a few weeks of preparation William then entered the Stigmatine Juniorate at Verona in the year 1904. He studied there until 1908. Then he was transferred to Trent to complete his year of Novitiate. After the year of probation was successfully passed he was sent again to Verona to complete his studies at the diocesan seminary.

This year in Verona was particularly pleasing to the boy for he had commenced the study of philosophy which was to bring him a step nearer to the fulfillment of his desires. But God in His eternal designs wished to test the strength of the young lad. On January 10, 1910, He had decreed that Mr. Ludessi was to enjoy his reward for all eternity in Heaven. This was a terrible blow. The boy engulfed in sorrow sought comfort from his mother. William's mother hastened to console her son, advising him to be strong, for it was -thus that God tries His creatures here below. A beautiful paragraph that will last with Fr. Ludessi as long as he will live came then from his mother in those moments of trial and anguish. "Remember, son, where God inflicts a wound, He also applies sweet ointment so that our act of resignation may be sweet to Him." Beautiful words for a mother whose only thoughts were maintaining her family in unity with God, and helping her son fight on manly towards the priesthood. The boy thus fortified by his mother's faith strove harder for the goal that his dear father desired so much to see him attain.

After years of hard study the time was at hand. Each evening drew him nearer to the altar where he would offer himself up to God through the hands of Mary, his heavenly Mother," to be another Christ. December 21, 1915, the Deacon, ascending the altar where Christ continues as the invisible High Priest, William Ludessi was to be invested as His visible representative - a priest of God, a priest for his own santification and salvation, and a priest for the santification and salvation of all the souls whom God entrusted to his care, not merely to be chosen and appointed, but to be consecrated by a sacrament which imparts to him a share in the priesthood of Jesus Christ, the character not to be something merely attached to his personality as an office but to enter into and form a feature of his very soul never to be effaced in time and eternity.

But the joys of ordination had scarcely been felt when the rumble of the guns were to be heard. Nation after nation capitulated into this terrible catastrophe. Many

human beings were to be sacrificed and sent directly from the battlefields to their Creator without the assistance of the Sacraments or the care of a priest. This was a terrible thought for the newly ordained priest. He must endeavor to find a place to help those soldiers. After a bit of insistence, his superiors convinced of his sincerity assisted his appointment as chaplain.

After peace and order had been restored Fr. Ludessi was then transferred to Rome to assume the responsible position of Prefect of the Philosophers.

In Trent, at the re-organization of the Mission-band, the Superiors appointed Fr. Ludessi a member. Also under his guiding hand were placed the important offices of Director of the Catholic Action and Diocesan Counselor of the Catholic Action movement.

In 1922, a new field to conquer was waiting him. He was assigned to America to assist the Stigmatine priests who had preceded him. His first position in America was as curate in Waltham; in 1924 to West Springfield under the kind and intelligent direction of the late Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta; then on December 21, 1925, on the tenth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood, he was promoted to the pastorate of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Springfield. In 1928 he was made Provincial, the highest office of the Stigmatine Congregation in this country. Also Fr. Ludessi holds the honor and distinction of having served the most terms of all as Provincial. He was elected at the 1928 Chapter for the usual three-year term and has been re-elected four times. His duties have taken him over a good part of the country and also to Timmins, Ont., and to Vancouver, B. C.

In spite of all the work connected with the executive discharges, he manages to find time to preach Italian missions, a hobby which he thoroughly enjoys.

In conclusion, dear Father, it is fitting that on your Silver Jubilee we publicly acknowledge your merits. We can say in all honesty and sincerity that your life has been modeled on Christ's. You strove to attain the height of those sublime truths which Jesus Christ taught, and strove incessantly to impart this to your fellowman.

A word of encouragement and a prayer that the good Lord may preserve your health, strength, and fervor so that you may continue to serve Him in the future the way you have served Him in the past. Ad Multos Annos - May God Bless You.

Appendix 3.3: The Celebrations of First Solemn Masses [1945]

The Berkshire Eagle June 17, 1945

Mt. Carmel and Sacred Heart Well Filled for Ceremonies

Fathers Carmen T. Russo, John C. Saracco and William P. Evans Climax Long Study for Priesthood

A combined total of 30 years of study for the priesthood was climaxed yesterday when Rev. Carmen T. Russo and Rev. John C. Saracco returned to Mount Carmel Church and Rev. William P. Evans to Sacred Heart Church to celebrate their first solemn high masses.

A well—filled church at Sacred Heart and more than 1400 parishioners at Mount Carmel witnessed the ceremonies.

A dinner at the Wendell-Sheraton for Fr. Russo was attended by 150 and the reception, by more than 300. At Fr. Saracco's dinner, held at the White Tree Inn, 50 were present, and several hundred were at the reception in Mount Carmel parish hall. Sixty guests attended a dinner for Fr. Evans at the Wendell—Sheraton, and about 250, the reception at his home.

Mt. Carmel Services

Rev. Angelo Daprai of Lynn, preaching at Mount Carmel in Italian, spoke of being with Fr. Russo at the Waltham seminary for seven years. He congratulated him and, quoting Fr. Lacordaire, said, "He must be a part of the world without partaking of any of its pleasures; he must be a member of every family, without belonging to any of them; he must have a heart of fire for charity and a heart of steel for purity." Rev. Charles Armour of Waltham gave the sermon in English.

Rev. Gilbert Fini of Wellesley, speaking of Fr. Saracco, said: "He has chosen a noble purpose for his day's work. That day is only in its aurora, but the light of its advance tells of its coming glory."

Sacred Heart Ceremony

The sermon at Sacred Heart was preached by Rev. Joseph Hart, C.S.C., of North Easton, head of the Eastern Mission Band. He said that at the Last Supper Christ instituted the holy priesthood, that on Sunday, June 10, William Patrick Evans knelt before an Archbishop, the apostolic delegate, and when he arose, was not simply William Patrick Evans, but Fr. Evans with all the powers his ordination would give him. At the end of mass, Fr. Evans imparted his individual blessing.

The Mt. Carmel senior choir, under the direction of Mrs. Evelyn Wilde, organist, sang the Rosewig mass in E flat at both services there. James DeFazio, at Fr. Russo's mass, and Nicholas Soldato, at Fr. Saracco's mass, sang "Juravit" by William Cardinal O'Connell at the offertory. Mrs. Concetta Viggiano of Rome, N.Y., cousin of Fr. Russo, sang "Ave Maria" at the communion.

The Gregorian mass "Cum Jubilo" was sung antiphonally by the girls' and men's sections at Sacred Heart, under the direction of Rev. Daniel J. Cronin. The processional was "Sacerdos Alter Christus" by Gounod, and the recessional, "Jubilante Deo" by Flynn. Arcadel's "Ave Maria" was sung a capella by the men's choir.

Fr. Russo is the son of Mrs. Jessie Russo, 409 Fenn Street; Fr. Saracco, the son of Mrs. Lena Saracco, 213 Elm Street; Fr. Evans, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Evans, 81 Edward Avenue.

Appendix 3.4: The Parish School and Auditorium [1948]

Our Lady

of

Mount Carmel

School

Margareth Street
Springfield,
Massachusetts
1 9 4 8

In Appreciation

There comes a time in the life of every man, woman and child, when it is impossible to fittingly express the gratitude that glows in the human heart. At this moment, such is our sentiment.

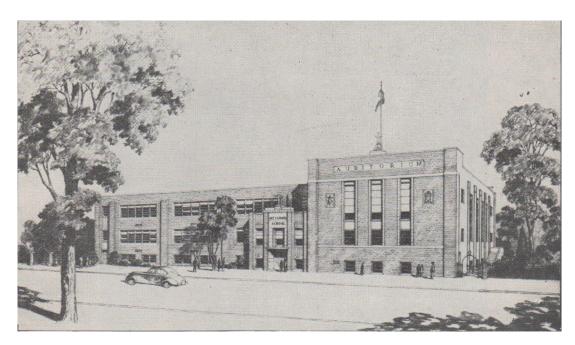
Our parishioners have made possible the erection of a beautiful parochial school. To you and to all who have contributed in any way, spiritually, financially or morally, each beat of our hearts expresses deep gratitude and appreciation.

May God love you now and through all eternity.

The Priests of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Dedicated

To the Memory of the Men of OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL PARISH Who Made the Supreme Sacrifice in World War II 1941 – 1945



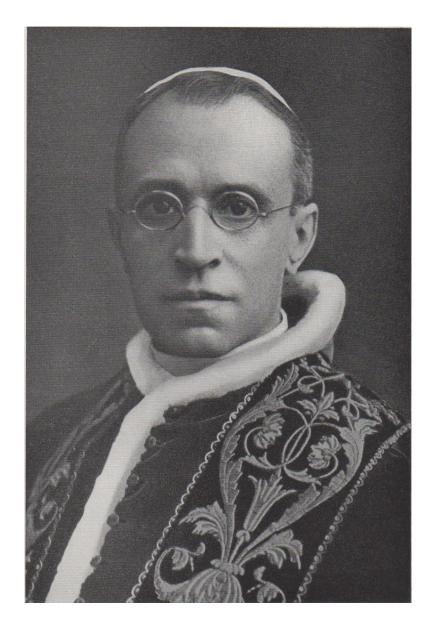
MT. CARMEL SCHOOL & AUDITORIUM MOST REV. THOMAS M. OLEARY BISHOP OF SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

REV. WM J. LUDESSI, C.P.S. PASTOR

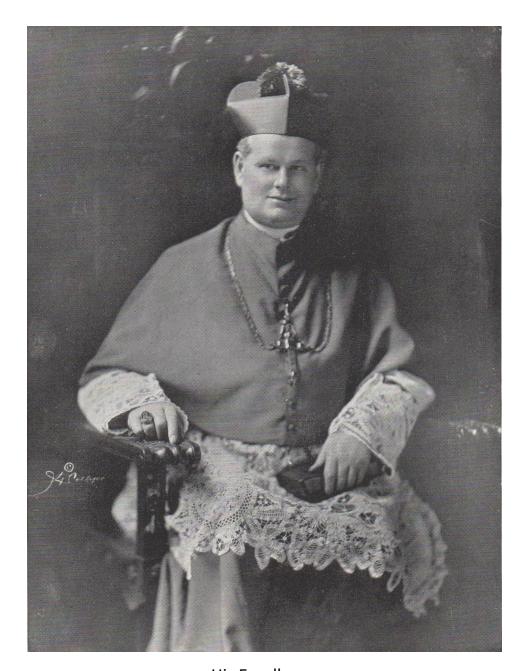
ANTHONY J. DEPACE ARCHITECT 131 WAGO ST. NYC

Our Lady of Mount Carmel School

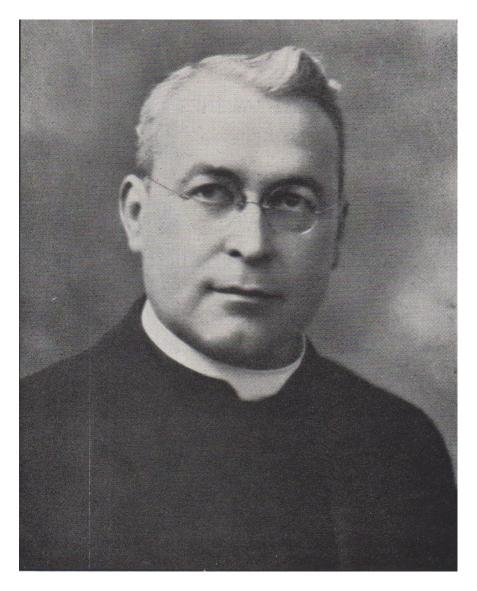
Dedicated Sunday, December 12, 1948



His Holiness POPE PIUS XII Our Guide and Spiritual Father



His Excellency
BISHOP THOMAS M. O'LEARY, D.D.
With Sincere Gratitude for Words of Encouragement and Advice



Our Beloved Pastor REV. WILLIAM J. LUDESSI, C.P.S. Guiding Spirit and Promoter of Our School



Rev. George Linse, C.P.S.



Rev. Serafino Piazzi, C.P.S.



Rev. Edwin Kelley, C.P.S.



Rev. Arthur Cerino, C.P.S.



Rev. Rinaldo Ribezzi, C.P.S.



Br. Joseph Barba, C.P.S.

Assistants of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church



Kindergarten Class - 1948-1949



First Grade - 1948-1949



Third Grade - 1948-1949



Left to right: Sr. Corrine, D.M., Sr. Michael, D.M., Sr. Veronica, D.M., Sr. Sup. Immaculata, D.M. and Sr. Christina, D.M.

Sisters teaching at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School



Memorial Plaque in School Lobby

The Words in the Plaque:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF THE MAN OF MT. CARMEL
CHURCH WHO MADE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE IN WORLD
WAR II 1941 - 1945 AND IN HONOR OF THE MEN AND WOMEN
WHO SERVED FOR COUNTRY AND WORLD PEACE

IN MEMORIAM

ALTOMARE FELIX **GUERRI ANTONIO AMMIRATO THOMAS** LASORSA LOUIS ARDIZONI JOSEPH LATTELL VINCENT LEONE MICHAEL RALBONI LENO BALESTRI LORENZO LUCCARDI FRANK BARTOLUCCI DINO MAGGI BORTOLO BELLO JOHN MANINI ANDREW **BOBBA PRIMO** MASTROIANNI HENRY

BONGIOVANNI LIBERO MAY JAMES

CALABRESE ALFRED MINICHINO CARMINO

CALGAGNINI CARLO

CALGAGNINI CARLO

CAMEROTA CARMINE

CAROSELLO THOMAS

CELENIANO LUIGI

CESSARINI ILIO

CICCARELLI JOSEPH

CICCIA VINCENT

MINICITINO CARMINO

MONESI LOUIS

NASO SALVATOR

PRIONA DOMINIC

PALOMBELLA VICTOR

PENNA STEPHEN

PESSOLANO EUGENE

QUAGLINI RUBEN

DE BONIS LIBERO SALLI ITALO

CORCNATI EMILIO

DELNERO CARMINE

DEL PESCHIO SILVESTRO

DE MAIO JAMES

DI SANTI PETER

SCAFURI CHARLES

STABILO FIORE

STABILO JOSEPH

TORLASCHI PRIMO

DUGA FLAVIO VECCHIARELLA DOMINIC

RUGGIERO RAFFAELE

FRANGIAMORE ROSARIO VENDITTI FRANK FULVI PAUL VERONESI JULIUS GAGLIARDO VICTOR VESCE JOHN

GENTILE LOUIS

GIANFELICE ALBERT

GUARNERA ERNEST

VEZZOLA LOUIS

ZANETTI LEO

ZURLINO ALFRED

GIFT OF THE

CATHOLIC WAR VETERANS OF MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH

A. D. 1948

DEDICATION PROGRAM

December 6, 1948

Testimonial Dinner and Dance
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Auditorium

Auspices of
Christian Mothers; Young Ladies Sodality; Holy Name Society
Catholic War Veterans

December 7, 1948

Testimonial Dinner and Dance
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Auditorium
Auspices of
Lega Protettiva and Vittoria Colonna Lodges
Order of Sons of Italy in America

December 8, 1948

Testimonial Dinner and Dance
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Auditorium

Auspices of
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Society
Our Lady of Grace Society
Our Lady of Assunta Society
Our Lady of Salute
Our Lady of Carita
and Auxiliaries

Life's Real Heroes Are Those Who Not Only Bear Their Burdens
Bravely But Give a Helping Hand to Those About Them.

A Tribute to

The Pastor, Curates and Nuns of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and School

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Youth Organization
Junior Holy Name – Children of Mary

Thursday, December 9 Moving picture in the Mt. Carmel Auditorium

Friday, December 10 Dance for young folks and teen agers in the Mt. Carmel Auditorium

Music at the banquets will be furnished by:

Pianist: Miss Dorothy Marchetti

Singers

Vincent Spolzino John Tedesco
Theresa Siciliano Libby Campagna
Mary Ferri Laura Cipriani

Carmela Cellilli

Program

Chairman: Rev. George Linse, C.P.S.

Co-Workers

Rev. Arthur Cerino, C.P.S. Rev. Serafino Piazzi, C.P.S.

Peter De lapa Carmen Spagnolo
Jerry Nardi Philip Mirarchi
Carl Santanello Joseph Lemme

DEDICATION PROGRAM

Sunday — December 12, 1948

10:00 A.M Laying of the cornerstone; Blessing of the school and social center

by Most Reverend Thomas M. O'Leary, D.D. Procession: Societies

and Auxiliaries from School to Church.

10:30 A.M. Solemn Mass with Pontificial Assistance.

Most Rev. Thomas M. O'Leary, D.D., Presiding

Celebrant: Rev. William Ludessi, C.P.S. Deacon: Rev. Francis J. Tronconi, C.P.S. Sub-deacon: Rev. Fr. Bonaventure, C.P. Arch Priest: Very Rev. Paul V. Daly, C.P.S.

Deacons of Honor to the Most Rev. Bishop:

Very Rev. John B. Zaupa, D.D., C.P.S.

Rev. Errninio Lona, C.P.S.

Preacher: Rev. Francis W. Mackin, C.P.S.

Master of Ceremonies: Rev. Timothy Champaux, J.C.D. Asst. Master of Ceremonies: Rev. Rinaldo Ribezzi, C.P.S.

Servers: The Stigmatine Seminarians

Music: Mt. Carmel Choir — Organist: Mrs. Mary Giustina

3:00 P.M. Dedication of School and Unveiling of Plaque in honor of war dead of parish by —

Mt. Carmel Catholic War Veterans, Post 1183

Commander: Dominic Mastroianni Chaplain: Rev. George Linse, C. P.S.

Procession of distinguished guests

Massing of Colors of Veterans Organizations

Invocation

Unveiling of Plague by Gold Star Mothers

Taps — Firing Squad

Address

Benediction - National Anthem

Recession of Colors

3:30 P.M. Concert — Army Band of Westover Field.

Open House for All

7:00 P.M. Official Banquet: Mt. Carmel Auditorium

Guests:

Gov. Elect: Paul A. Dever Mayor Daniel B. Brunton

Other Civil and Ecclesiastical Authorities Master of Ceremonies: Mr. William Belli

Appendix 3.5: The Golden Jubilee of Mount Carmel Church [1957]

Program

May 19	Solemn Mass at 11 o'clock \$5 Plate Dinner — City Auditorium at 7 o'clock
May 20	Evening Solemn High Mass for the Men of the Parish – 8 o'clock
May 22	Evening Solemn High Mass for the Women of the Parish - 8 o'clock
May 23 A.M.	Solemn High Mass for Children of our school — 9 o'clock Special day of Adoration and Thanksgiving Exposition at the 9 o'clock Mass From 8 P. M. to 9. P. M. Holy Hour, Sermon and Benediction
May 24	Evening Solemn High Mass for the Deceased of the Parish at 9 P.M.
May 25	First Holy Communion at the 8 o'clock Mass
May 26	Solemn Poetical Mass to be celebrated by Most Reverend Bishop Christopher Weldon, Bishop of Springfield, at 11 o'clock.

IN APPRECIATION

The Golden Anniversary of the founding of our parish is an appropriate time for us the parishioners of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church to survey the results of fifty years of labor a church which satisfies our religious needs a school which satisfies our educational needs a recreation center which satisfies our social needs. Such notable achievements impress upon us that it is no small debt of appreciation we owe to the bishops who so willingly and capably bestowed their leadership and to the priests, brothers and sisters who have served God by sewing us. Dedicated to the cause of saving souls they have worked zealously for our success as a parish prayed fervently for our welfare as children of God. Without their guidance

Without their guidance
without their teaching
without their sacrifices
the ideals of those who founded our church
could not have been realized.

4

THE PARISHIONERS OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH

SOLEMN PONTIFICAL MASS 📕 MESSA PONTIFICALE SOLENNE

Sunday, May 26, 1957 — 11:00 o'clock

Celebrant — Celebrante

MOST REVEREND CHRISTOPHER J. WELDON, D.D.

Bishop of Springfield, Massachusetts

Assistant Priest — Prete Assistente

VERY REVEREND GILBERT G. FINI, C.P.S.

Superior Provincial, Stigmatine Fathers

Deacon — Diacono

REVEREND JOHN T. MACPHERSON, Rector, St. Michael's Cathedral, Springfield
Subdeacon — Suddiacono

REVEREND JOHN J. POWER, Pastor, Our Lady of Hope Church, Springfield

Deacons of Honor — Diaconi d'Onore

REVEREND ERMINIO LONA, C.P.S., Pastor, Holy Family Church, Lynn REVEREND WILLIAM J. LUDESSI, C.P.S., Pastor, Mt. Carmel Church, White Plains, N. Y.

Hand-Candle — Bugia

REVEREND ARCHIBALD R. LAJOIE, Assistant, St. Joseph's Church, Springfield Miter — Mitra

REVEREND VINCENT M. O'CONNOR, Chancery Office, Springfield

Book — Libro

REVEREND JOHN C. SARACCO, C.P.S., Master of Novices, Stigmatine Novitiate, Springfield

Crozier —— Pastorale

REVEREND FRANCIS KEEFE, C.P.S., Assistant, Sacred Heart Church, Feeding Hills

Thurifer — Turiferario

REVEREND JOSEPH P. MASSARO, C.P.S., Rector of St. Joseph's, East Longmeadow Acolytes — Accoliti

REVEREND FRANCIS J. KEANEY, Assistant, St. Patrick's Church, Chicopee Falls REVEREND SIGMUND F. KWIATROWSKY, Our Lady of the Rosary Church, Springfield

Master of Ceremonies — Cerimoniere

REVEREND GEORGE A. BERTHIAUME, Chancery Office, Springfield
Assistant Master of Ceremonies — Assistente Ceremoniere
REVEREND JOSEPH U. AMODIO, C.P.S., Assistant, Mt. Carmel Church, Springfield

Dedication

The past fifty years belong to you
the parishioners of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church
for it was your piety, your enthusiasm, your cooperation
which inspired the founding of the church we share
which encouraged its growth, spiritually and materially
so that today we may point with pride

as one of the fine achievements of the Italian-American people.

to our church and school

The work was yours: the honor must be yours.

Gratefully, then, do we dedicate to you our present and past parishioners
this GOLDEN JUBILEE BOOK

the record of your accomplishments.

THE PRIESTS, BROTHER AND SISTERS

OF

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH

Bishop's Residence 68 Elliot Street Springfield 5, Massachusetts

April 9, 1957

Dear Father Torretta,

The Golden Jubilee Year of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish affords us an opportunity to review the wonderful blessings that our Divine Lord has bestowed on innumerable souls and on the community at large through the faithful, devoted service of the priests, religious and laity of your parish over the past fifty years.

I am deeply grateful both to Almighty God and to all at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish for the great work accomplished in the past and for the heartwarming encouragement contained therein for the future. Having laced great obstacles and difficulties through the years, your achievements both on the material and on the spiritual level are that much more remarkable and praiseworthy.

Very much impressed by the depth and warmth of your Christ-like spirit and by the wholeheartedness and generosity of your cooperation, I commend, congratulate and thank you personally, the other self-sacrificing priests assigned to the parish since the beginning, the good religious of the Daughters of Mercy and the loyal and devoted lay members of your flock for the excellence of what has been accomplished for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom in our midst.

I pray Almighty God and Our Lady of Mount Carmel to continue Their loving provident generosity to you in the years to come. May They give the souls of your beloved dead a rich reward in the splendor of Heaven. May Their goodness to each and all of the living enable you to achieve full worthwhile lives for yourselves, for your families, for your parish and for your civic community. May God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost bless and prosper you in all your interests and undertakings!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

♣ CHRISTOPHER J. WELDON

Reverend Peter V. Torretta, C.P.S., Pastor Our Lady of Mount Carmel Rectory 123 William Street Springfield, Massachusetts

Rome, January 23, 1957

REVEREND PETER TORRETTA, C.P.S. Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel 123 William Street Springfield, Mass.

U.S.A.

Dear Father Peter,

I am most happy to associate myself with you, with our beloved Confreres and with all your good Parishioners to celebrate in a fitting manner the Golden jubilee of the founding of your fine flourishing Parish.

Considering the fact that in the comparatively short span of fifty years Our Lady of Mount Carmel has grown, like the proverbial "mustard seed", from nothing into the thriving and pulsating Parish it is today, succeeding in attaining an equal status with the most flourishing parishes of the city, I can't help but render fervent thanks to God and heartily congratulate the good Priests and the Community of the faithful committed to their care for this marvelous achievement.

The lofty goal realized is indeed consoling and fills us all with just pride; but, in order to reach it, what untold toil and sweat, what innumerable sacrifices, what painful strife strew the path! How very true it is that God's works are sown in tears and grow amidst sorrow! It is because of this that our thoughts wander back spontaneously today, imbibed with the warmest sentiments of admiration and gratitude, to the truly apostolic pioneers and their successors who laid the groundwork and elevated this splendid spiritual edifice which is your present parochial "family", and, in a particular manner, to its founder, the indefatigable and dynamic Father Anthony Dalla Porta, of venerated memory.

May the good Lord bless you all abundantly and grant that you may always be foremost in your labors for His Glory and for the salvation of souls. You must not rest on the laurels attained, but continue to push ever forward and upward towards loftier spiritual aims. Do not spare yourselves in giving your best to the holy cause you have embraced; may Saint Paul's exhortation: "the Charity of Christ urgeth us on" be ever present as a stimulus to dedicate yourselves unselfishly to help whomever might have need of you.

I extend my most cordial good wishes to one and all, and with all my heart I give you my paternal blessing.

Fraternally yours in Our Lord, /s/ FR. DENIS MARTINIS Superior General

January 23, 1957

REVEREND PETER TORRETTA, C.P.S. Mount Carmel Rectory 123 William Street Springfield 5, Massachusetts

Dear Reverend Father:

On the occasion of the Golden jubilee Celebration of the Mount Carmel Parish, I am delighted to convey my cordial congratulations for the material and spiritual progress during the past fifty years and my earnest prayers for the future.

The Christian Life developed in countless souls through these golden years will certainly bring consolation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The beautiful church, the parish school and convent reflect the practical desire of the faithful to provide all services necessary for the formation of the Christian conscience and the worship of God.

May the good Lord, our Eternal Pastor, bless you and your Assistants, all Stigmatines, living and dead, who during these past fifty years have worked to make Mount Carmel Parish what it is today. I am sure that the spirit of Venerable Gaspar Bertoni, our Father and Founder, will help you to continue in the footprints of your predecessors.

With every best wish for the occasion, I have the pleasure to remain,

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Department State House, Boston

Rev. PETER V. TORRETTA, C.P.S. Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Rectory 123 William Street Springfield, Massachusetts

Dear Father Torretta:

May I extend my personal best wishes to you, along with the greetings of the Commonwealth, on the observance of the Golden Anniversary of the founding of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish.

Your parishioners surely must feel happy and proud to take particular note of this event and in having played a part in developing the glorious history of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church.

I know that the community has been enriched in the half century that the parish has been established, and that the work of all the clergy in this time has helped bring an abundance of blessings to all the faithful.

No light shines brighter than that of Truth, and no life is happier than that which is dedicated to the service of God in bringing peace of mind and soul to others.

The parishioners of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church will honor the occasion of this Golden Anniversary, for it stands meaningful in their lives and embodies their deep gratitude and respect.

I join with them in expressing appreciation to the clergy of the church and in hoping that continued blessings from God will favor Our Lady of Mt.

Carmel Parish in the many years ahead.

Regards to all!

Sincerely,

FOSTER FURCOLO

April 1, 1957

Rev. PETER TORRETTA, Pastor Mount Carmel Church 123 William Street Springfield, Massachusetts

Dear Father Torretta:

It is a privilege for me to join with our beloved Bishop Christopher J. Weldon, his priests and devoted sisters in the observance of your golden jubilee.

The granting by the late Bishop Thomas D. Beaven to the Italian people of Catholic faith permission to establish a parish of their own to be known as Our Lady of Mount Carmel has more than justified the great faith and confidence he had in them.

Much credit for fifty years of service to God must go to your first great spiritual leader, the late Father Anthony Dalla Porta, and the handful of Catholics that surrounded him.

The tremendous growth through the years, and the accomplishments by the pastors and priests are many. The work done by Father Ludessi in the repairs to the church, the rectory, and the building of the new hall and school, and the new convent for the devoted sisters were his accomplishments.

The carrying out of these great responsibilities now rests in your hands. May we ask God to bless you daily in your work among your people and to give you good health and the strength to carry on God's work in the present and the future.

Very truly yours, DANIEL B. BRUNTON, Mayor

Appendix 3.6: The 100th Italian Festival [1997]

DIOCESE

'Faith is the first thing'

Mt. Carmel Society celebrates past, future at 100th Italian festival

By Rebecca Drake - Observer staff



FESTIVAL PROCESSION — A 6-foot-4-inch statue of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, the patron saint of Bracigliano, Italy, was carried through the streets of the South End July 13 as part of the annual Italian festival. Holding up the front of the platform are Alfonzo Calvanese (left), president of the Mt. Carmel Society, and Martino Santaniello, also a member of the society. (Photo by Bob Robinson)

culture in Springfield for the last century.

SPRINGFIELD - Working in the sweltering July heat 10 to 12 hours a day for two weeks, Italian electrical engineer Benedetto Calabrese and his crew installed the lights and wiring for Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Society's 100th Italian Festival.

The festival, held July 10-13 in the South End, drew an estimated 50,000 participants in four days. It included booths offering a wide sampling of Italian foods, a fireworks display and a performance by Italian tenor Vittorio Marciano.

Frank Daniele, owner of Daniele Imports, funded the shipping cost of the lights, which came from Italy to the intersection of Main and Winthrop Streets, where the festival transformed the South End for four days and five nights.

For Rosario Giordano, the highlight was the devotion of the workers and volunteers who put up displays, staffed booths, made food and contributed in countless ways to the festival's success. "Without them we wouldn't have a festival," said Giordano, 56, vice president of the society which has helped preserve Italian

Acknowledging respect for his Italian ancestors, Giordano praised the dedication of the young workers and their role in preserving the festival for future generations. "They're more important than the history," he said.

While promoting Italian culture, Giordano emphasized, the Mt. Carmel Society has also opened its arms to other ethnic groups who have settled in the South End. "We have all nationalities here. We're all sticking together, working together."

Giordano, who emigrated from Italy in 1953, has been member of the society for 41 years. Sitting in the society's headquarters on Winthrop Street, he pointed to the wall behind him to the portraits and photographs of former society presidents. He talked about the faith and work ethic of his elders and the importance of passing these values down to the next generation. "We learn from our forefathers and hopefully they (the younger generation) will learn from us.'

A festival worker, taking a break from the heat on the Thursday afternoon before the festival opened, echoed Giordano's sentiments. "The faith is the first thing," the worker said.

Leo Daniele, chairman of this year's festival, is an Italian-American who was born and brought up in Springfield's South End. He attended Mt. Carmel School and is a lifetime member of the parish, as are most members of the Mt. Carmel Society. His family owns La Fiorentina Pastry Shop and Mom and Rico's Specialty Market.

"Italians are very self-sufficient," Daniele said. "They can make something out of nothing... They have a lot to be proud about."

Like other ethnic immigrant groups, Daniele said, the Italians who first settled in Springfield often arrived with only their faith and their talents — and they have struggled to build a new life while preserving the culture of the old one.

The Mt. Carmel Society, founded in 1897 by Giovanni Battista Albano, was instrumental in establishing Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in 1906.

In Daniele's opinion, the South End today is an example of the hard work and devotion of successive generations of immigrants. The Mt. Carmel Society, which has seen its membership fluctuate over the years, presently has 260 members. During the last two months, Daniele said, 30 to 35 young men have joined. This, he believes, is a testament to the viability of life in the South End.

"We want people to know it (the South End) is a safe area," he said. "And we hope to let the Italians know that they're still strong and vibrant in the city."

The response to this year's Italian festival supported Daniele's description of his native city. More than 2,000 people participated in the July 16 candlelight procession which began the celebration. "We anticipated about one hundred to one hundred and fifty but had two thousand," Daniele said. "It was just overwhelming."

Throngs of festival-goers enjoyed a variety of ethnic foods, carnival rides, and musical entertainment each night. The Saturday night fireworks attracted more than 25,000 spectators and the Sunday greased pole contest remained a popular event.

Hovering over the food and entertainment were the elegant arches of colored lights which brought the atmosphere of Italian villages to urban Massachusetts. And, ever present, was the figure of the Madonna del Carmine, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, the patron saint of Bracigliano, Italy, and of Springfield's Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish.

Stigmatine Father Richard Scioli, pastor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, said that the festival reflects the "great devotion to the Blessed Mother", that characterizes the towns and villages from which many of the South End residents have emigrated. In his sermon at the July 20, 8:30 a.m. Mass, he compared the day's Gospel readings, about the compassion of Jesus, to the generosity of the Italian community and, he said, "how the Italians are very gracious in inviting other people to the table."

After the Mass on Sunday, the 6-foot-4-inch statue of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel was carried through the streets of the South End, in a procession that lasted until 3:30 p.m. According to custom, spectators placed money and other articles of value on the statue as offerings to their patron saint. The statue was draped with a new robe donated by La Fiorentina Pastry Shop and stood atop a new wooden platform donated by Martino Santaniello.

"It was just unbelievable, the reaction of the city and the community", Daniele said.

Speaking to *The Catholic Observer*, Father Scioli suggested that the sharing of food and hospitality at the festival can be viewed as a metaphor for the sharing of faith. He also described the festival as a means of unifying all groups within the city.

"It was a celebration, not only of heritage, but of faith," Father Scioli said. "It was a binding force for our little corner of the universe."



Appendix 3.7: Mount Carmel Pre-School [1998]



IN GOOD SHAPE – The soon-to-be-former convent of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Springfield, once a firehouse, is in good structural shape, making it relatively easy to convert it into a pre-school.

CHAPTER 3 – SPRINGFIELD APPENDIX 3.7 – PRE-SCHOOL 135

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in Springfield is converting part of the first floor of the parish convent into a pre-school. It will open this fall, and already has 21 students enrolled.

The idea for the pre-school was developed by Stigmatine Father Richard Scioli, Mt. Carmel's pastor, and Claire Cote, Principal of Mt. Carmel School.

"We saw the pre-school as an opportunity for a feeder system to our school. Also, we're urban and we thought it might be attractive to have a pre-school in this area under the umbrella of the Catholic Church for those working and living here", said Father Scioli.

Room for the pre-school became available when the remaining Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy announced they will soon take other assignments for their community in Pennsylvania.

The religious order had served at Mt. Carmel Parish for the past 79 years, including 50 years at the school.

Sister Bernadette Borelli, the retired principal, and Sister Anne Tieuli, had been living in the historic convent on Margaret Street.

The convent began its life as a fire station, which means that Mt. Carmel's littlest students will soon get to admire its high ceilings, and the place where the fire pole once stood.

"We were fortunate because the convent was in good shape and everything was up to code", said Father Scioli.

However, the building also had asbestos and lead paint which needed to be removed professionally. Those tasks, plus the purchase of little furniture and other items for the pre-school, have accounted for much of the \$ 30,000 the parish has so far spent on the project.

But the project, which has been financed through Mt. Carmel's general maintenance and school endowment funds, would have cost much more had parishioners not volunteered their labor to do general construction and decorating work.

"Many parishioners came in and painted and fixed things", said Father Scioli.

He showed the *Observer* the new nap room which was once a parlor in the convent. The foyer has become the play room. Another room is designated as a clinic.

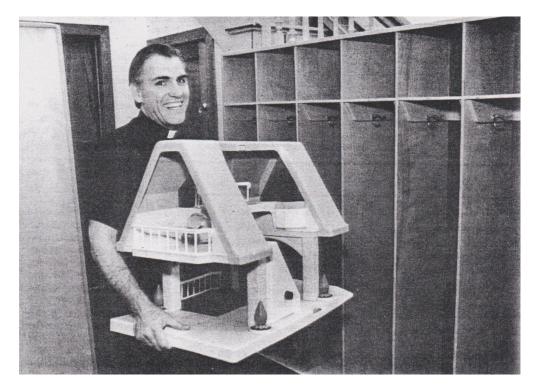
The chapel will remain and be a place of prayer and quiet for the youngsters. Pre-school students will be able to have hot lunch through the school and link up with Mt. Carmel's after-school program.

In the fall, the parish will begin more projects, according to Father Sciolli. "We will work on air conditioning the church and creating handicapped bathrooms".

Taking care of the physical plant is an important responsibility for a pastor, he said. "The fact we want to keep our parish plant welcoming and full of possibilities and opportunities is important. It shows we care about our people and welcome them."

The Stigmatine pastor acknowledged that, like his diocesan priest peers, he never took courses on maintenance of construction when he was in his community's seminary.

"You learn by experience", he said. "But I also have a lot of people with me in the parish who can help focus and assess our needs here."

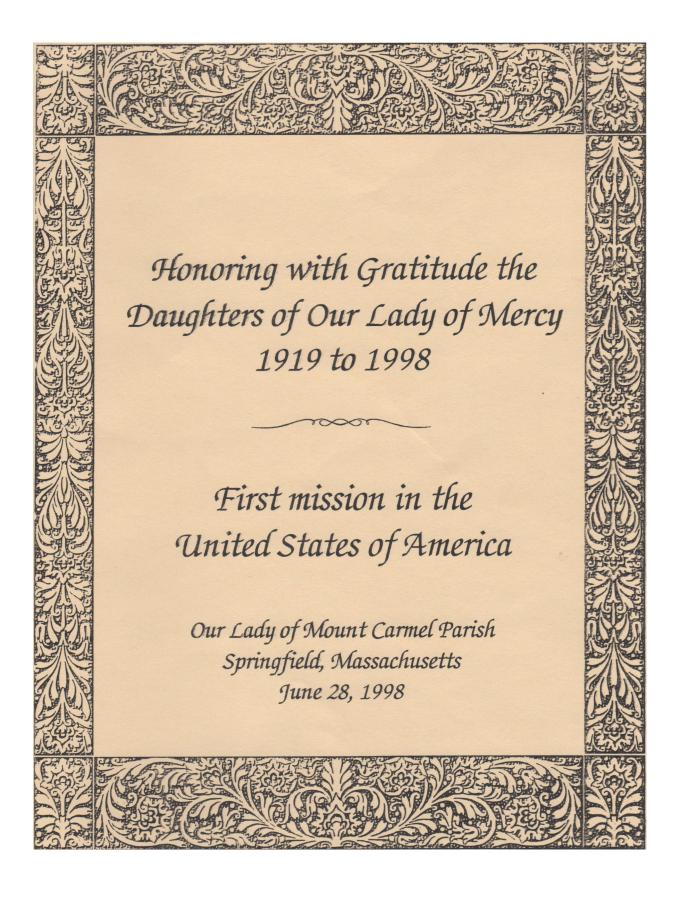


PLENTY OF HELP — Stigmatine Father Richard Scioli, pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Springfield, holds a playhouse that was donated to the newlycreated Mt. Carmel Pre-School. Donations of labor and materials have helped keep costs down for the project.

[The Catholic Observer - Springfield, Mass. – 1998. Photos by Fred LeBlanc]

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Appendix 3.8: Honoring with Gratitude the Daughters of Mercy [1998]



Mass on the **Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Presider The Rev. Msgr. Richard Sniezyk

Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia

Concelebrants Rev. Richard Scioli, CSS

Rev. Robert White, CSS

Rev. Anthony Corigliano, CSS

Rev. Camillo Santini, CSS Rev. Carlo Bevilacqua, CSS

Rev. Geoffrey Deeker, CSS

Homilist Rev. Richard Scioli, CSS Pastor

Readers Sr. M. Salvatoris, DM

Miss Krista Puppolo Class of 2004

Mr. Joseph Rueli Pastoral Council President

Class of 2004

Offertory Gifts Sr. M. Bernadette, DM

Sr. Judith O'Connell, SSJ Vicar for Religious

Mr. and Mrs. George Tazzini, Sr. Benefactors

Music Mt. Carmel Church Choir

Mrs. Mary Mastroianni Organist

Greeters Mt. Carmel Parish Representatives

The Seventy-Nine Year Story

of the Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy in Springfield, MA

A large population of Italian immigrants came to Springfield, MA from 1919 to 1923. It became a serious problem to preserve their Catholic faith in the new century, before knowing its language. This difficulty led the immigrants to build their own churches served by priests who spoke their language. These were called "National Parishes".

The Stigmatines Fathers of Verona, Italy, served in several National Parishes, and Mr. Carmel in Springfield, MA was one of them. Here they found a great many children being lured by an English-speaking evangelical church located in front of their Catholic Church. The evangelicals used many lures to attract the young, who were quickly learning the new language in school. The Stigmatine Fathers could see they would need much help.

Superior General Rev. John Baptist Tomasi explained the enormous problem to Mother Amabile Gavina in Rome. The Annals say, "The heart of the good Mother was touched at the fate of those poor helpless children who were being so shamefully snatched away from the truth of their holy religion". She missioned English-speaking Sisters, three from Argentina and two from Italy, to the USA. They arrived in New York on June 16, 1919, and on that same day in Springfield, "at 10 PM, tired out by the fatigues of their long and tedious journey". They were the first of 80 Daughters of Mercy to serve the Church of the United States at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Springfield, MA. Four years later, the first American born postulant joined the Congregation in Hazleton, PA.

What a challenge this new mission was! Mt. Carmel Parish was large and there was much to be done. The sisters opened a Kindergarten and taught sewing and Italian after school. Three days a week, they went to West Springfield and Ludlow to teach catechism and sewing to children after school, and to adults at night. On Sunday, they taught Catechism – all in "the cold climate which they had never before experienced". They took a census, visited the sick, and set up a summer school.

The number of adults and children at Sunday Mass increased "so much that the priests had to prepare the basement of the church for the children's Mass". And the competing church across the street moved away!

Thirty years after their arrival, the parish built a parochial school. It opened September 8, 1948. The Daughters of Mercy staffed it. That school will celebrate 50 years of Catholic education in 1998-1999.

These are the Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy who have served our parish:

Sr. Anne Marie *	Sr. M. Gabriela
Sr. Carmel Marie	Sr. M. Gertrude
Sr. Daniel Marie	Sr. M. Giuseppa Fortuna *
Sr. Dolores Howard	Sr. M. Grace
Sr. Joseph Marie	Sr. M. Ignatia
Sr. M. Elizabeth	Sr. M. Immaculata
Sr. M. Agnes *	Sr. M. Jerome *
Sr. M. Amabile *	Sr. M. Joanna
Sr. M. Angela	Sr. M. Joanna *
Sr. M. Anne	Sr. M. Joseph *
Sr. M. Annunziata	Sr. M. Lorenza
Sr. M. Antonia *	Sr. M. Louise *
Sr. M. Benedict *	Sr. M. Magdalene
Sr. M. Bernadette	Sr. M. Marcellina *
Sr. M. Brigid Carew *	Sr. M. Margaret
Sr. M. Carmela	Sr. M. Massima *
Sr. M. Carmelina	Sr. M. Matilda *
Sr. M. Casemira *	Sr. M. Michael
Sr. M. Catherine *	Sr. M. Monica
Sr. M. Claudia	Sr. M. Patricia *
Sr. M. Clement *	Sr. M. Paula *
Sr. M. Clemente *	Sr. M. Paul
Sr. M. Clementina *	Sr. M. Pauline
Sr. M. Concepta	Sr. M. Pius *
Sr. M. Cronin	Sr. M. Rose
Sr. M. Damian	Sr. M. Salvatoris
Sr. M. Dionisia	Sr. M. Susanne
Sr. M. Eleanora *	Sr. M. Terisita
Sr. M. Emelia *	Sr. M. Theresa
Sr. M. Emmanuel *	Sr. M. Theresa (La Vie) *
Sr. M. Ermalinda *	Sr. M. Ursula
Sr. M. Ernestine *	Sr. M. Veronica *

Sr. M. Fausta *

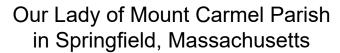
Sr. M. Frances * Sr. M. Francesca

Sr. M. Francine

Sr. M. Vincent * Sr. M. Virginia

^{*} Deceased [as of June, 1998]

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish has sent to the Heritage Archives of the Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy a plaque crafted in calligraphy with the following text:





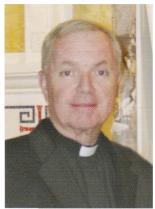
acknowledges with gratitude the Devoted Ministry of the



Of Newfield, New Jersey
From 1919 to 1998

Your presence has enriched the lives of thousands of Italo-American children and their families and neighbors here. As educators and religious women dedicated to the Catholic faith and human development, you are models of leadership and hope. Your years among us leave a heritage of which we will ever strive to be worthy.

Appendix 3.9: Centennial – Thanks and Congratulations Letters [2007]



Dear Parishioners,

One hundred years ago Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish was born from the hopes and dreams of Italian immigrants.

Like so many other new arrivals to our country, they had meager economic resources to rely on. Despite limited means, their confidence in the future empowered them to marry, start families, buy homes, establish business, and work hard. Builidng on rich cultural traditions, they made a new life for themselves.

They also understood that their lives would only be complete if they could gather to initiate, celebrate and nourish their belief in a personal God. In testimony to that faith, they were willing to risk what little they did have and build a neighborhood parish under the patronage of our Blessed Mother.

You, the members of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, are the children of their hope, the heirs of their dream, the inheritors of their faith!

We certainly look back with gratitude for all we have received from those who walked before us. But this celebration is not about happy memories. We are proud of the work we have carried out to restore much of Mount Carmel's original beauty. But what we celebrate today is not just our refurbished sanctuary. This building is but a symbol of the proud heritage bequeathed us by Mount Carmel's founders.

We honor our forbears best by claiming as our own their optimism. Only when we share their faith in the future do we have power in the present. They created a "home" where we gather to be fed by the Eucharist. Their trust in God's love and their desire to pass on such love, challenge us to look ahead. Their example dares us to be a family of faith, a community of welcome, a people of justice and compassion who respect and defend all human life.

You deserve to celebrate this moment. One hundred years is no small achievement. Let us also recognize this anniversary for what it really is — a beginning... a beginning of renewed faith and hope and love in us... a beginning for the generations that come after us. Let's commit our own resources to that end and Our Lady of Mount Carmel's Parish's future will be blesses.

May the peace of Christ be with you!

Reverend Robert S. White, C.S.S.

Pastor

Centennial Committee

Helen Ambrogi	David Costa	Sylvia Forastiere	Susan Manchester	Joseph Rueli Jr.
Maryann Ardito	Michael Cremonini	Frank Forastiere	John Mastrangelo	Thomas Rueli Jr.
Phillip Aucella	Laura D'Angelo	Theresa Galluzzo	Mary Mastroianni	Marie Rugani
Anna Aucella	Leo Daniele	Jonathan Gray	Sr. Betty Matuszek, SSJ	Felix Salzano
Bernie Balise	Anna Daniele	Concetta Grimaldi	Anthony Mazzarino	Joseph J. Sapelli Jr.
Hilda Bartolucci	Rico Daniele	Angie Grimaldi	Michele Montagna	Peggy Sarno
Jennie Bartolucci	Alfred Dasso	Franck Grimaldi	Joseph F. Pasternak III	Salvatore Scibelli
Vivian Bobrowski	Judith Dasso	Carla Grimaldi	Rosamarie Pedulla	Lynn Shively
Albert Bonavita	Eleanor Davio	Laura Giuggio	Patricia Pietrucci	Marie Spedero
Jim Bonneville	Mauro De Maio	Nick Giuggio	Larry Pietrucci	Ralph Stirlacci
Ralph Brackley	Nicholas DeAngelis	Nancy Hartman	Michelle Pietrucci	Franck Stirlacci
Rev. Paul D. Burns	Cynthia DeAngelis	John Hodge	Elailne Planzo	Roseanne Stirlaci
Tina Brackley	Kathy DeCaro	Silvia Hodge	Giuseppe Polimeni	Catherine Taranto
Carmine Carando	Carol Delevo	Karen Kakley	Carol Raffaele	Christine Tazzini
Peter Carando	Alfred Dimauro	Frank J. Liberti	Rolande Renaud	Robert Ventrice
Judith Ceravolo	Michael DiVenuto	Nancy Liberty	Joyce Rosati	Josephine Vogliazzo
Rev. Anthony Corigliano	Yvonne Ferraro	Lauren Liberty	Donna Rueli	Rev. Robert S. White
Rosamarie Costa	Vincenzo Ferraro Jr.	Frank J. Liberti II	Rose Rueli	Mary Ann Yacovone



On behalf of all the parishioners and friends of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, we would like to acknowledge and thank all those who served on the Centennial committee. It is through their dedication and effort, and our Lord's guidance that the renovations of our church have been accomplished.

Rev. Robert S. White, C.S.S.

RAW 1. loto, cas

Pastor

Joseph E. Rueli Jr.

Chairman

Centennial Committee

Joseph M. Justif



Dear Fellow Parishioners:

Depicted on the pages of this memorial book are the heart and soul of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. The people and events that built this church and parish community are commemorated herein. With God's blessings we have grown in faith from the small Italian community of our parents, grandparents and great grandparents to the devoted parish family that defines us today. Thanks to the dedication of our beloved Stigmatine Fathers and Brothers and the Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy, we bequeath a legacy of faith, hope and charity to our future generations.

Now we are celebrating the centennial of our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church with the beautiful renovation of the edifice that has housed us since 1907 and witnessed so many gatherings of our parish family. As a result of our collective efforts we have done our best to ensure that the work of Our Lord will continue on for generations to come.

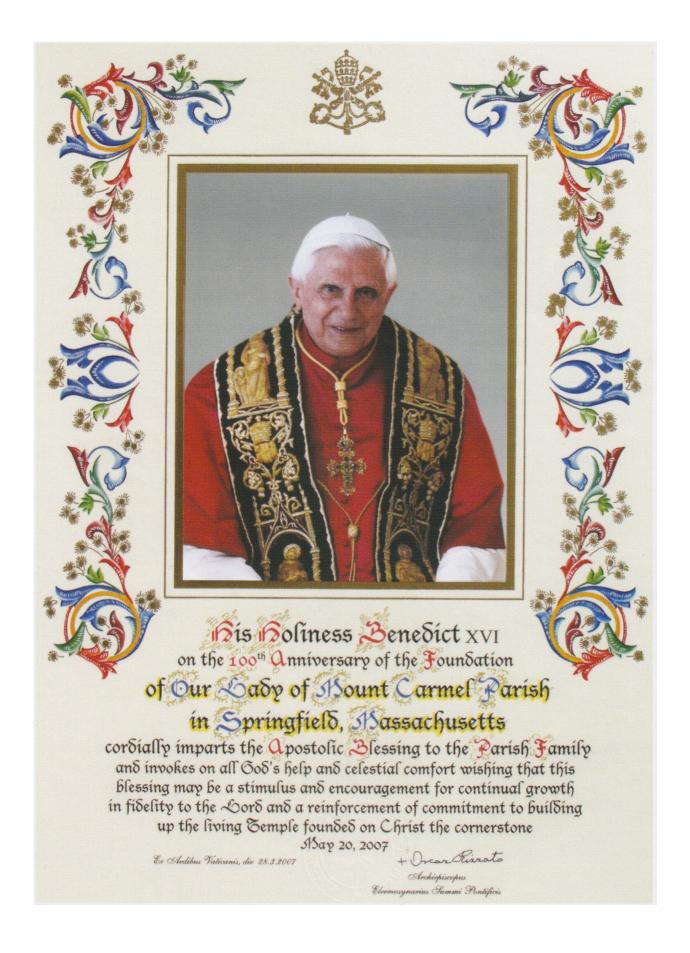
Please join us in thanking God for all the blessings he has bestowed upon us and for His continued guidance and blessings in all that we do.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Joseph A. Justif

Jøseph E. Rueli, Jr.

President





Diocese of Springfield Office of the Bishop



Dear Friends in the Parish Family of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church:

My heartiest congratulations to the entire parish as you celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. For 100 years, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church has been a beacon of faith in Springfield. Think of the many souls nourished and cared for within the parish for ten decades. The psalmist says, "What marvels the Lord worked for them; what marvels the Lord worked for us! We are glad indeed." That echoes the feeling of all who have been privileged to be part of Our Lady of Mount Carmel over the years. Bless you all.

The story of any parish is essentially one of people – of individuals and families. Many who celebrate this jubilee year can trace themselves back to those who were the founding parishioners of this church 100 years ago. Others have only recently become part of this community of faith and worship. For all, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church has been a home. Regardless of length of stay or generation of membership, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish is one body in Christ, brothers and sisters in God's own household, gathered in this holy church.

As your bishop, I am honored to convey not only my own best wishes, but also those of your neighbors and friends across the four counties of Western Massachusetts. May our Divine Savior bestow abundant blessing of happiness and peace upon all of you in the jubilee year of your church.

With gratitude for what has been and in anticipation of all that is yet to be, I am,

In Christ

Most Reverend Timothy A. McDonnell

Bishop of Springfield



Papal Blessing from
Saint Pius X
conferred the founding of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish
May 20, 1907



STIGMATINE FATHERS AND BROTHERS

Office of the Provincial

554 LEXINGTON STREET WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 02452-3097 Tel: (781) 209-3100 Fax: (781) 894-9785

Very Rev. Gregory J. Hoppough, C.S.S., S.T.D. Provincial Superior

Reverend Robert S. White, C.S.S. Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish 123 William Street Springfield, MA 01105 May 20, 2007

Dear Father White,

Please accept my congratulations and best wishes as you celebrate the 100th Anniversary and restoration of *Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church*. Along with Father Burns and Father Corigliano, your staff and loyal parishioners, you certainly have every reason to be proud of the rich faith and heritage that has always been the *hallmark* of your parish community.

Our Stigmatine Community rejoices in the dedicated ministry that has been offered by our Confreres over many years. We are indeed fortunate and blessed to have been able to serve God's people at Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Please convey our deepest gratitude to your parishioners for their long-standing and faithful hospitality to each and every one of our Stigmatine priests and brothers.

The 100th Anniversary of your Parish and its restoration are indeed a *graced time* of remembrance and gratitude. All of us thank Almighty God for the graces He has so generously bestowed upon the community of faith at *Our Lady of Mount Carmel*. May the powerful intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and our Holy Patron, Saint Gaspar Bertoni, continue to sustain, protect and guide your wonderful family of faith.

Sincerely in Christ,

(Very Reverend) Gregory J. Hoppough, C.S.S.

Gregory J. Hoppough

Provincial Superior



THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

MAYOR CHARLES V. RYAN

May 2007

Dear Father White,

It is both a pleasure and a privilege to be invited to remark on the Centennial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church here in Springfield. A pleasure because all of my life I have been familiar with and have admired Mount Carmel and its many fine parishioners. A privilege because, as Mayor of Springfield, I am in the position of being able to give public testimony and praise to the immensely impressive contributions, through these hundred years and more, of the thousands of Italians and Italian-Americans who have graced our City with their lives, their work, and their spirit of joyous community.



My very best congratulations to you, Father, to the faithful priests of the Stigmatine Fathers who founded and serve Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, to the Sisters of the Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy who devoted their lives to this mission, and to the hundreds of members of Mount Carmel Parish who are joining together to present this splendid celebration on this exceptional occasion.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church itself, in its remodeled glory, is the visible sign of the intangible quality of service that these people have and are continuing to give to our City. I am happy and proud that you have invited me to join all of you in celebrating the Centennial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church.

Sincerely,

Charles V. Ryan

Mayor

City of Springfield • 36 Court Street • Springfield, MA 01103 • (413) 787-6100



THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

MAYOR CHARLES V. RYAN

PROCLAMATION

Whereas,

Since the better part of the Nineteenth Century, Italian men and women have been active participants in our City, working toward achieving the American Dream and sharing with us their traditions, history and culture; and

Whereas,

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church was begun by Saint Gaspar Bertoni with the help of the dedicated Stigmatine Fathers and Brothers, who followed the call of their church father to provide service to the Italian-American immigrants of Springfield; and

Whereas,

2007 marks the year in which Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church and the congregation of Catholic Christians celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the church and the beginning of a fine Catholic influence and community outreach that has been exercised in Springfield, Massachusetts to better the quality and condition of our neighborhoods and those who are less fortunate.

Now, Therefore, I, Charles V. Ryan, Mayor

of the City of Springfield, do hereby proclaim

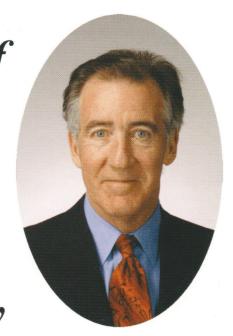
the year 2007 as

"Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church Centennial"

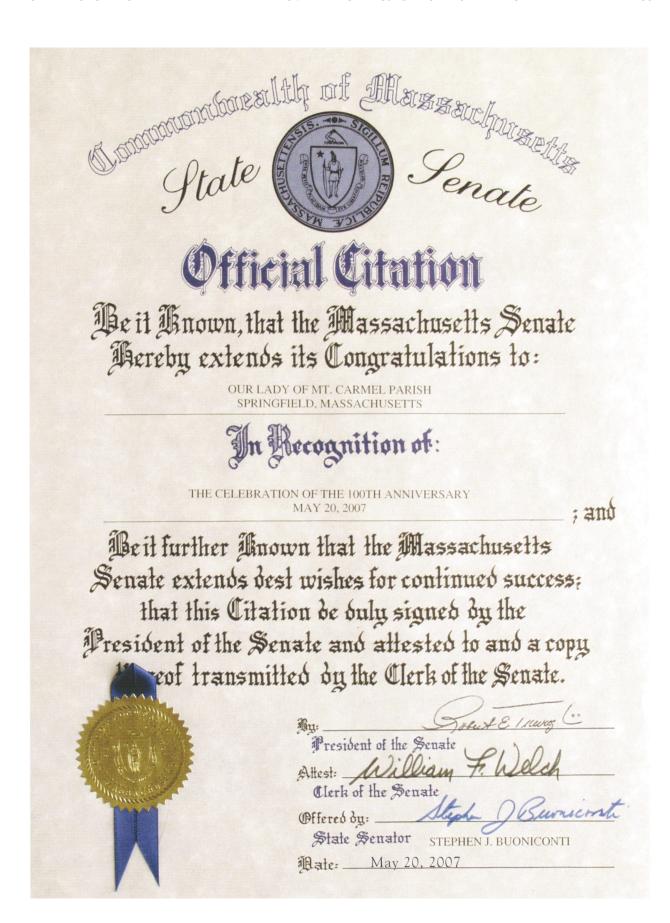
in the City of Springfield, and I urge all our citizens to take cognizance of this event and participate fittingly in its observance.

CHARLES V. RYAN MAYOR Congratulations

Our Lady of
Mount
Carmel
on its
100th
Anniversary









Stigmatine Priests

who were assigned and graciously served as Pastors at

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church

Reverend Anthony Dalla Porta, C.S.S.	1906 – 1924
Reverend William Ludessi, C.S.S.	1924 – 1928
Reverend Erminio Lona, C.S.S.	1928 – 1932
Reverend William Ludessi, C.S.S.	1932 – 1952
Reverend Peter Torretta, C.S.S.	1952 – 1967
Reverend Paul Zanini, C.S.S.	1969 – 1981
Reverend Carmen T. Russo, C.S.S.	1981 – 1987
Reverend Richard Scioli, C.S.S.	1987 – 2001
Reverend Robert S. White, C.S.S.	2001 – Present

Stigmatines

who served at

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church

Reverend Joseph Amodio	Reverend Emilio Baratella
Reverend Dennis Batancandolo	Reverend Carlo Bevilacqua
Reverend Luis Bonan	Reverend Paul Burns
Reverend Victor Canizzo	Reverend Michael Cariglia
Reverend Lino Cembran	Reverend Arthur Cerino
Reverend Samuel Chameal	Reverend Anthony Corigliano
Reverend Joseph Costa	Reverend Anthony Dalla Porta
Reverend Raymond Dalla Porta	Reverend Stephen Dalla Via
Reverend Geoffrey Deeker	Reverend Victor DeMichei
Reverend John Dickinson	Reverend John Ecker
Reverend Adolph Ferrari	Reverend Louis Fontana

Reverend Victor Formolo	Reverend Leo Geraci
Reverend Gerald Hogan	Very Reverend Gregory Hoppough
Reverend Edwin Kelly	Reverend George Linse
Reverend Erminio Lona	Reverend William Ludessi
Reverend Francis Mackin	Reverend Robert Masciocchi
Reverend Joseph Massaro	Reverend Paul Merrill
Reverend Guido Mespilli	Reverend Joseph Morgan
Reverend Michael Madussi	Reverend Marcus Murthough
Reverend Joseph Nardon	Reverend Anthony Nuccio
Reverend Joseph Oliosi	Reverend John Paolazzi
Reverend Serafino Piazzi	Reverend Pietro Piemonte
Reverend Rinaldi Ribezzi	Reverend Joseph Rosa
Reverend Carmen Russo	Rev. Camillo Santini
Reverend John Saracco	Rev. Richard Scioli
Reverend Leo Sella	Rev. Angelo Simeoni
Reverend Louis Tommasi	Reverend Peter Torretta
Reverend Dante Turri	Reverend Julius Valentinelli
Reverend Joseph Welch	Reverend Robert White
Reverend Remy Zadra	Reverend Paul Zanini
Reverend Charles Zanotti	Reverend John B. Zaupa
Reverend Louis Zullani	

Brothers:

Brother Joseph Barba	Brother Joseph Fontanari
Brother Paul Kessler	Brother Henry Maderna

With Grateful Hearts We Thank You The Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy

of Villa Rossello, Newfield, New Jersey



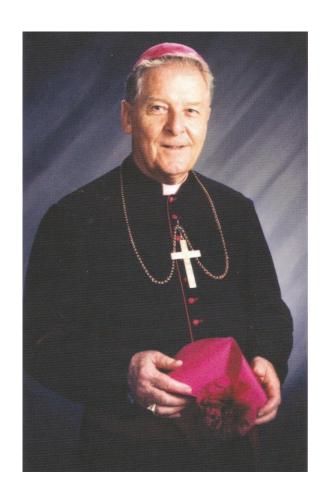
For 79 years of service among us In this, your first North American Mission. All the good you have done lives on in us.

Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy who served at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish

Sr. M. Josephine Fortune	Sr. M. Rose Ferraro	Sr. M. Joanna Cefalo
Sr. M. Marcellina Keegan	Sr. M. Dorothy Segaria	Sr. M. Susanne DiNicola
Sr. M. Clementina Fusa	Sr. M. Joseph Scarano	Sr. M. Emmanuel Matteo
Sr. M. Fausta Punta	Sr. M. Ursula Bowers	Sr. M. Lucy Marie Prebola
Sr. M. Matilda Molloy	Sr. M. Frances Ferrari	Sr. M. Antonia Lepore
Sr. M. Eleanora Bola	Sr. M. Regina D'Arcangelo	Sr. M. Damian Aussi
Sr. M. Rosalia Ferraira	Sr. M. Elizabeth Stanziola	Sr. M. Ambrogina Aldeni
Sr. M. Massima Berti	Sr. M. Anne Tieuli	Sr. M. Mary Grace DeJoseph
Sr. M. Amable Gear	Sr. M. Carmelina Gandolfo	Sr. M. Frances Spaziani
Sr. M. Antonia Terrile	Sr. M. Carmela Metallo	Sr. M. Dimas Lutz
Sr. M. Lorenza Raffini	Sr. M. Monica DiSabella	Sr. M. Rose Marie Apa (was Santissima)

Sr. M. Dionisia Pincete	Sr. M. Gertrude Guerrisi	Sr. M. Jude Saliga
Sr. M. Bridget Carew	Sr. M. Gabrielle Gattone	Sr. M. Incarnata Connolly
Sr. M. Benedict lademarco	Sr. M. Vincent Russo	Sr. M. Andrea Marie DelRossi
Sr. M. Amabile LaRosa	Sr. M. Theresa LaVia	Sr. M. Annunziata Mastrosimone
Sr. M. Patricia Gaynor	Sr. M. Bernadette Borelli	Sr. M. Kevin McKeon
Sr. M. Virginia Bertoni	Sr. M. Margaret DiNunzio	Sr. M. Salvatoris Capitani
Sr. M. Casimira Ravera	Sr. M. Ermelinda Maestri	Sr. M. Jean Marie Ervin
Sr. M. Catherine Poligono	Sr. M. Agatha Curran	Sr. M. Joseph Marie Hatch
Sr. M. Louise Ciavaglia	Sr. M. Pauline Posedly	Sr. M. Pius Marchetti
Sr. M. Elina Bonetti (was Clement)	Sr. M. Jerome Mancuso	Sr. M. Judith Anne Greppo
Sr. M. Angela Durso	Sr. M. Agnes Gentilesco	Sr. M. Carmel Marie Paroli
Sr. M. Michael Tucci	Sr. M. Concepta Abbot	Sr. M. Claudia Mauri
Sr. M. Emilia Casassa	Sr. M. Magdalene Fanucci	Sr. M. Daniel Marie Catherine
Sr. M. Ernestine Conti	Sr. M. Maria Goretti Howard	Sr. M. Frances Dacy
Sr. M. Immaculata Metallo	Sr. M. Maristella Giuliani	Sr. M. Mary Theresa Andreolli
Sr. M. Veronica Porta	Sr. M. Trinitá Meehan	Sr. M. Mary Paul Giordano
Sr. M. Christina Manock	Sr. M. Ignatia Clatch	Sr. M. Joanna Bauer
Sr. M. Corinne Durso	Sr. M. Teresita Valenti	Sr. M. Mary Cronin

To Our Friend Bishop Emeritus Joseph F. Maguire

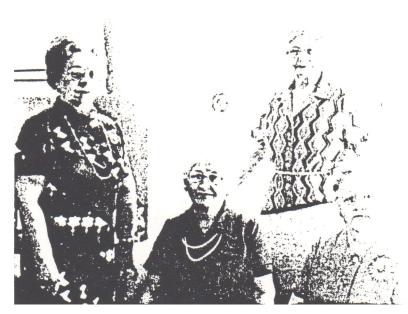


Thank you for your pastoral care for us these many years!

Sincerely,
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
Parishioners

ST. ANN'S SOCIETY

162



Four of the charter members still active in the occasion of St. Ann's Golden Jubilee: left to right – Albina Masi Scagliarini, Theresa Funaro, Mary Gallerani and Elizabeth Gilli.

With the encouragement and blessings of Father Ludessi, the first women's society of our parish formed on January 11, 1925. Twenty-two members assembled to elect their first President, Clementina Lamborghini (1925 - 1928). They originally called themselves "Society Madri Cristian" or Society of Christian Mothers. They renamed themselves "St. Ann's Society" in later years. Since its inception this group had only four other Presidents: Cleonice Girotti (1929 - 1930), Albina Masi (1930 - 1931), Rose Fossa (1932 - 1934) and, from 1935 until today, Mary Gallerani.

From the start of their activities, these women were quick to establish a varied program for the members. While availing themselves of good speakers on the religious aspects of life, they also came forward to practice good works for others. Their hard work planning and offering social activities to the parish began with small suppers in the Rectory.

At that time the priests were living on the first floor of the Rectory, and Mr. and Mrs. Augusto Masi resided on the second floor and acted as custodians of the premises. Society could only accommodate small gatherings in the dining room of the first floor, but were undaunted in their efforts.

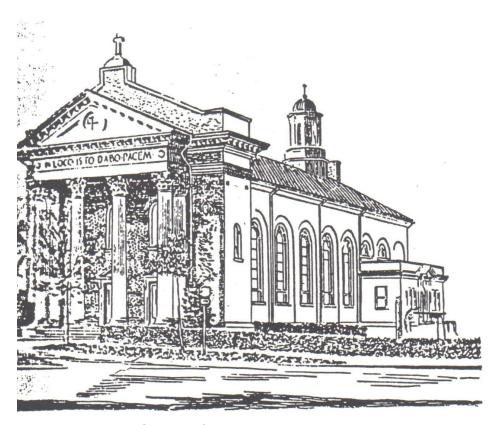
They served homemade pasta and tortellinis and were able to realize financial success through these efforts. They later were able to enlarge participation by using the Parish Hall. They run four major fundraising suppers a year. They are renowned throughout the Town because of their homemade tortellini and pasta.

St. Ann's Society has never stopped in their untiring efforts to assist the Church in its continued need for financial support. They have donated such varied necessities as furniture for the Rectory, dishes for the Church Hall, paint for redecoration projects, money for the Renovation Drive, contributions for the new on the Church, and many more projects throughout the years. They have also contributed toward the education of our youth by participating in scholarship programs for CCD pupils who need help in furthering their educational goals.

The women of St. Ann's Society, both past and present, have dedicated their efforts to God and us - we in turn would like to dedicate our prayers to them and wish them congratulations and God's blessings now and in the years to come. We wish them a healthful and holy 50th Anniversary Year in 1975 and know that we have found women truly worthy of our love and thanks.

Dedication Jubilee

St. Ann's Church



West Springfield, Massachusetts

1924 - 1949

Vatican City, April 18, 1950

Fr. Victor Formolo

St. Ann's Rectory

576 Memorial Ave.

West Springfield, Mass.

Occasion Silver Jubilee Dedication St. Ann's Church, Holy Father lovingly imparts paternal Apostolic blessing yourself, assistant clergy, parishioners.

MONTINI Under Secretary of State

Dal Vaticano: 18 Aprile, 1950

Fr. Victor Formolo

Rettoria di S. Anna

576 Memorial Ave.

West Springfield, Mass.

In occasione del Giubileo d'Argento della Dedicazione della chiesa di S. Anna Il Santo Padre imparte amorevolmente la sua paterna Apostolica Benedizione al Rettore, Assistente e Parrochiari.

MONTINI Sottosegretario di Stato

June 17, 1950

Dear Father Formolo,

A quarter of a century has elapsed since the dedication of Saint Ann's Church and it is only fitting that this occasion be marked by solemn festivities.

As Bishop of the Diocese I am happy to send an expression of my personal congratulations and good wishes to you, your assistant and the good people of Saint Ann's. May your beloved Patroness and her loving Child Mary continue to shower you with abundant blessings in the years that lie ahead!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

MOST REV. CHRISTOPHER J. WELDON, D.D. Bishop of Springfield

Reverend Victor Formolo, C.P.S.

St. Ann's Rectory

176 Memorial Avenue

West Springfield, Massachusetts

APPENDIX 3.11 - ST. ANN'S SILVER JUBILEE [1949]

CHAPTER 3 - SPRINGFIELD

167

Rome, April 13, 1950

Dear Father Formolo,

I have learned with satisfaction that you are about to celebrate solemnly the

Twenty Fifth Anniversary of the dedication of your beautiful Church of Saint Ann. To the

chorus of voices which will undoubtedly ring out in unison their greetings on such

memorable occasion, I wish to join my own felicitations, in terms of congratulations for

the splendid achievements of the past (the artistic Church), and of the present (the

beautiful new Rectory), and of encouragement and best wishes for the future.

I am sure that today both yourself and your good parishioners feel rightly proud

and content with the magnificent work accomplished, and happy to have borne

perseveringly the manifold sacrifices entailed in striving to reach this goal. Future

generations will ever bless the memory of all those whose generous and unselfish

cooperation has made its realization possible.

May Saint Ann continue to bless and watch over you all!

Devotedly yours in Our Lord,

FR. DENIS MARTINIS, Superior General

APPENDIX 3.11 - ST. ANN'S SILVER JUBILEE [1949]

CHAPTER 3 - SPRINGFIELD

168

June 14, 1950

Dear Father Victor:

This year of Our Lord, 1950, which marks the Jubilee Year of graces and indulgences has a special significance in the annals of the Township of West Springfield.

This is the year — the twenty-fifth year — since the doors of the Church of Saint Ann were opened to public worship.

In the name of all the Confreres of the Stigmatine Fathers, I hasten to beg God's special graces upon you, your Curate and people. May God bless those who have shared with you the toils of the past twenty-five years.

May the Good Saint Ann intercede in behalf of all the families entrusted to your spiritual care.

Sincerely,

VERY REV. JOHN F. GOLDEN, C.P.S.

Provincial

Congratulations

It is my great pleasure to extend my felicitations to the parishioners of St. Ann's Church on the happy occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the Church.

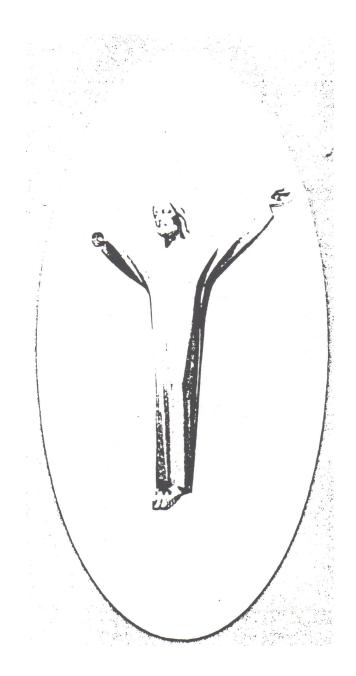
Personally, I have great reason to join with you in this celebration and to rejoice with you in spirit, because St. Ann's represents the first field of my labor in the vineyard of the Lord, here in the Springfield diocese.

Actually, it was my good fortune, twenty-five years ago, to be here in your midst, to direct your efforts for the completion of the church and to be appointed its first rector. I still recall, with satisfaction, the joy and holy pride of all the parishioners when the late Bishop Thomas O'Leary came here for the solemn dedication.

I hope and pray that your spirit of loyalty to God and to the Church may always increase, and may God, through the intercession of your patron saint, grant you every blessing.

REV. WILLIAM J. LUDESSI C.P.S.

GOLDEN JUBILEE 1924 – 1974



ST. ANN'S CHURCH West Springfield, Massachusetts

Congregazione delle Ss. Stimmate di N. S. G. C. (Stimmatini)

Curia Generalizia

Rome, June 27, 1974 Via Mazzarino, 16 Tel. 461.094 – 471.082

Rev. Adolph A. Ferrari, CSS

St. Ann Rectory

576 Memorial Avenue

West Springfield, Mass. 01089

Dear Father Ferrari,

It is with much happiness that I wish to share in the joy of the people of West Springfield on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of St. Ann's Church.

This is a date to be remembered both as an accomplishment, as well as a new beginning.

During these fifty years, St. Ann's has served as a center of unity, of faith and of dedicated Christian charity. It is here that so many of the faithful of West Springfield have had their first contact with God. Here, too, so many of them have lived the most significant moments of their lives, and where they have been formed in a religious outlook concerning their fellow man and this world.

At St. Ann's over these many years, is a mutual appreciation and affection, with the various Rectors and Assistants who have served there, so many of the faithful have experienced – and are experiencing now – the ideal of a living church, which means a family united in faith and in charity, animated by the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, the people of St. Ann's have every right now to look ahead with confidence toward the period which is opening before them.

The building itself (which I personally have had the great pleasure of admiring) has been renewed according to the modern liturgical spirit. It is truly beautiful and inspiring. There is a great debt of gratitude which is owed to all the people of St. Ann's for their generous and willing contribution toward making it all possible.

While I thank God for all that has been granted and accomplished in this period, I express the hope that the Christian life which flows out of St. Ann's might increase ever more in extension and in intensity in the fifty years which lie ahead.

Most sincerely yours in Christ,

2

Fr. Joseph Cappellina, CSS Superior General



SECRETARIAT OF STATE

FROM THE VATICAN, June 25, 1974

No. 250.592

Dear Bishop Weldon,

The Holy Father has been informed that on 1 November, 1974 the Stigmatine Fathers of St. Ann Church in West Springfield are celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary both of their parish ministry and of the opening of the church to the public.

On this happy occasion His Holiness ask you kindly to convey his greetings to the Fathers concerned, and also to assure them of a remembrance is his Masses and prayers. Giving thanks to god for the graces bestowed on the parish community over the past half century, he cordially imparts the requested Apostolic Blessing to all taking part in the solemn commemoration.

With the expression of my fraternal regard, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

T- (and Villet

The Most Reverend Christopher J. Weldon Bishop of Springfield in Massachusetts The Chancery 76 Elliot Street Springfield, Massachusetts 01105

PRIESTS OF ST. ANN'S CHURCH

Rev. Louis Fontana, C.P.S. Rev. Joseph Rosa, C.P.S.

Rev. William Ludessi, C.P.S. Rev. Joseph Massaro, C.P.S.

Rev. Joseph Costa, C.P.S. Rev. Anthony Nuccio, C.P.S.

Rev. Michael Madussi, C.P.S. Rev. Anthony Corigliano, C.P.S.

Rev. Humberto Zampieri, C.P.S. Rev. Nicholas Spagnolo, C.P.S.

Rev. Emilio Baretella, C.P.S. Rev. Leo Geraci, C.P.S.

Rev. Raymond Dalla Porta, C.P.S. Rev. James Cunningham, C.P.S.

Rev. Anthony Dalla Porta, C.P.S. Rev. John Lucey, C.P.S.

Rev. Serafino Piazzi, C.P.S. Rev. Vito Cannizzo, C.P.S.

Rev. Francis Tronconi, C.P.S. Rev. Adolph Ferrari, C.P.S.

Rev. Richard Ahern, C.P.S. Rev. Dino Giampaolo, C.P.S.

Rev. Joseph Morgan, C.P.S. Rev. John Dickinson, C.P.S.

Rev. Joseph Fellin, C.P.S. Rev. Victor Formolo, C.P.S.

WE POINT WITH PRIDE TO OUR OWN — WHO CHOSE TO DEDICATE THEIR LIVES TO GOD'S WORD



Rev. Philip Gallerani

Philip Gallerani, son of Mary and the late James Gallerani, was born and raised in West Springfield. He began serving as an altar boy while a youngster at St. Ann's. He graduated from Cathedral High School and went on to the Elm Bank Minor Seminary. Having completed his priestly studies at Christ the King Seminary in New York, Philip was ordained by the Most Rev. Clestine J. Damiano, D.D., Archbishop of Camden, N.J. and as Father Philip Gallerani was assigned his first parish in New Jersey. Father Philip chose to celebrate his first mass here at St. Ann's and reserved his first blessings for his parents. He is now stationed at St. Anne's Church, Chicopee, Mass.

Sister Bernadette

Teresa Borelli was born in West Springfield to the late Umberto and Josephine Borelli. She attended grammar and high school here and graduated from Misercordia College in Dallas, Pa. She received a certificate in theology at Marywood College, Scranton, Pa. Her religious training was received at the Mother House of the Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy, York, Pa. As Sister Bernadette, she received teaching assignments in Millville, N.J., Steelton, Pa., Milford, Mass., and West Springfield, Mass. She was Ref. Supervisor and principal of the Most Precious Blood Convent and school in Hazleton, Pa. and while stationed at the Provincial



House in Newfield, N.J., also taught at the academy and acted as assistant provincial of the Daughters of Our Lady of Mercy. Currently, Sister Bernadette is teaching at Mount Carmel School, Springfield, Mass., and is the Superior of Mount Carmel Convent.



VERY REVEREND GILBERT FINI Superior General of the Stigmatine Congregation

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Dante Fini on March 18, 1916, in West Springfield, Massachusetts, Gilbert Fini was to become one of our most honored members of St. Ann's Church. He entered the Stigmatine Minor Seminary in Waltham, Massachusetts in 1929, after spending his formative years as a young altar boy at St. Ann's. He made his Novitiate in Waltham and his first Profession in 1934. In 1937, following his Perpetual Profession, he was sent to Rome, Italy to study at the Gregorian University from which he received Bachelor's degree in Sacred Theology. Due to the events surrounding World War II, he returned to the United States shortly thereafter. He was ordained to the Priesthood by Archbishop Cushing in Newton, Massachusetts on June 20, 1942. Father Fini spent his first years as a priest teaching Philosophy and Theology at the Stigmatine Major Seminary in Wellesley, Massachusetts and serving in the Stigmatine parish in Vancouver, Canada.

Upon his return from Canada, Father Fini attended Boston College where he received a Master's Degree in English Literature. In 1953, he was engaged in preaching Missions while also fulfilling the office Provincial Councilor. In 1955, he was elected Provincial of the North American Province of the Stigmatine Fathers (U.S.A., Canada and Thailand Missions). In 1958, he became the first American to be elected Superior General of the Stigmatine Congregation (U.S.A., Canada, Brazil, Italy and Thailand). He was elected to this office in 1964.

Father Fini passed on to his eternal reward on November 19, 1968, in Rome, Italy. He had been a Stigmatine for thirty-four years and had celebrated his 25th anniversary of ordination in 1967. Funeral Mass for Father Fini was held on November 25, 1968 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Springfield, Massachusetts. The Mass was concelebrated by Most Reverend Christopher J. Weldon and forty Stigmatine priests from the United States, Canada and Brazil. His Excellency Thomas Manning, O.F.M., bishop of Curaco, Bolivia, was also present for the rites.

MASS LIVE

Powered by The Republican

Value of St. Ann's a mystery



By The Republican Newsroom

on July 21, 2007 at 2:00 PM, updated July 21, 2007 at 2:05 PM

By ANGELA CARBONE [acarbone@repub.com]

WEST SPRINGFIELD - Determining the actual worth of **St. Ann Church**, rectory and parking lot is a little like navigating a shifting maze.

Depending on your point of view, the path lies one way or another.

To its parishioners, the 73-year-old church is of incalculable worth.

To the city assessor's office, the assessed value of the property, zoned Business B, is \$650,000. But this figure has no relation to its true commercial value, Principal Assessor Edward D. O'Brien said. As it is a religious holding, there has been no reason to revalue it according to its possible use as a business, O'Brien said.

The church building itself, **at Memorial Avenue and Union Street**, is a red brick exterior with tall Corinthian columns gracing its front. The rectory next door is well-kept, and a parcel on the other side of **New Bridge Street**, which was donated by a local business owner, provides for parking.

The interior of the church was renovated and reconfigured to provide a warm, inviting interior for worship. Inside can be seen the original marble altar, donated by Peter Fossa and his family before World War II. Since that time, the parishioners added statues, stained glass windows and a historic pulpit that had been built in 1785 and originally was installed in New York City's Sts. Peter and Paul Church.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield announced that the church, a mission of **Our Lady of Mount Carmel parish in Springfield**, will cease to operate in mid-August. The diocese has cited a lack of priests and the proximity of other parishes in its decision to close **St. Ann**. At a meeting last month at the church, the **Rev. Gregory Hoppough**, Stigmatine provincial, told parishioners the order can no longer staff the church. The Stigmatines have staffed the church since it opened.

Since the diocese announced the plan to close the church, a number of parishioners expressed the belief that the commercial potential of the real estate lies behind the decision.

At a meeting with officials of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield, parishioners questioned Monsignor John J. Bonzagni, who heads the diocese's pastoral planning committee, about the financial implications of the closure.

Parish Council member Peter O. Andrew noted that **St. Ann** owes no money to the diocese and actually has more than \$100,000 in its coffers. "Why us, and not other churches in the immediate area that are in debt?" he asked.

According to the Mullins report, the result of two years of analysis by the Center for Economic Development at the University of Massachusetts, Immaculate Conception is \$159,658 debt to the diocese, while St. Louis de France owes \$4,595.

Bonzagni said, "Finances are not playing a role. No parish is closed solely because of finances. Geography trumps finances."

Other parishioners at the meeting said they are dismayed that their hard work, making the mission church solvent and taking care of repairs and restoration, has been for naught. During the 17-day run of the Big E each fall, parish volunteers spend hours standing in the church parking lots parking cars for money. The church is only about a half-mile from the exposition grounds, and the parking lot always is filled.

Parish Council member Angela Giorgi disputes Bonzagni's assertion that money is no consideration. She said the diocese will see a goodly profit if they sell the site.

"Why are we being pushed to close the 19th of August?" Giorgi asked. Other churches are given six to 12 months to put things in order before being closed, she said. The Stigmatine priest who has been saying Mass at the church, the **Rev. Paul D. Burns**, has publicly said he would be happy to continue at the church, even on a part-time basis, if the diocese allowed.

Parishioners also have said they would welcome any priest - Stigmatine or not - on a part-time basis, just to keep the community together.

Giorgi and other parishioners question whether the sale of the property is imminent.

Diocesan spokesman Mark E. Dupont said there are many rumors, but there is no reason to believe them. The priority of the diocese is to have the church close with dignity, pay off any outstanding bills, and take care of the sacramental items in the church.

The church has had the property surveyed and has an outside real estate consultant, Dupont said. Once all other aspects of the closure are settled, the consultant will make his recommendations to the bishop, Dupont said.

At the meeting in the parish hall in June, Bonzagni said the assets of the church will remain local. "It stays in the community. It doesn't go to the diocese," he said. The rationale is that people have worked for and donated to a church, in part, to provide for the religious life of children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, he said.

By virtue of the fact that **St. Ann** is a mission of **Mount Carmel**, it would be reasonable to have assets transferred there, Bonzagni said.

Many parishioners have said they will not be likely to become members of **Mount Carmel**, but will go elsewhere.

Peter O. Andrews, a member of the St. Ann Parish Council, asked, "If everybody in the parish, or nearly everyone, goes to St. Thomas, will St. Thomas get the money?"

"I don't know," Bonzagni said. It's doubtful the diocese would pro-rate the assets in that way, he said.

In the meantime, parishioners attend Mass, schedule meetings, submit petitions, erect signs imploring others to pray for their church, and plan the vigil at the church, which is to take place July 31.

Source:

http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2007/07/value of st anns a mystery.html

MASS LIVE

Powered by The Republican

Catholic Church wins temporary reprieve

by the Republican Newsroom
Saturday, August 18, 2007 8:19 p.m.

By Angela Carbone acarbone@repub.com

WEST SPRINGFIELD - **St. Ann Church** has been granted at least a temporary reprieve.

Tomorrow was slated to be the last for the **Memorial Avenue church**, but at Mass this afternoon, the Most Rev. Timothy A. McDonnell, bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield, announced **St. Ann will remain open until the end of this year.**

Interim pastor the **Rev. Paul D. Burns**, who has served the church since the death of the **Rev. Joseph P. Massaro**, will say a single Mass on Sundays, McDonnell told a church packed with parishioners.

Like Massaro, Burns is a Stigmatine priest and primarily serves Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Springfield, the mother church of St. Ann.

McDonnell came out from behind the altar and said the diocese's downsizing study, released last March, was just the "first layer" of an overall plan. This fall, diocese officials will hold "listening sessions" to speak with parishioners about the ecclesiastical, pastoral and ministerial future of the area, he said.

Allowing Burns to continue to say Sunday Mass will enable the St. Ann community to participate in those sessions, McDonnell said.

It could be just a delay, he warned. "I don't want you to have false hopes," he said. "There may not be a green light, but there is at least a caution light."

The Rev. Gregory Hoppough, Stigmatine provincial from Walpole, thanked the bishop and gave thanks for all the Stigmatine priests who have served St. Ann and Mount Carmel.

Hoppough asked the congregants to forgive him if any of his words or acts mistakenly caused them pain. "We Stigmatines will cooperate and collaborate with Bishop McDonnell in any and every way we can," he said.

The congregation applauded Hoppaugh with enthusiasm. After Mass, parishioners hugged each other, but said they are mindful that this could mean only another few months for the parish.

Parish Council Secretary Celeste Labbe said her family, like others with children, still has to find another parish for religious education. "But I'm hopeful," she said. "Maybe this study might give us what we want, for St. Ann to remain open." However, closing another parish will cause as much anguish to that parish as it has for St. Ann, she said. "Regardless of what happens, it's sad," she said.

Parish Council member Rose Bunnell said she is more optimistic about the future of St. Ann than she was two months ago, when the closing was announced. "We have some strong leaders. We'll see what happens in the study," she said. "They're going to find out we're a devout and friendly parish."

Amy Garello, a member of St. Ann for more than 60 years, was "on pins and needles all through the Mass." She said, "It's a start. I'm hopeful that things will go well."

Diocesan spokesman Mark E. Dupont said the listening sessions to which the bishop referred will most likely start in West Springfield and Holyoke. St. Ann could be open after the first of the year, depending on the progress of the sessions, he said.

The bishop concelebrated yesterday's Mass with Monsignor John J. Bonzagni; the Rev. Geoffrey Deeker, pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Pittsfield; the Rev. Robert S. White, pastor at Mount Carmel in Springfield; the Rev. Hoppaugh; and Father Burns.

Source:

http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2007/08/12-week/

Powered by The Republican

BishopAccountability.org

2 Churches to Shut Doors in West Side the Decision

By Michael McAuliffe The Republican August 10, 2008

http://www.masslive.com/news/topstories/index.ssf?/base/news-2/1218352641155590.xml&coll=1

WEST SPRINGFIELD - The Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield will close **St. Ann's** and St. Louis de France churches in **West Springfield**, joining those parishes with Immaculate Conception Parish to create the new St. Francis Xavier Cabrini Parish.

That decision was disclosed to churchgoers in the city at services Saturday via the reading of a letter from Bishop Timothy A. McDonnell. The new parish will come into existence by Jan. 1.

The changes were among recommendations for church reconfigurations in four of the diocese's 10 regions presented by the Pastoral Planning Committee and accepted by McDonnell as the diocese deals with a diminishing number of priests, fewer worshippers and rising costs to keep churches open. The diocese will detail the changes at a press conference on Monday, but McDonnell wanted to give parishioners in each of the affected areas the opportunity to hear of any changes in their community at services this weekend.

Mark E. Dupont, a spokesman for the diocese, said there will be a "few instances" where a number of parishes will be closed and a new parish created. Dupont did not provide more details Saturday night.

One of the affected regions includes **Agawam**, Westfield, **West Springfield**, Chester, Huntington, Russell and Southwick; another includes Greenfield, Montague, Northfield, Orange, Shelburne Falls, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway and South Deerfield. The two remaining regions consist of Berkshire County communities.

The Rev. Wayne C. Biernat read McDonnell's letter detailing the changes in West Springfield Saturday afternoon at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, which escaped any change. With about 7,500 parishioners, St. Thomas is the largest diocese parish in West Springfield.

"There was overall agreement that the parish of St. Thomas the Apostle shall remain as presently configured. And so it shall," McDonnell wrote.

That decision was met by light applause during the 5:30 p.m. Saturday service at the church.

But Angela A. Giorgi, a lifelong parishioner at **St. Ann's**, said later she was angry that she heard of the closings from parishioners who attend St. Thomas the Apostle and Immaculate Conception. **St. Ann's** sole weekend service is at 10 a.m. today.

"That's wrong," the 78-year-old Giorgi said. "I'm sorry. I don't think we deserve that. We worked hard to keep that church going."

In his letter, McDonnell stated that Immaculate Conception "provided the overall best facility" for the new St. Francis Xavier Cabrini Parish.

But another **St. Ann's** parishioner, Nancy R. Tessier, disagreed.

"We have a phenomenally well kept physical plant," said Tessier, noting **St. Ann's** has air conditioning, a new boiler and a well-appointed rectory.

Tessier also said the parish, which typically draws 150 to 200 worshippers for Sunday Mass, is fiscally sound.

"We have no financial debt," she said.

"I don't understand their logic. And I don't think I'm alone in that department," Tessier added.

St. Louis de France also has a single Mass on Sunday. That service rarely draws more than about 20 people.

Source:

Western Massachusetts Catholics

letter - A 'mea culpa' needed from Diocese

The Berkshire Eagle (Pittsfield, MA)

Friday, August 29, 2008

"Mea culpa, mea culpa" is a chant recited by Catholics. It means "through my fault." Penitent worshippers confess a wrong, a sin. In recent weeks, the wrongdoers have been the leaders of the Catholic Diocese of Springfield.

It's bad enough that they decided to close viable churches through Western Massachusetts. To add insult to injury, they failed to properly inform the people they are supposed to serve. In **West Springfield**, parishioners of **St. Ann Church** were shocked when they picked up the Sunday Republican on August 10. A front page article announced **the closing of their church**. During the one Mass at 10 a.m., a formal letter was read, but St. Ann members were already understandably upset.

Throughout the diocese, similar stories are told of loyal Catholics, even presidents of parish councils, learning this news second hand or through the media. Bishop Timothy McDonnell could have sent Monsignor John J. Bonzagni, director of pastoral planning, or Mark E. Dupont, diocesan spokesperson, to area parishes in advance to deliver the message.

Another question concerns the renaming of churches. Who decided on the new names? No one consulted the devoted parishioners who faithfully attend services and give money week after week.

The late journalist Tim Russert moderated a discussion series at Boston College titled "The Church in the 21st Century." Increased participation by the laity and greater involvement of women were two of many recommendations. Unfortunately, the Springfield Diocese has not caught up with 21st century ideas. It's still in the Dark Ages, where church hierarchy dictate orders and expect meek compliance.

Bishop McDonnell and his emissaries claim that their actions were inevitable. In the future, they will have to recognize that their actions broke a sacred trust and caused emotional pain. Then, they too will pray, "Mea culpa."

Source:

Powered by The Republican

West Springfield prepares for final Mass at St. Ann Roman Catholic church

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By The Republican Newsroom

on December 30, 2008 at 9:20 PM, updated December 30, 2008 at 11:53 PM



Angela A. Giorgi and Stephen L. Zambelli sit in front of the hand-carved Nativity figures they bought in Jerusalem in 1997 for St. Ann Church in West Springfield.

Republican photo/MICHAEL GORDON

ANGELA CARBONE [acarbone@repub.com]

WEST SPRINGFIELD - At 4 p.m. Wednesday, **St. Ann Church** on **Memorial Avenue** will celebrate a final Mass before the church closes forever.

Parishioners will have a last chance to gaze around the renovated church, which is replete with sacred statues, paintings and stained glass windows.

The pews and a statue of St. Ann will be going to Immaculate Conception Church on Main Street, which is to be renamed St. Francis Xavier Cabrini Parish. **St. Ann** and the already closed St. Louis de France Church are now yoked with Cabrini. Other articles have been offered to St. Thomas the Apostle or Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Springfield.

Once the window or crucifix is donated, it becomes the property of the diocese, said Msgr. John J. Bonzagni, director of pastoral planning for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield. "Items of a spiritual nature, statues or altars, are under the patrimony of the parish and cannot be returned," he said.

Church belongings not conveyed to local churches will be offered to other churches in the diocese.

There is a procedure for returning a sacred building to a nonreligious use. After Jan. 1, the diocese will hold a rite to make the closing spiritually official. The ritual will be done without fanfare. "We want the closure to happen respectfully," Bonzagni said.

The fact that sacred items, many donated by parish families or individuals, will be offered to other churches in the diocese has disturbed a number of parishioners.

While the diocese has linked **St. Ann**, St. Louis and Immaculate Conception, many parishioners expect individuals to be scattered in many directions, which means they can glean no comfort from items going to the yoked church, parishioner Gay Morris said.

Parishioner Angela A. Giorgi is unsure what to do once **St. Ann** closes. She also said she is one of many unhappy that the diocese has no plans to return items to donors if requested.

Giorgi, Stephen L. Zambelli and three others purchased olive-wood, hand-carved Nativity figures in Jerusalem in 1997. As of Tuesday, the scene was still in place in front of the altar. "I almost got arrested taking it into Jordan," Zambelli said.

"We're trying to find a home for it," Giorgi said. "I don't know what's going to happen to the paintings," referring to several oil paintings that have graced the ceiling of the church since it opened in 1924.

Giorgi and Zambelli have been St. Ann parishioners since its beginning. Between them, they remember who gave what to the church. "Some of the people are asking for the (stained glass) windows back," Zambelli said.

Source:

http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2008/12/angela_carbone_acarbonerepubco.html

Powered by The Republican

West Springfield church closing plan assailed

An excerpt of "Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield puts closed churches on the Market"



By Jeanette DeForge, The Republican Follow on Twitter

on June 27, 2010 at 12:01 AM, updated June 28, 2010 at 2:49 AM



St. Ann Church on Memorial Drive in West Springfield is among 10 churches the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield plans to close as part of a plan to respond to the dwindling number of diocesan priests. (Photo: Michael S. Gordon/The Republican)

July 22, 2007 9:00 a.m.

A lack of priests and close proximity to other parishes forced the diocese to announce the closure of St. Ann Church.

While most parishes were given 12 months to close its doors, St. Ann's would cease to operate by mid-August.

Parishioners questioned why their church, operating without debt to the diocese, was chosen to close.

"Finances are not playing a role," said John J. Bonzagni, who heads the diocesan pastoral planning committee. "No parish is closed solely because of finances. Geography trumps finances."

Source:

http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2010/06/roman_catholic_diocese_of_spri_9.html

Powered by The Republican

Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield puts closed churches on the market



By Jeanette DeForge, The Republican
Follow on Twitter
on June 27, 2010 at 12:01 AM, updated June 28, 2010 at 2:49 AM



A service is held at the Slavic Evangelical Baptist Church, located at the former St. Louis de France church at 801 Main St. in West Springfield.

Photo: Don Treeger / The Republican

WEST SPRINGFIELD - It almost seemed like a gift from God.

The Slavic Evangelical Baptist Church had been renting space in West Springfield for several years when members learned the nearby Roman Catholic Church, St. Louis de France, had closed and was for sale.

"It is very good for us, and it was a nice price," says the Rev. Fedor Songorov, pastor of the Slavic church. "It is excellent for our church, and also we wanted to stay in West Springfield."

On Oct. 28, Songorov's congregation, which has about 170 worshippers, bought St. Louis de France church and its adjacent rectory at 801 Main St. for \$280,000.

The stained-glass windows remain as do other features that embody a place of worship. His members are now painting and making other repairs, Songorov said.

"It is a nice comfortable place to be for us," he said.

The sale – even though the property carried an assessed valuation of \$601,100 – is a success story that the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield hopes to replicate as it shuts churches across Western Massachusetts in a downsizing that has spanned several years.

Less than a mile from the St. Louis De France church, the **St. Ann mission church** and its imposing brick rectory on **Memorial Avenue**, assessed at close to \$700,000, have sat vacant and seeking new owners since witnessing its **final Mass in December 2008**.

Over the past decade more than 65 Roman Catholic churches have been closed in Western Massachusetts, including 18 which were shuttered this winter in Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin counties. Thirteen of the buildings that have closed in the past decade are still being used as churches, mostly to house new parishes that merged two or more closed churches.

The Springfield diocese now has 21 churches on the market with more to come in the future. They range from the former St. Mary the Morning Star, in Pittsfield, which includes four buildings with 41,524 square feet of space, to the quaint, 4,200-square-foot St. Catherine of Alexandria Church on Main Street in Leeds.

While many of the diocesan properties up for sale, like the former Blessed Sacrament Church rectory in Westfield, date back more than a century, the Nativity of our Lady of the Blessed Mary, on Chicopee Street in Chicopee, was built in 1979 and includes a church and rectory.

Some of the properties were only been put up for sale a few months ago; others have been on the market for as long as 10 years.

The diocese, which would not disclose sale prices, does not put churches up for sale if members have appealed the closing to the Vatican and are still waiting a decision. Nine of the 18 closed this winter fall into that category, and there are also several others under appeal which closed earlier, said diocesan spokesman Mark E. Dupont.

Selling a church is not an easy task, however; only 17 of the 65 have been sold over the past 12 years, officials say.

Source:

http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2010/06/roman_catholic_diocese_of_spri_9.html

Powered by The Republican

Former St. Ann Roman Catholic Church in West Springfield due to be demolished



By Sandra Constantine, The Republican

on January 26, 2012 at 9:45 PM, updated January 27, 2012 at 12:04 PM



Windows from former St. Ann Church on Memorial Avenue in West Springfield have been removed in anticipation of the former church being readied to be demolished.

(Photo by Mark M. Murray / The Republican)

WEST SPRINGFIELD –

The former <u>St. Ann Church</u>, for decades the home parish for the city's Italian-American Catholics, will bow to the wrecking ball in the next week or two, according to the developer who bought it and who has already razed the adjacent rectory.

Frank Colaccino, president of <u>Colvest</u>-West Springfield LLC, said Thursday the church will be torn down by **Associated Building Wreckers Inc.** of Springfield to prepare the site for retail development.

Colaccino's company, which is based in Windsor, Conn., bought the church and rectory at 560-576 Memorial Ave. Oct. 18 for \$650,000.

Bishop Timothy A. McDonnell of the <u>Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield</u> closed the church Dec. 31, 2008, after a struggle with parishioners who wanted the diocese to keep it open.

The diocese has removed the church's stained glass windows, as well as all sacred materials, according to spokesman Mark Dupont. The diocese sold the property as part of pastoral planning because it no longer had a use for it, he said.

Dupont said after any debts are discharged, the proceeds from the sale will be given to the successor parish.

St. Ann parish was combined with Immaculate Conception and St. Louis de France parishes to create St. Frances Xavier Cabrini parish. St. Louis de France Church was also closed, and the new parish worships at the former Immaculate Conception Church.

As church membership has declined in recent years, bishops around the country have closed church buildings, an oftentimes controversial and emotional development for worshippers.

Parishioners of Mater Dolorosa Church in Holyoke have kept a round-the-clock vigil there to protest its closing last June.

Since 2000, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield has closed about 70 parishes.

Colvest-West Springfield LLC is affiliated with Colvest Group, a privately held company with property, most of it in retail, in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. The company has done a number of projects in the area, including developing Berkshire Bank's headquarters on the site of the former St. Joseph's Church in Springfield.

Colvest is also redeveloping the former Hill and Dale strip mall in Northampton.

Colaccino said the St. Ann site at Memorial Avenue and New Bridge Street is appealing because of the large volume of traffic and the fact that it is next to an intersection with traffic signals.

Colvest does not have tenants lined up for the property, nor is it in negotiations at this point, Colaccino said.

"We really don't have any plan for the property at this point," he said.

The bishop has attached a deed restriction that prevents developing the site as anything "inconsistent with the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church as determined in the sole discretion of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Springfield."

Meanwhile just driving by the church tugs at the heartstrings of longtime parishioners like 66-year-old Gay Morris of Kelly Drive. She had spent her most of her life worshipping at the church, where she was baptized and married and served as a Eucharistic minister.

"It is heartbreaking every time I drive by there. It is more than a building. I feel like I've lost a church family," she said.

Source:

http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2012/01/former_st_anns_church_in_west.html

Powered by The Republican

Demolition of St. Ann's Church in West Springfield begins

By The Republican Newsroom

on February 06, 2012 at 7:37 PM, updated February 07, 2012 at 12:21 AM



02/06/12 – The front of the former St. Ann's Church in West Springfield as demolition of the Church by the Association Building Wreckeers Inc. began on Monday. Work will continue on Tuesday morning because wood beams were found inside the columns and not steel so more precautions will be needed before the structure comes down.

(West Springfield – Staff Photo by Dave Roback)

WEST SPRINGFIELD -

Demolition of the former St Ann's Church started on Monday.

The demolition contractor, Associated Building Wreckers Inc., will continue work on Tuesday morning. Work was held up temporarily because wood beams, not steel, were found inside the columns in front of the structure, so more precautions will be needed before the building comes down.

Frank Colaccino, president of Colvest-West Springfield LLC, recently said the site will be used for retail development. Colaccino's company, based in Windsor, Conn., bought the church and rectory at 560-576 Memorial Ave. on Oct. 18 for \$650,000.

Bishop Timothy A. McDonnell of the <u>Roman Catholic Diocese of</u> <u>Springfield</u> closed the church on Dec. 31, 2008, after a struggle with parishioners who wanted the diocese to keep it open.

The diocese has removed the church's stained glass windows, as well as all sacred materials, according to spokesman Mark Dupont. The diocese sold the property as part of pastoral planning because it no longer had a use for it, he said.

Source:

http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2012/02/photos_demolition_of_st_anns_c.html

Powered by The Republican

Catholics in Western Massachusetts mourn as churches prepare to close

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By The Republican Newsroom

on December 28, 2008 at 7:08 PM, updated December 29, 2008 at 11:03 AM



Rev. Steven C. Amo, pastor of the All Saint's Parish, wipes a tear from his eye as he says goodbye to parishioners following the final mass at St. Therese Church in Agawam.

[Photo by Bob Stern / The Republican]

By DAVID BERGENGREN, ELIZABETH ROMAN, and JEANETTE DEFORGE

There was an air of mourning at St. Therese Church Sunday as All Saints Parish in Agawam celebrated its final Mass.

Roman Catholics across Western Massachusetts grappled with impending church closings on Sunday, primarily because of a projected shortage of parish priests.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield will formally close the parish's two Agawam churches - St. Therese on Bridge Street and **St. Anthony on Maple Street - Jan.**1. The diocese has cited a projected shortage of active ordained priests as a key reason for the closings.

The two churches have played important roles in the lives of many parishioners, and they gave voice to their sadness and, in some cases, frustration over the closings as they filed out of St. Therese after Sunday's Mass.

"I'm brokenhearted. I was married (here). My children were baptized here and married here," said Blanche M. Depalo, of Agawam.

"I'm very sad," said Paula E. Provost, of Agawam. "I want to know where all the Catholics are going to go when they realize they made a mistake and all the churches are closed."

Provost sounded a note that was a refrain for many on Sunday.

"This is a viable parish," she said. "I don't know why they're closing it."

Lawrence Pisano Jr., of Agawam, said, "The bishop made the wrong decision. At least one of these churches (should have) stayed open. Unfortunately, instead of uniting us, I think he's dividing us."

In October more than 100 parishioners met with Msgr. John J. Bonzagni, director of pastoral planning for the Springfield diocese. They pleaded with him to take their request to Bishop Timothy A. McDonnell that St. Therese remain open as an adoration chapel and to create a new parish in conjunction with the congregation of Sacred Heart on Springfield Street.

"We couldn't convince the bishop to change his mind, unfortunately," said F. William Euliano Jr., chairman of the Pastoral Council at All Saints. "They basically said you're on your own, thank you very much."

Though the Rev. Steven C. Amo has been serving both All Saints and Sacred Heart parishes since April, and will continue at Sacred Heart, Euliano said, "We're not merging with (another parish). We're not being yoked. We're not being anything."

"This was a small parish, a friendly parish, a welcoming parish," said Ernest W. Musa, of Springfield. "We were growing as a parish and we had everything going for us. We thought we had a good opportunity to have the church continue."

The Archbishop Williams Assembly of the Knights of Columbus provided an honor guard for Sunday's final Mass, in which the Rev. Albert E. Breton, pastor for St. Therese from 1983 to 1997, participated.

"The moment that all of us has dreaded has finally arrived," Amo told more than 200 parishioners. With the dissolution of All Saints Parish, he said, "It is merely the buildings that are going away. We do not have to."

This is a very difficult moment in our common history as a parish family," Amo said. "The challenge now is to look toward the future, to what lies ahead."

"We can always hold our heads up high and know what we did here was a good thing," he said. "Our faith has to be in Christ, and Christ will never disappoint."

After Sunday's service, Amo said, "Right now I feel numb. It's been a long haul, and I myself need time to process all of this."

"This was a very active, vibrant parish," said Amo, who said All Saints numbered about 750 families. "It's my hope that a majority of the people will come to Sacred Heart, so that we can try to build a great parish family there."

In West Springfield, every pew was filled and people lined the back and side walls of St. Ann Church on Memorial Avenue for the final Sunday Mass.

The church, opened in 1924, will be closed Jan. 1. St. Ann and St. Louis de France, which closed in October, were yoked with Immaculate Conception on Main Street.

"It's a sad day," said Michael E. Thompson. "I was married in this church in 1984. My wife's family has been coming here for many years."

The Rev. Paul D. Burns, the pastor since last year, told parishioners they should be proud of the history of the church and move on to another congregation with joy and a willingness to help.

"Take the light you have and spread it to other people," he said. "Be proud of the history of this parish and all that has been done here. And be joyful in another Catholic community. Support it and help it grow."

Carmella Montagna, of Agawam, has been a parishioner of St. Ann for 77 years. "My children have grown up here, my son was an altar boy here. I've seen my grandchildren's children baptized here," Montagna said.

Like many members who are saddened by the closing, Montagna is uncertain what she will do. "I live in Feeding Hills, and I might end up going to a church there," she said. "I just can't believe it's closing. This church means a lot to me."

During his sermon Burns said when he arrived as the new priest in 2007 he was met by a "delightful community of people who worked together for the advancement of the church." Its people are what have made St. Ann special, he said.

"A church is never only about the building," he said. "It's about the people who have thrived here for eight decades. What makes this building a holy place is when the people of God gather to worship in it."

Burns said he will always remember the people he met and the wonderful things that happened at the church. "This has been a positive experience for me and I will never forget it," he said.

The final Mass will be held New Year's Eve on Wednesday at 4 p.m.

This weekend five other churches also held their last services. In North Adams, Holy Family, St. Francis and St. Anthony churches closed and will join as a new parish, St. Elizabeth of Hungary in the former St. Anthony Church. In the Millers Falls village of Montague, St. John's closed.

A sixth parish, the North American Martyrs in Lanesboro is to have its close later this week.

The most controversial closing was in Adams where members of St. Stanislaus Church appealed the decision to the Vatican and vowed to hold non-stop vigils in the church after the final service at 3 p.m. Sunday.

"They have every right to do it," said Mark E. Dupont, diocese spokesman, said of the appeal.

Church officials hope the group does not decide to continue the vigil, but said they will not call for police to make arrests, he said.

In August, Bishop Timothy A. McDonnell announced 10 parishes would close and gave members a Jan. 1 deadline. A number, including two in South Deerfield which closed and formed a new parish, held final Masses early.

While there have been a number of parish closings this year, few have appealed the decisions or staged major protests.

"It is hard to predict when you are hitting a flashpoint," he said. "Here in Western Massachusetts people tend to hold long ties to the parish, and it is a real loss when they close."

There were few complaints when St. Thomas Church in Adams closed, even though it is the oldest parish in town, Dupont said.

There were nearly 130 churches under the Roman Catholic Diocese in Springfield when it slowly began closing parishes in 1994. By the end of 2009, Dupont said the number of churches in the Springfield diocese are expected to be reduced to about 100.

"We have far fewer priests and far fewer Catholics," Dupont said.

Many believe the churches are mostly being closed because of the diocese's need to raise money to pay settlements for sexual abuse victims, but Dupont said that is untrue. Money earned from the sale of buildings will go to the Catholic community in the area of the closed church.

Source:

http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2008/12/catholics_in_western_massachus.html

Powered by The Republican

How St. Paul's Parish with its bilingual pastor is becoming a 'strong family together'



By <u>Anne-Gerard Flynn, The Republican</u>
Email the author | Follow on Twitter
on December 30, 2011 at 7:22 AM, updated December 30, 2011 at 1:37 PM



Parish council members and other staff at St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Springfield, include, seated from left, Evelyn C. Vecchiarelli, Deacon Frank D. Rogers, the Rev. Quynh Dinh Tran, pastor Beverly M. Dimauro and Thu Pham. Standing from left: Canh Tran, Tina Nguyen, Vananh Tran, Deacon Ly X. Cao, Ray Casella, also architect for the planned social center, Quynh Anh Tran, John Wynne and Angelo Salvatore. *Republican photo by MICHAEL S. GORDON*

The new year is one much anticipated by parishioners of St. Paul the Apostle Roman Catholic Church in Springfield. In 2012, members hope to build their new social center on the church's 235 Dwight Road property and more fully integrate as a community.

The parish includes families from the former St. Joseph mission in East Longmeadow as well as existing parishioners and Vietnamese-American families who came with the Rev. Quynh Dinh Tran, now St. Paul's bilingual pastor.

A willing Tran was assigned to St. Paul's in 2006 from Holy Name in Springfield, and his arrival, along with more than 100 Vietnamese families with as many children, has helped breathe new vitality into the 49-year-old parish that had been in danger of closing.

St. Paul's now has weekend Masses in both English and Vietnamese, choirs for both Masses and religious education programs in the two languages. The weekly bulletin is printed in both languages.

In addition, parishioners have raised more than \$1.35 million toward a goal of \$1.45 million for a social center. Some \$440,000 of this amount has been pledged through a three-year capital campaign — a sizeable amount from a parish with a large number of immigrants with limited financial resources. These Vietnamese immigrants had use of the existing social center at Holy Name for their religious and cultural gatherings but those interviewed say any sacrifice is worth their move to St. Paul's with Tran.

"Having a parish helps people unite in one faith and that is the Catholic faith and this brings out the better of the community," said 59-year-old Canh Tran, who was raised Catholic by his parents in Vietnam. A former soldier with U.S. and South Vietnamese Air Force during the war there, Canh added he has felt God "bless him many times."

He "always feels peace within God's arms," said Vannah Tran, interpreting for her father.

Tran, 28, helps with the Vietnamese religious education program and also help start the parish's Vietnamese youth choir in 2009. Vietnamese is a tonal language and a choir singing in Vietnamese is a beautiful component of Masses here and in Vietnam, where Catholic nuns once ran many of the schools and hospitals. It was a 17th century French Jesuit who first gave the Vietnamese a writing language, using the Latin alphabet.

Tran typifies many of her generation, switching easily between Vietnamese and English.

"For last year's Christmas event," she said, "we rented a hall but we couldn't do that this year for financial reasons and the kids were disappointed. At Holy Name, there was a place for performances and that is what we hope for next Christmas here. The social center project will help us pull together better as a community of one instead of a Vietnamese and American parish."

The parish did hold a fall concert in the church featuring The Dan Kane Singers as a fund-raiser for the new center but lack of space limits participation and socialization. A hall is rented for the annual parish picnic featuring both Vietnamese and American food.

The need for a center is well observed by Deacon Frank D. Rogers who, at the request of the Most Rev. Timothy A. McDonnell, bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield, was transferred in 2006 from his diaconate position at St. Michael Parish in East Longmeadow, to St. Paul.

"We need a hall so we can have functions to bring people together. We would like to do breakfasts and dinners and we can't because we don't have the facilities," Rogers said. The church now has only one small room in the rear of the compact building for functions that include the religious education programs with 150 children in the Vietnamese language one alone.



At St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Springfield, from left, Deacon Frank D. Rogers, Fr. Quynh Tran, pastor, and Deacon Ly K. Cao. Republican photo by MICHAEL S. GORDON

Rogers serves at St. Paul with two other deacons — Ly Cao, imprisoned for nine years by the Communists in his native Vietnam and the first Vietnamese ordained a deacon in the diocese in 2009, and Khanh Tran, ordained in 2011.

Rogers said he has found the assignment "very interesting," working with both the parish's English speakers and the Vietnamese and ease any frictions that arise from cultural misunderstandings. He called the parish a "growing, vibrant community" and described the Vietnamese as "very religious people with a great devotion to Mary and to the parish."

"They are very faithful people with 300 to 400 at Mass. They have a lot of children and they come every Sunday to the CCD (religious education classes. They also reach out to people. We have had a lot of conversions thanks to the efforts of Father Tran and the Vietnamese people, "Rogers said.

When asked for his reaction to the efforts of St. Paul's parishioners, Bishop McDonnell said, "The scriptures remind us: 'Paul plants, Apollo waters, but

God gives the increase.' We've seen that happen at St. Paul parish where the planting and watering by the parishioners, old and new, are with God's grace giving rise to growth."

Parish council member John B. Wynne, who grew up in the parish, also credits the parish's revitalization to Father Tran and his ability to deal with "different personalities" in achieving cultural balance and harmony in the parish.

"He has had a much harder time than any priest going into a neighborhood parish since he has had the challenge of serving two groups of parishioners," Wynne said. "The Vietnamese are very instantaneous and want things to move quickly and, of course, nothing moves quickly in the Catholic Church, and the original parishioners are frustrated, too, — though you may think the opposite —in terms of the parish coming together. The hope is for the center to move things along."

Wynne sees full integration as a long-term goal through more outreach and future programs at the center designed specifically for the parish population.

Father Tran, 44, said the majority of his parishioners who speak English as their first language are "mix" of nationalities and said those active number about 150 families. He described many of the parishioners who joined from the closed St. Joseph Mission as being of Italian heritage.

Tran said there are about 150 Vietnamese families active in the church in addition to that many coming for Mass from northern Connecticut and elsewhere in the Pioneer Valley.

He is proud of the sacrifices made by his parishioners in raising revenue for the new hall that, as designed by area architect and lawyer Ray Casella, will accommodate 400 people and feature three classrooms.

"One Vietnamese man with five children in the religious education program sold the gold watch he had from his mother and gave the money despite losing his job. Another elderly Vietnamese man gave money he saved to buy a new refrigerator. People on both sides — Anglo and Vietnamese — have been very supportive," said the Vietnamese-born priest who came here in 1979.

He was ordained in Worcester and his assignments include two years at a Korean parish in New Jersey. There is a small community of Korean-speaking Catholics who also worship at St. Paul's.

Tran, who commutes to the weekday 7:30 a.m. Mass in English from Wilbraham since St. Paul's also has no rectory, said he has always seen building a hall where people can eat, socialize and share their cultural traditions together as key to the success and integration of his parish.

"When I took the assignment to St. Paul's, a priest, who is a good friend, predicted the parish would be closed in three months. I knew it would be very challenging with two different parishes and with the economy in a downturn. However, I resolved to do it and now we are almost there (to the goal of \$1.45 million). People have responded generously in a short period of time," Tran said.

"The Vietnamese want to keep their culture and language while preparing the next generation and we are seeing young Anglo families come back. If we build the hall, we can be a strong family together."

The following interview is with John B. Wynne, a member of St. Paul's since the age of 5, and chair of its finance committee.

Q. When did the Vietnamese and Koreans join the parish? And why?

A. In 2005 the diocese made a preliminary decision to close St. Paul the Apostle Church. Our parish was dwindled down to 125 families, and although we were supporting ourselves financially, we were losing families due to a lack of programs. With no social center or meeting place it was difficult to compete with surrounding Catholic churches, five within two miles.

At a deanery meeting various priests were asked if they would consider taking over St. Paul's Church; only the Rev. Quynh D. Tran showed any interest.

Against the advice of other priests, he agreed to take over as pastor. He had been at Holy Name parish for 10 years developing a Vietnamese following from around Western Massachusetts. However, he shared the parish with the residing priest.

So in 2006, he was assigned administrator of St. Paul. He is now the pastor, and 150 families from the Vietnamese community joined him. The bishop asked Father Tran to allow the Koreans families to hold Mass at St. Paul's twice a month, so in 2009, some 40 Korean families came together to celebrate Mass in the Korean language (with their own priest).

The Korean families are from various home parishes, they come together to celebrate their culture and language, two times a month.

Q. When was the parish established and for whom?

A. The parish was established in 1960. The original parishioners went to weekly Mass at the Blue Moon cafe while the church was being built and was completed in 1962. The diocese purchased enough land to build a rectory and parish hall, however never followed through on design or construction.

A nearby home was purchased for a rectory and was sold in 2005. The cost to build the initial church was close to \$3 million, which put a heavy financial burden on the original families. So much so, the diocese had to spread the mortgage payment over three generations, in order for the families to have cash flow to operate the church. In 2003, the entire mortgage was paid back to the diocese.

Geographic lines were drawn, initially outlining and guiding Catholic families which church to attend. In time though, families withdrew on their own from St. Paul's to join other Catholic parishes that had the facilities and programs better suited to their families needs.

Q. Why is there a need to expand?

A. When Father Tran came to St. Paul's, he immediately recognized that there was no facility for people to gather. Religious school programs were being conducted in various parts of the church, not conducive for learning. People would come to church and go home, for there was no place to gather and interact with each other.

There was a lack of meeting space to counsel families, children and adults who wanted and needed training. There was no meeting hall to plan programs and have social events. He knew that for the different cultures to learn from one another and become one family under God, we would have to get to know each other and work with each other side by side.

Q. How have you been able to raise more than \$1 million dollars?

A. <u>In 2003 the diocese yoked St. Joseph of East Longmeadow, with St. Paul's</u>. The diocese sold off the property at St. Joseph's and allowed \$500,000 from the proceeds to be escrowed in St. Paul's name for future endeavors.

Some \$440,000 has been raised from a capital campaign with our parishioners, of which \$360,000 is secured in the bank, and the balance is paid by families over a three-year commitment. Another \$100,000 was granted from the Davis Foundation, \$50,000 in August of 2010 and another \$50,000 commitment in August 2011.

The diocese sold four adjoining lots on the back of the St. Paul's property, that raised \$300,000. To date we have commitments and cash of \$1.35 million. Our goal is \$ 1.45 million to build and purchase kitchen equipment, chairs, tables and the necessary supplies to open the doors. Our architect, Ray Casella and his Casella Design Associates, have been fantastic in working with our planning committee in design and cost savings.

Q. What have been some of the cultural challenges?

A. Initially, the original parishioners of St. Paul's thought the transition was going to be smooth, the Vietnamese families would join our parish and we would do everything as we always have. Wrong! Blending two cultures into one big family is not simple. Each has its own traditions that are steeped in generations of practice.

One example — the children's education program is currently taught separately, by two different directors. The Vietnamese have more than 100 children in the program and it's designed to be taught in Vietnamese.

Families don't want to change what is working for them, hence we have separation and some division.

Father Tran is acutely aware of the needs of both cultures and is the mentor mediator and spiritual leader for all. He is misunderstood by members of both communities who may feel he is favoring one over the other, or not standing his ground on other issues; however he has a master plan and is not quick to change things to accommodate on group, unless it benefits all.

He recognizes that when the families of both cultures come together in facility, that over time they will come together as one, respecting and learning from one another, and bringing benefits to the surrounding neighborhood and city.

Q. What were the requirements from the diocese?

A. The diocese took almost two years to allow us to move forward with our capital campaign. They wanted to complete their plan for reorganizing local parishes before they gave their blessing. We now have full cooperation, and must submit our progress to the diocesan building committee for approval.

The diocese will not allow us to start building until all monies are secured. We hope to have secured the remaining funds and go out to bid shortly, and commence building this spring with completion by year end 2012.

Source:

 $\frac{\text{http://www.masslive.com/living/index.ssf/2011/12/how_st_pauls_parish_with_its_bilingual_pastor_is_becoming}{a_a_strong_family_together.html}$



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(L-R) St. Mary parishioners Mary Golden, Kathleen Lavoie and Bill Eagan, are part of the crowd over 100 who gathered for a protest rally after Mass on Sunday, Dec. 6, in a effort to save the church from closing next year.

[Turley Publications staff photos by KATIE BREAULT]

By Katie Breault kbreault@turley.com

LUDLOW – Parishioners at St. Mary the Assumption Church in Ludlow have gathered in protest over the decision by the Springfield Diocese to close their beloved church.

The protest was held after the 10:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, Dec. 6, outside the parish. Over 100 church members turned out for the demonstration with signs that read "Save St. Mary's" and "Why close our church?"

Many Catholic churchgoers reacted in shock and disbelief this summer when the diocese announced the closing or merging of 19 Catholic churches in the Hampden and Hampshire counties. As one of the churches slated to close this January, St. Mary's will merge with St. John the Baptist Parish in Ludlow, under the new name of St. Elizabeth Parish, served by one pastor.

St. Mary's parishioners responded to the news this summer by submitting an appeal to the diocese to keep the parish open. Protestors noted on Sunday that their pleas have been met with little explanation about why the church was selected for closing. Following the submission of their appeal, parishioners received a letter dated Nov. 24 from Bishop Timothy McDonnell of the Springfield Diocese, confirming the recommendation to close the church. And in the Nov. 27 issue of the *Catholic Observer*, parishioners read the formal Decree and Order to close St. Mary's.

Parishioners followed up with a hand delivered letter to the diocese last Wednesday, Dec. 2, with alternative solutions in their effort to maintain St. Mary's existence in Ludlow. In the letter, parishioners indicated that they would prefer to "yoke St. Mary of the Assumption with St. John the Baptist", or "keep St. Mary's Church open as a Mission Church of St. Elizabeth Parish whereby there would be limited weekly and weekend service".

John Dryjowicz, chair of the Friends of St. Mary's and one of the protest organizers, said on Sunday that when the Mullin Report (a parish analysis study provided for the Springfield Diocese by John Mullin, director of the Center for Economic Development at the University of Massachusetts) came out several years ago, "we were told at St. Mary's that we weren't going to be touched", Dryjowicz said.

Dryjowicz said parishioners continue to be surprised by the decision since the church does not meet much of the criteria that led to most of the other church closures. He said the parish continues to have one of the largest pew counts in the community at 645, and he added that over one-third of its members are "active participants" who attend weekly Mass and are involved in church ministries. He said the parish is also self-sustaining and continues to meet all its financial obligations on a yearly basis.

Dryjowicz pointed out that one of the other reasons the diocese has selected certain churches for closure is due to the priest-to-parishioner ration. Despite the Catholic community's growing concern over the large number of retiring priests, it is not something St. Mary's parishioners are too worried about, he said. Additionally, Dryjowicz pointed out that according to town planning reports, Ludlow is expected to see an increase in the number of new practicing Catholics in the next 10 years. St. Mary's parishioners were informed at a recent pastoral planning meeting of "rumors" of future building plans for a new church in the northern Ludlow / southern Belchertown area. If the rumors are true, Dryjowicz argues that St. Mary's should remain open to accommodate that growth instead.

In addition to the church's appeals to the Springfield Diocese since the announcement of its closing, Dryjowicz noted that parishioners also recently met with Monsignor John Bonzagni, director of Pastoral Panning for the diocese, who also serves as a canon lawyer. The next step will be to resubmit their appeal in accordance with Canon Law, he said.

"We just hope for a listening ear. We would like to get the recognition of the Bishop", he said. "We would like for him to sit us and explain to us why they're closing a viable church."

Having been involved in church ministry for over 20 years, Dryjowicz said his biggest fear is that the closing will "scatter the church family". While some will attend St. John's, others will opt to go elsewhere, and "unfortunately, some may not go to church anymore", he explained.

"It will have a negative effect on the Catholic Christian community", he said. "This is reverse evangelism".

Indian Orchard resident Paul Arsenault, a 29-year member of St. Mary's, said he is still waiting for more answers from the diocese.

"We are an active, healthy Catholic community that is being scattered. Our biggest thing is we want to know why they're closing us. We never got an answer", he said.

"We have a viable prayers community", he continued. "We don't fit any of the criteria. When they (the diocese) got to us, I think they just got tired. They needed to close churches".

Arsenault said that although the St. Mary's Church building was constructed in 1981, the parish actually started out as an Italian mission church in 1948. For him, the parish has provided him with a "second family".

"We call ourselves sisters and brothers", he said.

Although no longer a member of St. Mary's, Tracy Whitney joined her mother, Ludlow resident Val Perham, a longtime member of the parish, at the protest on Sunday. Whitney said she and her brothers were all raised in the church and that her mother continues to attend Mass there daily.

"This is not a just a building. This is her home", she said.

According to Whitney, the diocese is running the churches in the Catholic community too much like a business.

"This is not a business. How can you downsize faith?" she said. "It doesn't make sense. This is wrong in every way".

Sandy Dolley, a 31-year member of St. Mary's, said parishioners recently collected over 1,100 signatures petitioning Bishop McDonnell to come and speak with the parish members.

"I'm upset that the Bishop didn't come. I want to know why. We don't understand the reason for the closing", she said.



Parishioners of St. Mary of the Assumption Church want answers from the Springfield Diocese about why the decision was made to close their beloved church.



Mary Jerz and Shirley Fitzgerald join parishioners who want more answers about why their church is closing from the Springfield Catholic Diocese.



John Dryjowicz, chairman of the friends of St. Mary's Committee that organized the protest, says closing the church will separate the Catholic community.



Tracy Whitney attends the protest with her mother Val Perham, a member of St. Mary's for over 40 years. Whitney said the Catholic community shouldn't be "downsized" like a business.



Ed Jerz and Connie Minnie, of Ludlow, join their fellow parishioners with protest signs.

Source:

Powered by The Republican

Springfield diocese sells former St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Ludlow



By <u>Suzanne McLaughlin, The Republican</u> on January 06, 2012 at 8:22 PM



The former St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Ludlow has been sold to the Church of the Nazarene.

[The Republican file photo | Mark M. Murray]

LUDLOW – The Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield has sold the former St. Mary of the Assumption Church at 499 East St. to the Church of the Nazarene for \$750,000.

Mark Dupont, spokesman for the diocese, said the church was sold after the diocese made a decision to merge the church with St. John the Baptist Church in Ludlow. The two parishes became the new parish of St. Elizabeth Church.

Dupont said Colebrook Realty handled the sale, which took place after the Protestant evangelical Church of the Nazarene expressed interest in the property.

No spokesman from the Church of the Nazarene could be reached for comment Friday.

The proceeds from the sale will go to the newly formed St. Elizabeth Parish, Dupont said.

He said there is a misconception that the proceeds from the sale of church property go back to the coffers of the diocese. Dupont said that only happens if the closed church has debts which must be paid off.

St. Mary of the Assumption Church closed in January 2010.

Source:

http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2012/01/diocese_sells_former_st_mary_o.html

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