

St. Michael's Parish History

The information on the formation of the Catholic Church in Hardy, AR, and the years prior to the Cherokee Village location, was gathered from various sources. We thank those who took the time to document the early years of our Parish history.

Hardy, AR, in the early 1900's: In the early 1900's, Hardy area's main sources of income were farming, logging and resorts. Peach and Apple orchards lined the dirt road between Hardy and Ash Flat; the Firsco Railroad was buying all the timber for ties for their tracks, and Spring River was a popular vacation place for the people in Memphis. The main attractions in Hardy were two theatres, a bowling alley, a night club, a dance hall, and a big public beach.

The first known Catholics to the area were Godlieb and Bertha Wavrick and their 5 children, who moved to Draft, AR, now part of Cherokee Village, in 1912. As more Catholics moved to the area, they hid their religious affiliation from the general public in order to be successful in business. (Anti-Catholic prejudice was quite prevalent throughout the state.) To dispel fears and misinformation, the diocese sent seminarians to conduct familiarization meetings. These were held at the Shady Ridge School (Hardy). The Seminarians did a good job explaining the faith and answering the interrogation of the non-Catholics, with bibles in hand, but this still did not dispel the fear and prejudices of the people about Catholics.

The Development of St. Michael's as a Mission: In the years prior to the erection of a church building in 1939, the few Catholics living in and around Hardy, AR, had long drives over very rough dirt roads to attend Mass at neighboring parishes such as Thayer, MO, and Hoxie & Paragould, AR. The very first priest who came to this area to offer Mass was Father Raymond J. Morman. Father Morman would use the train to get to Hardy from Paragould. The Wavrick family would meet him at the station to take him to their farm in a wagon. The Draft Post Office (and Store) was in the front room of the Wavrick home. Mrs. Wavrick was the Postmistress, and it was on the post office counter that Fr. Morman would offer Mass. This practice went on for many years. Mass was also offered at the "old" Higgenbottom Funeral Home. The children of the early Catholics would receive their Sacraments at St. Mary's Church in Paragould, AR.

There were intermittent visits by other priests of the Diocese offering Mass at various homes: Rev. Charles Stanowski in 1934; Rev. Otto Butterbach between 1934-35; and Rev. Henry W. Nix from 1935-43. Father Lawrence H. Schaefer, pastor from Hoxie, AR, also came in the 30's to offer Mass. Fr. Schaefer was the one who helped the early Catholics plan and start fundraising for a church in Hardy.

The First Parish Vocation: Sister Mary Philippa Wavrick, OSB, was born Cecilia Ruth, the 1st of five children of Godlieb and Bertha Wavrick, on July 19, 1909, in Burke, Idaho. The Wavrick family moved to Arkansas in 1922, building a home on land they purchased in Draft, AR. Bertha wanted her children to attend a Catholic School, and she found such a school in Paragould, AR, called St. Mary's.

St. Mary's was a boarding school operated by the Benedictine Sisters, and it was there that Cecilia's future life was influenced. She also learned to play the piano there and became an accomplished pianist. In January of 1930, Cecilia entered the Holy Angels Convent of Benedictine Sisters in Jonesboro, AR. Later that year she made her First Profession of Vows, was Prioress from 1954-1966, and died on August 4, 2004.



Mother Philippa

1939

Property Deeded for a Church: On January 14, 1939, approximating one acre, more or less, of the Beck Estate was deeded to Rev. John Morris, Bishop, and his successors, for the use and benefit of the Diocese of Little Rock. The deed had a reversal clause, which stated that it was not to be used for any other purpose, and when no longer needed, the deed would revert back to the original grantor. (Years later, when it was not possible to expand any further and a new church was needed, the land and building could not be sold for profit, but had to be deeded back to the Beck Estate.)

WARRANTY DEED
WITH RELINQUISHMENT OF SOWER

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

THAT we, Mrs. May Sullivan, Theresa Donaldson, Mrs. Ida Travathan, and J.A. Beck, SR. for and inconsideration of the sum of one Dollar and other good and valuable consideration in hand paid by John Bishop Morris, bishop of the Little Rock Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church and his successors the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, do hereby grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the said John Bishop Morris and unto his successors forever, the following lands lying in the county of Sharp and State of Arkansas, to-wit: Beginning at iron stake on the SE corner of the NW 1/4, section 11, Township nineteen (19) North, Range Five (5) West, thence North with Magnetic Declination 4 degrees 30' East, 1000' to the point of beginning, thence North 31 degrees and 20' West 207' thence South 38 degrees 40' West 207' thence South 31 degrees 20' East 207' thence North 38 degrees 40' East 207' to the point of the beginning, containing one acre more or less.

Reversion clause: It is expressly agreed and understood that this conveyance is made for the use and benefit of said Little Rock Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church, and in the event said lands in this conveyance are used for any other purpose, title in fee simple to the same shall irrevocably revert to the aforesaid grantors herein. To have and to hold the same unto the said John Bishop Morris and unto his successors forever, with all appurtenances thereunto belonging.

and we hereby covenant with said John Bishop Morris that we will forever warrant and defend the title to the said lands against all claims whatever, for and in consideration of the said sum of money, do hereby release and relinquish unto the said John Bishop Morris all our right of sower and homestead in and to the said lands.

Witness our hands and seals on this 14th day of January 1939.

Mrs May Sullivan

Mrs. Theresa Donaldson

Mrs. Ida Travathan

Margaret A. Beck (L.S.)

J.A. Beck Sr. (L.S.)

State of Nebraska, Pawnee County, SS.

On this 19th day of January, 1939 before me, the undersigned, a notary public in and for said county, personally came MRS. IDA TRAVATHAN, a widow, to me known to be the identical person described in and who executed the within and foregoing instrument as grantor and acknowledged the same to be her voluntary act and deed for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

Witness my hand and notarial seal at Pawnee City, in said County, the day and year last above written

S E A L My commission expires June 19.1940

Glyse Barton, Notary Public.

STATE OF MISSOURI }

SS

COUNTY OF OREGON }

On this 24th day of January, 1939 before me, Jno Parham a Notary Public, personally appeared J.A. Beck, Sr., and Margaret A. Beck his wife, to me known to be the persons described in and who executed the foregoing instrument, and acknowledged that they executed the same as their free act and deed.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal at office in Thayer, Missouri the day and year last above written.

S E A L My term expires March, 17th, 1939

Jno. Parham
Notary Public in and for said County, and state

STATE OF ARKANSAS }

SS

County of Sharp }

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on this day came before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public within and for the County aforesaid, duly commissioned and acting Mrs. May Sullivan and Theresa Donaldson to me well known as the grantors in the foregoing Deed, and stated that they had executed the same for the consideration and purposes therein mentioned and set forth.

Witness my hand and seal as such Notary Public on this 14th day of January 1939.

Sidney Kelley
Sidney Kelley, Notary Public

Duly filed and recorded this 1st day of February 1939 by Kenneth Spotts D.C.

Deed to

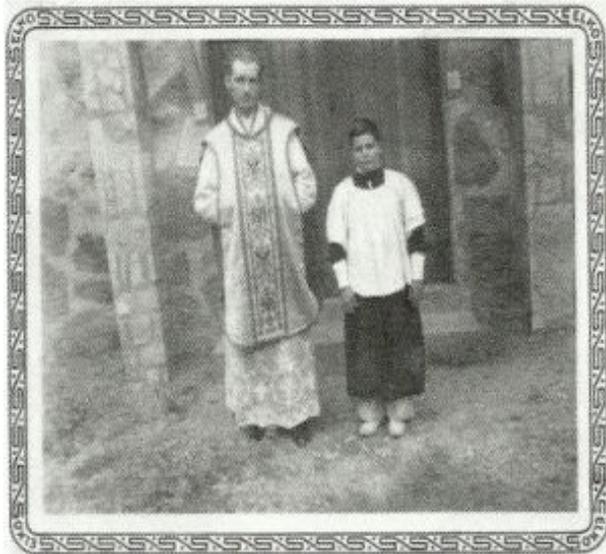
Property in Hardy

The Planning Began: It was said that a generous lady donor requested the church be named in memory of her deceased husband, Michael. Mrs. Waverick, with the aid of several other families, was

very active in the organizing and planning of St. Michael's as a Mission. The Diocese of Little Rock aided the parishioners in erecting a native stone church. Fred Wise, a rock layer, built the church of local native stone. The framing of oak was done by Mr. Avery. Mr. Henning made the doors and wooden candlesticks from cedar. He also made the front door hinges in his blacksmith shop. This church for many years was without water, plumbing or any air conditioning. A wood burning stove near the wall on the left hand side of the altar was the sole means of heating, with the wood being cut and brought in by the parishioners. It's seating capacity was estimated at 75.



Original Stone Church 1939



1939 Fr Schaefer & Johnny Henning

The First Mass: On July 23, 1939, the first Mass was celebrated in the new church building by Rev. Lawrence H. Schaefer, pastor from the church in Hoxie, AR.

1940's



Bishop Fletcher – 1941

Dedication

Dedication of the New Church Building: On April 20, 1941, Bishop Fletcher Dedicated the new church and Confirmed five children. He was assisted by Fr. McCormick, new pastor in Hoxie and priest-in-charge of Hardy, as well as Fr. Joseph Walshe. On this occasion of Dedication and Confirmation, the church was filled, to a very great extent, with non-Catholics. Unfortunately, Fr. Schaefer, who helped with the planning of the new mission church, had been re-assigned from Hoxie to Eureka Springs and was unable to attend.

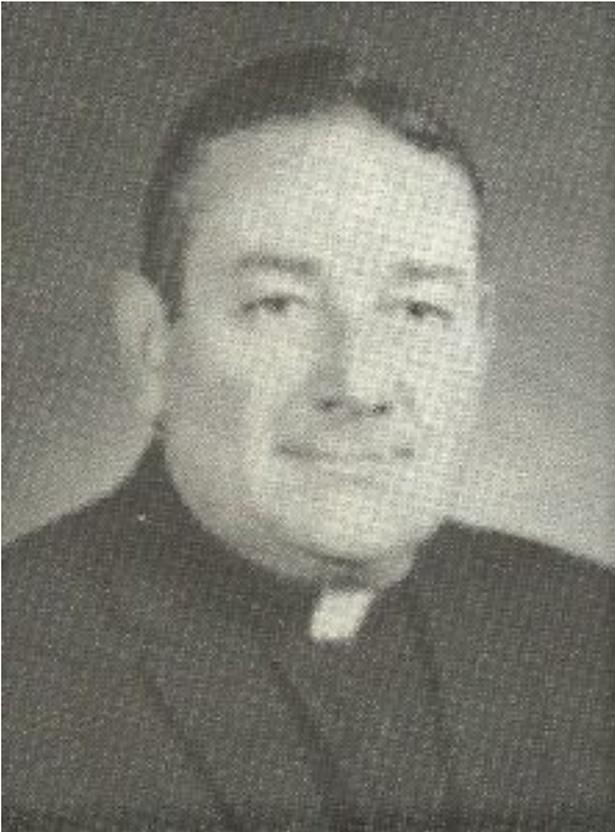
Mass Schedule: In the early 1940's, Mass was still celebrated intermittently in the new church, in 1941 by Fr. E.J. McCormick, in 1942 by Fr. Thomas Reynolds, and beginning in 1944 by Fr. Amos Enderlin. In March of 1945, Rev. S. F. Jacklin, stationed at St. John's Church Engleberg, AR, in a letter to the Bishop, stated that he would say Mass on the Second and Fourth Sundays of the month at St. Michael's in Hardy. This started the custom of the pastorate of St. John's Parish, Engleberg, having the care of St. Michael's Mission. Sacramental records were then kept at St. John's in Engleberg. From Christmas 1949 onward, Fr. Enderlin, priest in charge at the time, agreed to celebrate Mass every Sunday.

Attendance: The early St. Michael's Mission had eight families. Although attendance was scarce, the movement to this area was on. During the winter months the number of people attending Mass would number from 15 to 20. During the summer months, due to vacationers, the number would rise to around 75-100. In the mid-sixties, the church started to show growth, by 1968 the summer Masses were standing room only.

Firsts: The first Baptism, Phyllis Bailey, was on December 2, 1945 by Rev. Stephen F. Jacklin. The first marriage of recorded at St. Michael's was on March 9, 1947 uniting John D. Sullivan and Catherine Lea Henning. The first First Communion was Susan Embrey on Christmas Day 1950. The first

Confirmation was the day of Dedication, Bishop Fletcher Confirmed 5 students. Catechism class was begun after Mass in 1955; it was held in the small room behind the altar.

Until 1975, the priests assigned to the pastoral care of St. Michael's Mission were from the parish in Engleberg:



1945-50 Rev. Amos Enderlin



1946 (Summer) Rev. Charles Diamond

Altar Society: In the late 40's, under Fr. Enderlin, the ladies formed an Altar Society. They made coffee cakes which they sold and served with coffee after Mass, in the small room behind the altar, to raise money for items needed for the new church. As the congregation grew over the years, the coffee cakes were replaced with donuts.

Men's Society: A Men's Society was also formed at this time. Fr. Enderlin would drive 40 miles to attend their meetings.

1950's



1950-54 Rev. James Reynolds



1954-56 Rev. Lawrence Maus

church looking down on all who passed through the door. Today, 2018, it stands on a table inside the nave of the church.

1960's



1958-72 Rev. John Janesko

Parking Lot: In the early 60's, progress was being made under the direction of Fr. Janesko. The men began to work on making a parking lot.

New Organ: In the spring of 1967, Fr. Janesko found a music store in Paragould owned by a Catholic, who offered to take the old organ in trade for a new one. With \$800 in donations, they were able to purchase a new organ which was installed in the back of the church. The store owner also offered to give free music lessons to anyone willing to learn how to play the organ. A young woman from Engleberg offered, and became very adept as an organist. She would travel to St. Michael's with Fr. Janesko to play our organ for Masses and other celebrations as needed. Fr. Janesko had a fine voice and would lead the parish in songs at Mass. Later the organ was moved to the front and a sound system added to the organ and lectern.

Altar Society: In the late 60's, the Altar Society, originally formed in the late 40's, began to meet the 1st Tuesday of each month. The activities of the Altar Society were varied. Besides laundering altar linens and offering Coffee after Sunday's Mass, Raffles and Bake Sales were held to raise money for various

projects. The yearly Bazaar was started in 1971, which helped the ladies in doing their good works, such as buying hosts, wine, candles, vestments, linens, etc, for use when offering Mass.

St. Michael's Men's Club: The Men's Society, begun in the late 40's, reorganized in 1965 as the Holy Name Society. Then in 1968, the name of the organization was changed to St. Michael's Men's Club. The good works of the St. Michael's Men's Club were many, especially in the betterment of the church and the church property. To raise money for their projects they began regular Ham and Bean Suppers. A yearly "Oktoberfest" was begun with sausages and beer. They soon began to attend Mass in a body the 2nd Sunday of each month.

Diocesan Council of Catholic Men (DCCM): In 1968, at the encouragement of Bishop Fletcher, who wanted representatives from all the parishes, the men of St. Michael's joined the DCCM. Through this organization, Bishop Fletcher promoted the organization of Parish Councils in each parish for more involvement of lay persons in various activities of the parishes. The project was very successful.

Expansion Needed: As the growth was still evident in 1968, with standing room only at Mass, a committee was formed, lead by Father John Janesko, to begin planning for an addition to the church. The building fund drive (chicken dinner, raffle of a donated lot of land, and Bingo, along with pledges) raised \$14,410. Together with a \$3,000 grant from the Diocese, and a loan of \$5,000, enabled the addition of more than 1700 square feet, with 900 square feet added to the upstairs (the church upstairs was extended 30' in the back) and an approximate like amount to the downstairs. Other improvements were: indoor plumbing was installed with a septic system; a drop ceiling with lights was added to the upstairs and paneling was installed to cover the sheet rock; new window frames were installed and storm windows added; 34 pews were added; a Confessional and Vestry were added to the front of the church; and a large sign was placed by the highway. A mobile home was purchased in 1969 which allowed Fr. Janesko to spend more time at the mission church, including offering an Anticipatory Mass on Saturday evening during the summer months. Tables, chairs, dishes and silverware were purchased with the Altar Society and Men's Club sharing the cost.



Addition Being Added – 1968



Addition Completed



Mobile Home purchased in

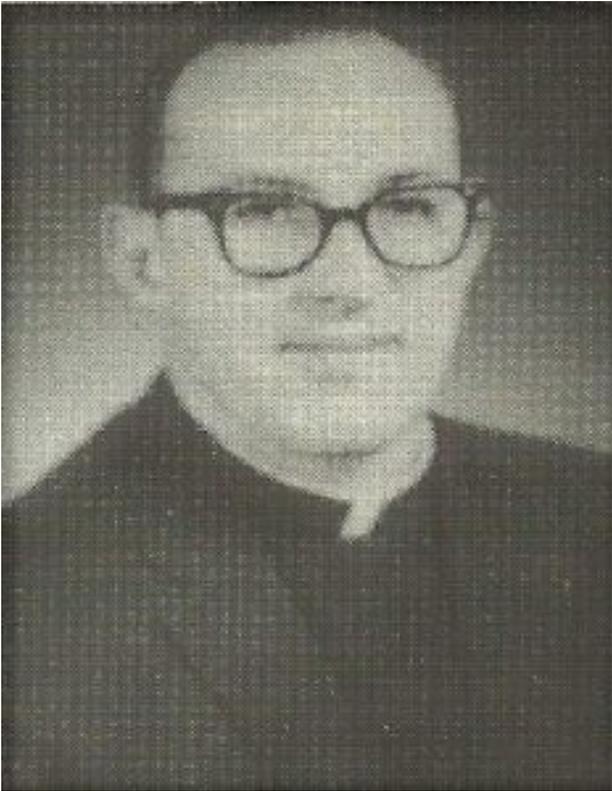
1969

1970's

Air Conditioning Installed: In 1971, an air conditioning system was installed to replace the wall fans, which greatly aided the comfort of all.

Parish Council Formed: In 1971, Constitution and By-laws for St. Michael's Parish Council were ratified; however, it wasn't until September 1974 that ballots were distributed to the congregation and four members of the Parish were elected to the first Parish Council.

Budget Committee Formed: In October of 1971 a Budget Committee was formed to record the Income and Expenses of the parish.



1972-75 Rev. Earl Booth

CATHOLIC BISHOP VISITS HARDY

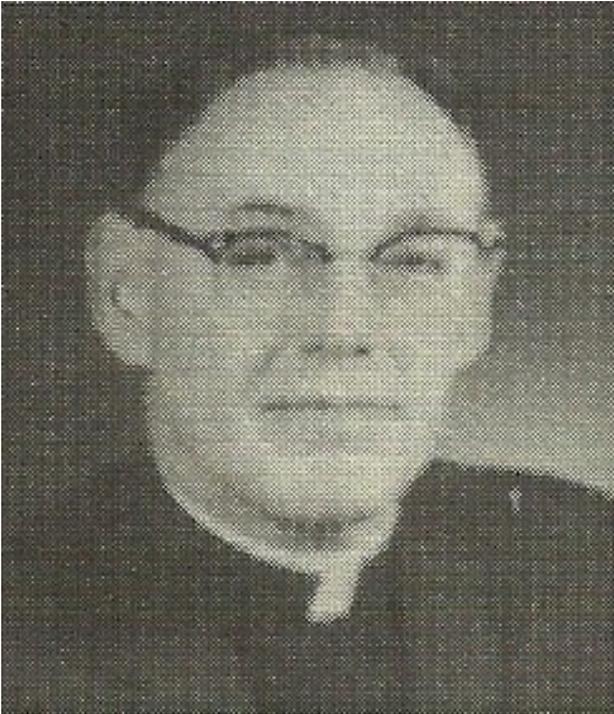


Most Reverend Andrew J. McDonald, Bishop of the Diocese of Little Rock, visited St. Mark's Catholic Church of Hardy on Tuesday, March 21. The purpose of the Bishop's visit was to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation on eleven children and their parents of the mission parish of St. Michael's. One adult from St. Mary of the Mount-Camp in Ingomar also was a member of the Confirmation class. A Mass of Confirmation was concelebrated by Bishop McDonald, Rev. Charles F. Kunkelstein, Chancellor of the Diocese of Little Rock, and Rev. Carl E. Smith, Pastor of St. Michael's Church.

Those assisting the Sacrament of Confirmation were Cheryl Allen, Marie Allen, Robert Clark, Chris Hugo, Gene Hugo, Robert Johnson, Bogie Miller, Mike Olson, Fred Olson, Tommy Olson, Holly Olson, Brian Rapp, Mark Rapp, Greg Robinson, Elizabeth Swartz, Elizabeth Thompson, Rev. Robert J. Swartz, Sr., William Swartz, Sr., Carl Swartz, and Mrs. William Swartz.

Confirmation with Bishop McDonald in March of 1973

Vigil Mass Begins Every Saturday: Up until now, the Anticipatory Mass was only offered in the summer months. But as of May 3, 1975, the Saturday evening Mass was offered every week at 7:15pm. The priest would stay overnight in the mobile home, offering a Sunday morning Mass before returning to Engleburg.



Aug-Nov 1975 Rev. Joseph Quinn

St. Michael's and St. Mary's served by same priest: Before Fr. Quinn came in August of 1975, St. Michael's of Hardy was a Mission served by the pastor from Engleberg, and St. Mary's in Horseshoe Bend was a Mission served by the pastor from Batesville. St. Michael's and St. Mary's, for the first time, shared a priest. Fr. Quinn was the Priest in Charge of both Missions for only 3 months.

In November of 1975 we bid Fr. Quinn goodbye and welcomed our new "Priest in Charge", Fr. Venantius Preske:

Rev. Venantius Preske: On October 23, 1975, Fr. Venantius Preske, formerly a Glenmary Missionary, was accepted into the diocese by Bishop McDonald on a 3 year trial basis. In November he was assigned as "Priest in Charge" of the two Missions, St. Michael's in Hardy and St. Mary's in Horseshoe Bend. According to Fr. Preske, St. Mary's was the larger of the two congregations, so it was in Horseshoe Bend that he resided. St. Michael's owned a mobile home in Hardy in which Fr. Preske sometimes stayed overnight.

First Bulletin: The first Parish Bulletin was distributed this year. (Our guess is Fr. Preske's housekeeper, who helped him with secretarial duties and also taught Religious Ed Classes, was the person who typed it.)

Mission Designated as a "Parish": On December of 1975, Fr. Preske petitioned Bishop McDonald to consider raising both Missions to the canonical status of "Parishes". On December 10, 1976, after boundary lines had been drawn, the Parishes of St. Mary of the Mount and St. Michael were officially established and Fr. Preske designated "Administrator" of both.

DIOCESE OF LITTLE ROCK
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
2415 NORTH TYLER STREET
P. O. BOX 7239
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72217

December 10, 1976

Reverend Venantius Preske
St. Mary of the Mount Church
P.O. Box 4012
Horseshoe Bend, Arkansas 72536

Reverend and dear Father:

By a decree of December 10, 1976, I have established St. Michael, Hardy, Arkansas, as a Parish.
By this letter, I appoint you Administrator of this Parish.

Since you already serve this part of Arkansas with Joyful zeal, I can only encourage you to continue your good work.

With best wishes and asking God to bless you, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Andrew J. McDonald

Bishop of Little Rock

St. Michael's Family Group: In 1976, a Youth and Adult Advisory Group was formed, later known as the Family Group. Their main function became the management and funding, through fundraisers, of the social activities of the parish, ie: Christmas and Easter celebrations, annual parish picnic, Summer Bible School for the children, etc.

Vacation Bible School: During the Summer of 1976, the First Vacation Bible School was organized for parish children conducted by Srs. Geraldine and Conrad from Holy Angels Convent.

Catholic Youth Organization (CYO): A chapter of the National CYO was formed at St. Michael's on March 20, 1977. The teenagers of the parish were all invited to be part of the CYO. They held an annual car wash, and other fundraisers, allowing them to attend the CYO Youth Conventions around the state.

Fr. Preske celebrates his Silver Jubilee Anniversary: On May 29, 1977, Fr. Preske celebrated his 25th Anniversary (actual anniversary date is May 31st). Mass was celebrated at St. Mary's in Horseshoe Bend with Bishop McDonald and former Bishop Fletcher, as well as other diocesan priests and his brother priest, Fr. Felix Preske. Liturgical Music was provided by St. Michael's Choir. Dinner was held at a nearby restaurant.



Fr. Preske – 25th Anniversary – May



29, 1977

Fr. Preske's Anniv. Dinner –

seen here flanked by Bishop McDonald (left) and Bishop Fletcher (right), also to his right is his brother, Fr. Felix Preske)

Knights of Columbus Formed: On July 20, 1977, a pre-organizational meeting was held to form a council of the Knights of Columbus. The name chosen for this new council was the Saint John Neumann Council of the Knights of Columbus. On August 24, 1977, the new Council was formed with the admission of 16 new members, 9 members transferring from other councils, and 6 members re-

instating. The Knights of Columbus dedicate service to church, family, community, youth and the elderly. In May of 1978, competing against 697 other councils, they received the Star Council Award for 1977-78, and a Knights of Columbus Day in May was declared by the Mayor of Hardy.

Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (DCCW): An organization of Catholic Women was formed in the North Deanery of the Diocese on November 14, 1977. This new district of DCCW, the North Deanery, was comprised at this time of St. Michael's of Hardy and St. Peter's of Mountain Home. The work of the DCCW covered a wide range of activities from Liturgy, to Communities, to International and Organizational projects at local, state, national and international levels.

Resolution for Building the New Church in Cherokee Village: On August 10, 1976, a resolution was adopted by the Parish Council that St. Michael's Parish be moved from its present location to a more suitable one as soon as reasonably possible. Cooper Communities, Inc, who were developing Cherokee Village, were offering plots of land to the area churches to build in Cherokee Village. Three sites were offered to St. Michael's Church: Commercial Park Site along Hwy 62, Town Center or Thunderbird Center. That fall, the Commercial Park Site was selected as the new Church site. A building committee was set up consisting of Robert F. Clark, Cliff Rowland, Paul Ruez, Harry Kresse, Richard Fink and Joe O'Brien. The early meetings of 1977 were taken up with ways of appropriating monies for building a new church and studies of tentative plans and sketches. The first submittal to the Diocese, for their permission to build, was carried down to Little Rock in early June. That June, the firm of Brackett and Krennerich of Jonesboro was engaged to architect the plans for the new church, for the second submittal to the Diocese. On July 20th, a parish meeting was held; the dream of a new church became a reality when the Parish Council approved the architects plans for the new Church. By September the approval of the third and final presentation to the Diocesan Building Commission was received by Robert F. Clark, Chairman of the Building Committee. Clifford Rowland, as Chairman of the Building Finance Committee, had arranged interim financing and a resolution was passed by the council authorizing him and Rev. Venantius Preske to sign notes in the name of St. Michael's Church. A Memorial Program was put into effect and advertisements were sent out for Contractor bids on the new church. Our Patron, St. Michael, came to the rescue in January of 1978 when Parker Construction Company of Marion, Arkansas, was awarded the building contract.

Ground Breaking: The ground breaking ceremony was conducted on the site, at 11:30 a.m., on Sunday, February 26, 1978, by Fr. Preske with parishioners and guests. Wesley Parker of Parker Construction Company, George Krennerich of the Architecture Firm, Hale Jackson of Cooper Communities, Inc. and Robert F. Clark, Building Chairman, turned the first earth at the site. A dinner to celebrate the ground breaking was held at the Italian Villa, where speeches and good food prevailed.



Fr. Preske – Groundbreaking

Ceremony – Feb 26, 1978

The new church was designed to preserve the character of its sloping, wooded site. Seating for 380 in the main auditorium on the upper level and a chapel with seating for 45. Total area of 9,500 sq. feet with 3,786 sq. feet in a partial basement. The lower level had a hall, kitchen, mechanical and utility spaces, and rest rooms.





Corner stone from the old



stone church in Hardy
inside the front door of church in C.V.

Plaque





Aerial picture



of the new church

St. Michael



Window

Holy Spirit



Window

Side Altar with Mary in left corner of



church

Side Altar with St. Joseph to left of Cry



Room/Chapel windows

New Holy Family



corner cabinet

New Holy Family



Cabinet

Altar with Tabernacle in Bl. Sacrament



Chapel (now Cry Room Chapel)

The Side Altar for the

Tabernacle was later moved into the Sanctuary on the left side of the Altar.



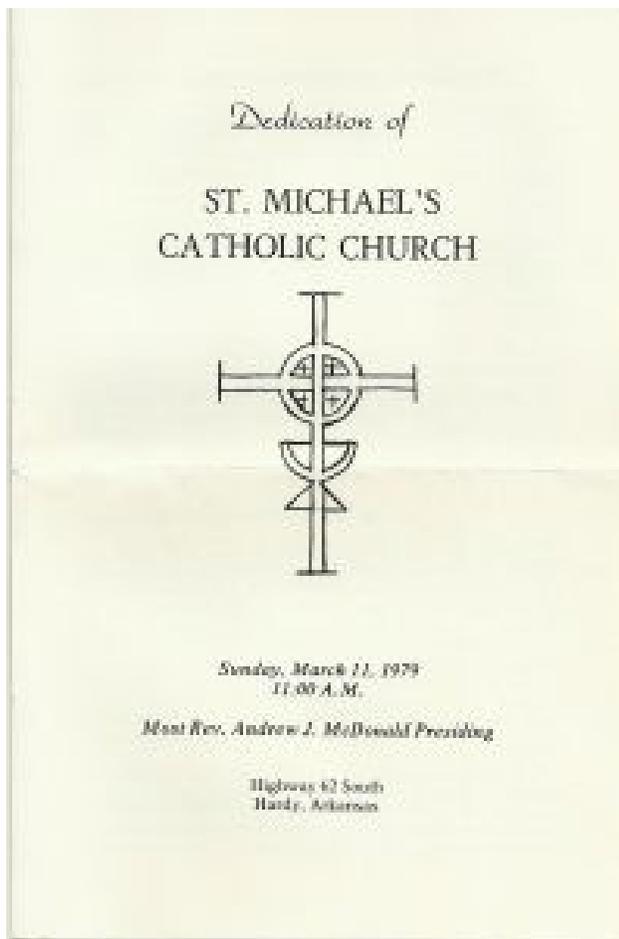
Baptistry with Paschal Candle – note Tabernacle

seen thru windows in Chapel

Rectory Purchased: A special Parish Council meeting was held May 15, 1978, and resolved to purchase the Doust House near the church for a rectory. Subsequently, the mobile home which was used for a rectory was sold.

First Mass: The first Mass in the new church was offered on February 4, 1979.

Dedication of the New Church in Cherokee Village: On March 11, 1979, Bishop Andrew McDonald Dedicated the new church building. At that same ceremony, the Bishop officially incardinated Fr. Preske into the Diocese of Little Rock and appointed him "Pastor" of both St. Michael's and St. Mary's Parishes.



3/11/79 Dedication of New Church



[<Click here to read article](#)

Altar Society Christmas Bazaars: In 1971, the Altar Society began holding annual Christmas Bazaars to raise money for vestments, candles, and other items needed at church for the offering of Mass. This was the Altar Society's main fundraiser each year. The women of the parish made their homemade crafts all year long to sell at the annual Bazaar. The event was held each 1st Saturday in November and included activities for children and adults, as well as a Luncheon. The annual Christmas Bazaar continued through 2007 after which they explored other means of fundraising, including Country Breakfasts, Rummage Sales, Bake Sales with Silent Auctions, Bingo Fundraisers, even Bakeless Bake Sales. Membership in the Altar Society grew smaller and fundraisers became more difficult. In 2017, the Finance Committee approved a 2nd collection three times a year to benefit the Altar Society.



Last Bazaar in Hardy Church 1977



Last Bazaar in Hardy Church 1977



Last Bazaar in Hardy Church 1977



First Bazaar in new Church



1979

First Bazaar in new Church



1979

Bazaar 1985



Bazaar 1985



Bazaar 1987



Bazaar 1987



Bazaar 1996



Bazaar 1996



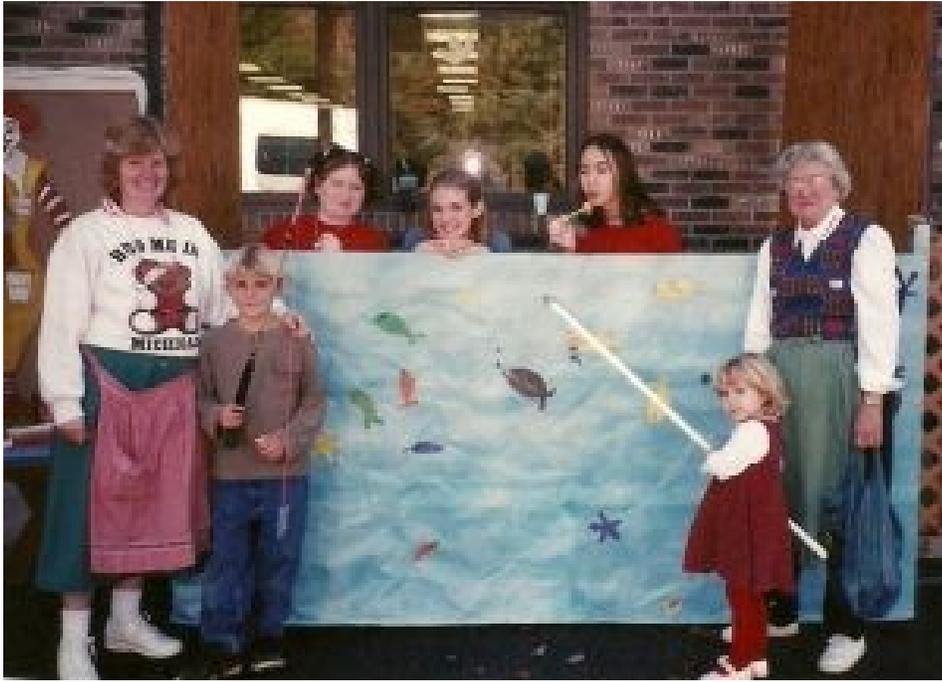
Bazaar 1998



Bazaar 1998



Bazaar 2001



Bazaar 2001 – Kids games



Bazaar 2001



Bazaar 2001 – BINGO

Vacation Bible School: Vacation Bible School was held during the summer, on and off throughout the years. In 1980, Vacation Bible School was held for 2 weeks. Classes were held for 55 students, grades Kindergarten thru 8th grade. The high school students and parents assisted the teachers, Srs. Geraldine Homer, Conrad Frankenberger, and Kathleen Blanchard from Holy Angels Convent, along with Sr. Elizabeth Bornhoft (Cecilia Orosz' sister) from CA.

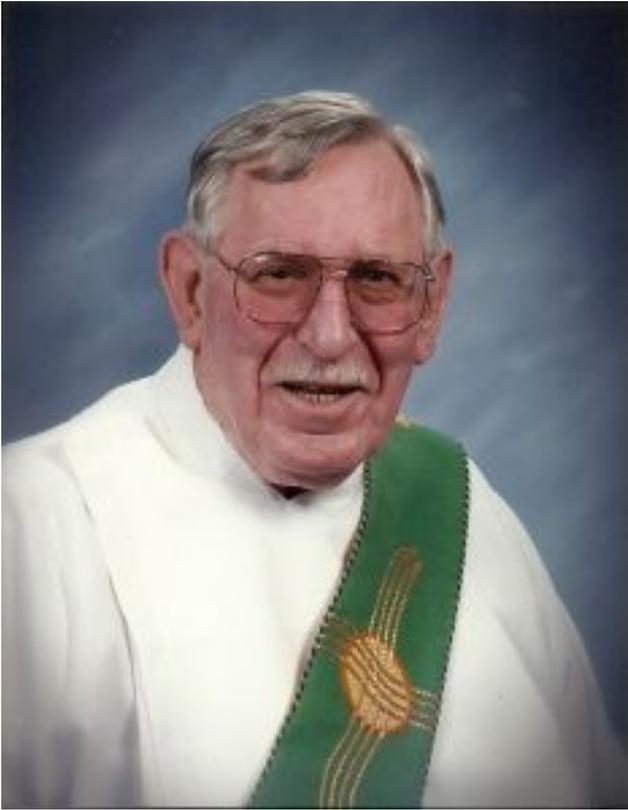


Vacation Bible School 1980

Our Parish Deacons

On November 7, 1981, Robert Clark and Cliff Rowland were graduates of the first Diocesan Diaconate Class.





1981 – 2002 **Dc. Robert Clark**



Dc. Bob and Virginia Clark

Dc. Bob died in 2002 while still active in ministry at St. Michael's. Virginia stayed in Cherokee Village for a few more years, then moved to Jonesboro be closer to children.

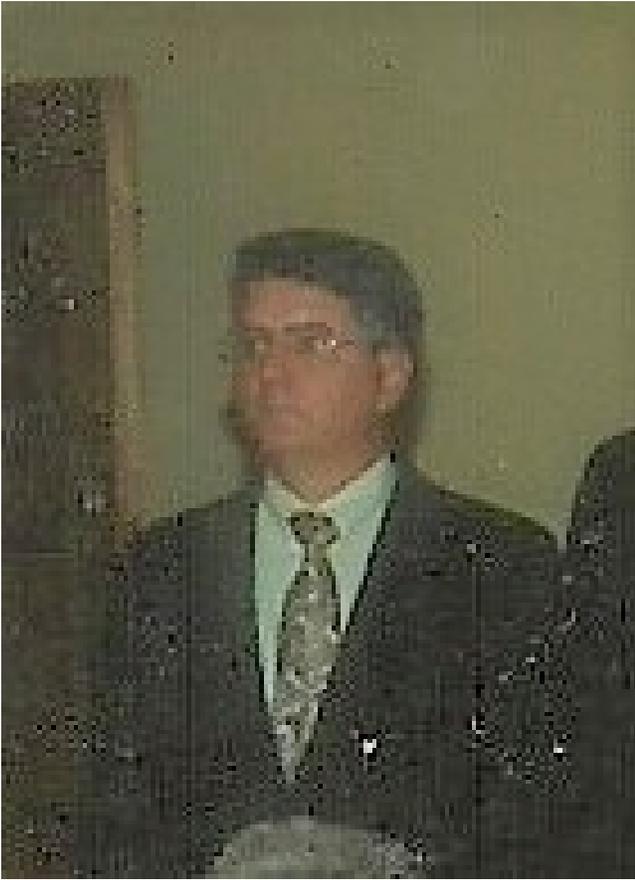


1981 – 1983 **Dc. Clifton Rowland**



Dc. Cliff and Mary Lou Rowland

Dc. Clifton's ministry was short. His wife, Mary Lou, died in August of 1982, and Clifton died in May of 1983. They were both only in their mid-60's.

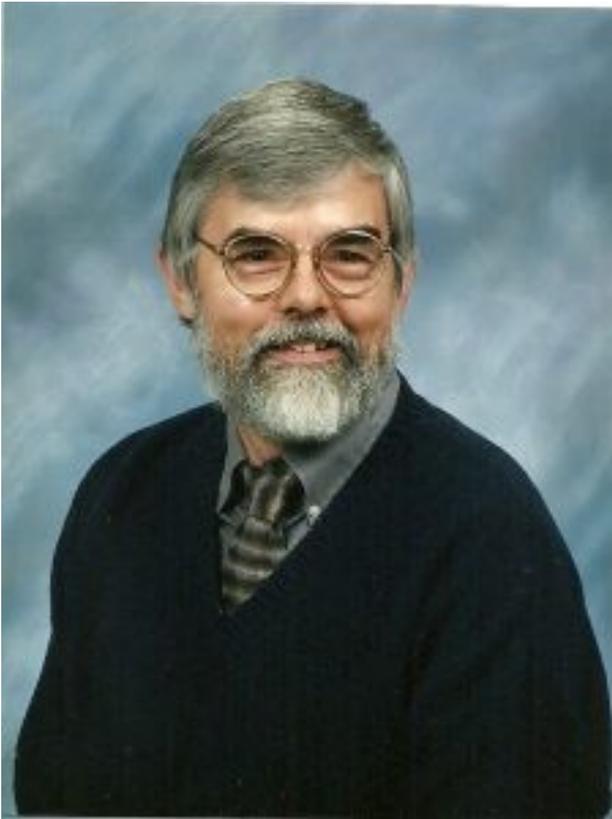


1980's Dc. Victor Stepka



Dc. Stepka visiting parish in 1992

Dc. Stepka transferred to the Jonesboro area.



1990's – 2002 **Dc. Michael Cumnock**

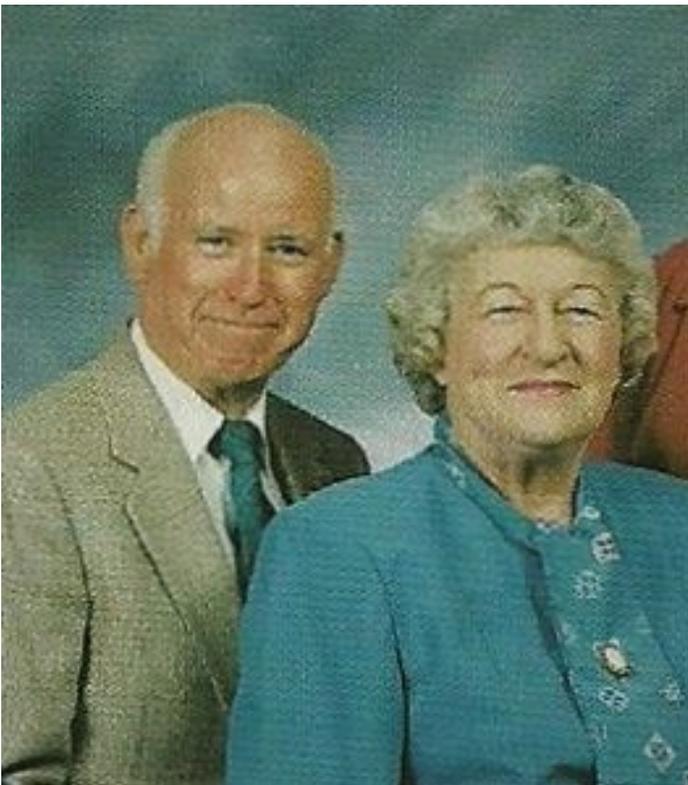


Dc. Mike and Sarah Cumnock

Dc. Mike was in a bad car accident in 2002, which took a year of physical therapy to recover from. He transferred to St. Mary's Parish in Batesville once he was able to resume active ministry again, and is still active there (as of 2018).



1996 – 2005 **Dc. Anthony Ludolph**



Dc. Tony & Dolores Ludolph

Dc. Tony and Dolores introduced the Schoenstat devotion here. In 2005, while still active in ministry here, they decided to move back to San Antonio, where they were originally from, and where the US Shrine to Our Lady of Schoenstat is located.

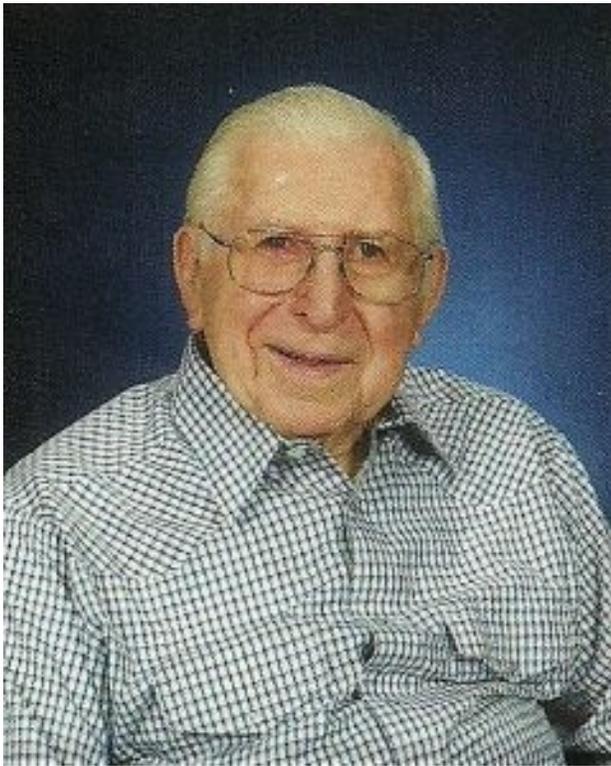


2000 – 2014 **Dc. James Thompson**



Dc. Jim and Helene Thompson

Dc. Jim retired from active ministry at St. Michael's around 2010 due to physical limitations. He and Helene remained in Cherokee Village until 2014 when they moved to Michigan to live with their daughter. He died in 2017.



2005 – 2015 **Dc. Raymond Siwek**



Dc. Ray and Marie Siwek

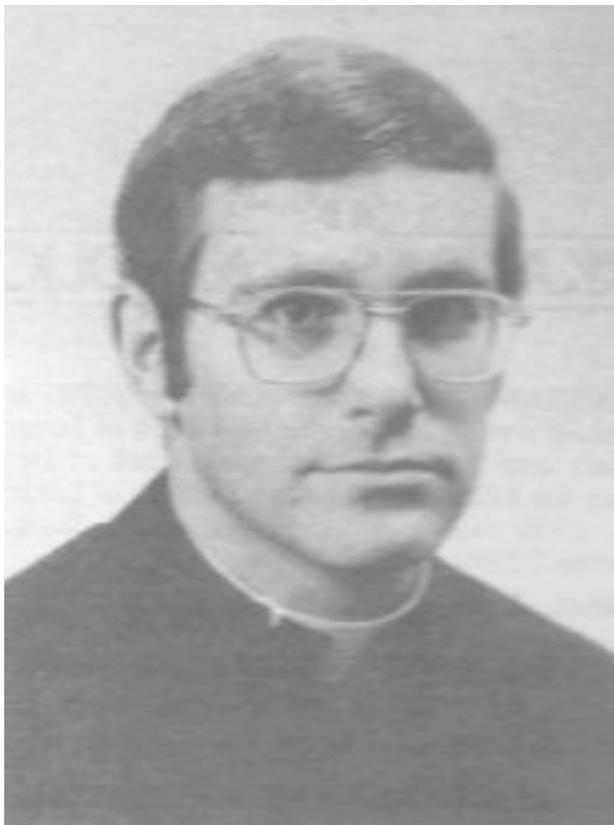
Dc. Ray and Marie moved to Cherokee Village in 2005. He was only able to serve as a deacon for a couple years due to physical limitations. He and Marie remained in Cherokee Village until Ray's death in 2015. Marie then moved to assisted living in Georgia to be closer to children.

1980's

In June of 1982 we bid farewell to Fr. Preske and welcomed our new pastor Fr. Herman Baltz.



Farewell Party for Fr. Preske



1982-84 Rev. Herman Baltz

Rev. Herman Baltz: Fr. Baltz was a native of Pocahontas. He made it known that he always wanted to go sky gliding, so Dorothy Wege made him a glider on a stick (see picture below). Fr. Baltz had some serious health issues and died following surgery in August of 1987. He was only 40 years young. RIP!

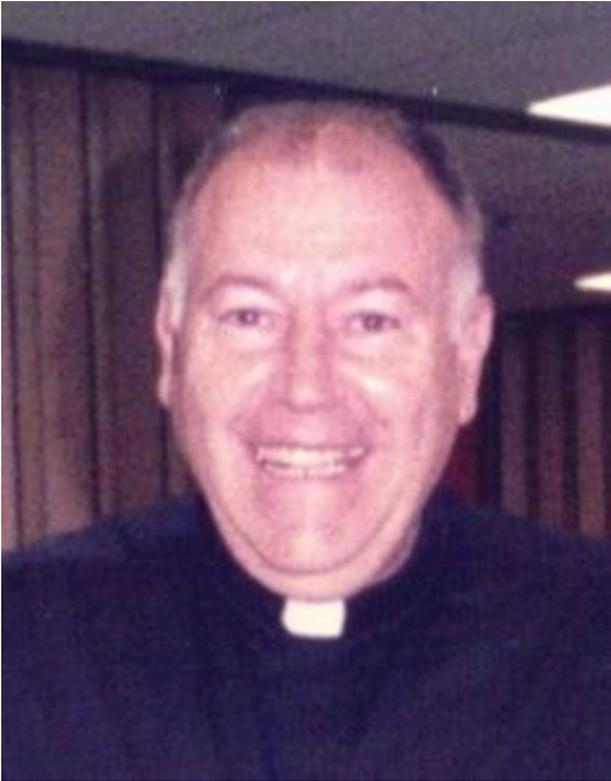
Carillon Chimes Donated: In December of 1982, Dc. Cliff Rowland donated Chimes in memory of his wife, Mary Lou. The bells were set at certain times of the day to chime the hour, followed by a tune. The cabinet where the mechanics for the chimes were housed was behind the altar back drop. The music was reel to reel. In the early 2000's, the unit had not worked for several years, so we decided to have it repaired, but it didn't last long. The technology had changed so much, everything was going digital. We could have replaced the unite entirely, to the tune of many thousands of dollars, but with some neighbors complaining when we had them going again, that the chimes disturbed them, the decision was made not to purchase new ones. When the new metal roof was put on in 2011, the speakers that projected the chimes were taken down. And when the sanctuary was remodeled in 2013, the metal cabinet behind the altar back drop was removed allowing for more storage space back there.



Fr. Baltz – Dec '82 with

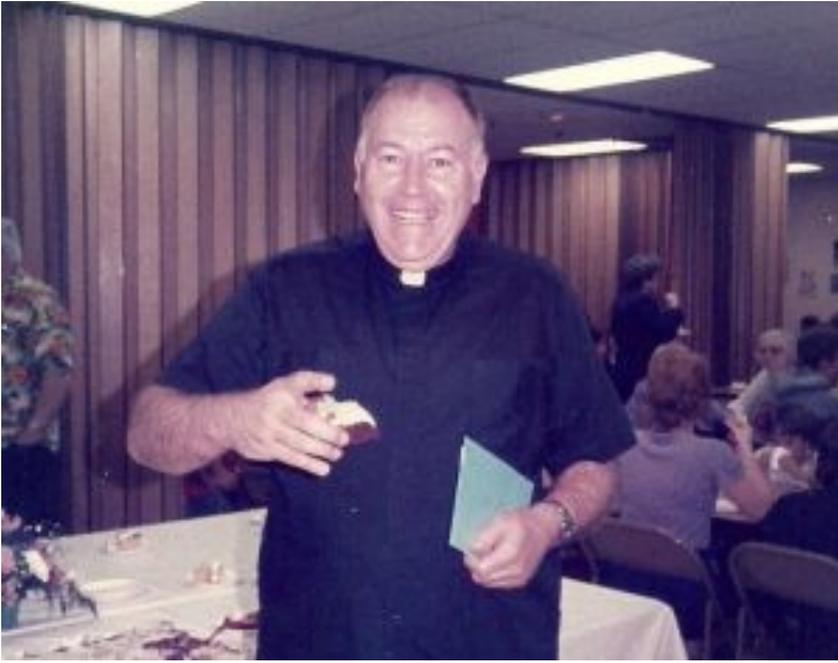
glider made by Dorothy Wege

In June of 1984 we bid farewell to Fr. Baltz and welcomed new pastor, Fr. Fred Zarilli.



1984-85 Rev. Fredrick Zarilli

In June of 1985 we bid farewell to Fr. Zarilli and welcomed new pastor, Fr. Francis Malone.



Farewell Party for Fr. Zarilli



Welcome Party for Fr. Malone



1985-86 Rev. Francis Malone

Fr. Francis Malone: Fr. Malone graduated from Law School in 1989 with a degree in Canon Law. He was later elevated to Monsignor and is currently Chancellor for Ecclesial Affairs for the Diocese of Little Rock (2018).

Easter 1986: Easter was celebrated with a new Risen Christ Tapestry and Tulips, which were planted around the property and along the sidewalks.



Easter 1986 – New Tapestry

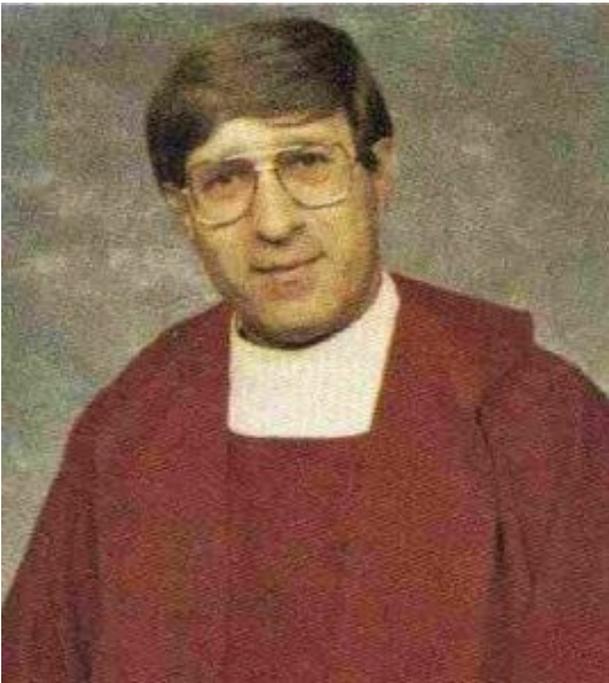


Easter Tulips 1986

In June of 1986 we bid farewell to Fr. Malone and welcomed new pastor, Fr. Ralph Esposito.



Farewell Party for Fr. Malone



1986-92 Rev. Ralph Esposito

Director of Religious Education: Sr. Cecilia Shannon, OSB, of Holy Angels Convent, was assigned as DRE.

Octoberfest: In 1986, the Men's Club offered the first annual Octoberfest.



Men's Club Octoberfest 1986

Ceiling Fans: In 1897, ceiling fans for the church were donated by Estelle Bradtke.

Marian Grotto: On May 29, 1988, Fr. Esposito dedicates the Marian Grotto on the church grounds. The statue of Our Blessed Mother was donated by Joe and Irene Kollross.



Grotto in 1988



Grotto in 2018

Garage Added to Church Property: One thing the church lacked was storage. In 1998 a 3-stall garage was added to the church property in the upper parking lot. This became the storage for church decoration and supplies, as well for outside grounds maintenance tools. The KCs put a freezer in here as well for overflow, especially when there was a parish event they were providing the food for. It is said that Fr. Ralph used to work on cars in there with some of the youth from the parish.

KC's Oktoberfest 1988: In 1988, the Knights of Columbus took over the organization of the Oktoberfest (spelled with a "K" now).



KC Oktoberfest 1988

Fr. Esposito's Birthday: In 1989 we celebrated Fr. Ralph's birthday, his twin brother came for the occasion!



Fr. Ralph and his twin brother

Golden Jubilee Mass: On July 16, 1989, St. Michael's celebrated 50 years since the first Mass with a Golden Jubilee Celebration and Mass.

[Click here to read the Cherokee Villager newspaper article.](#)



Present were Bishop McDonald (seated center), and pastors: Fr Preske (seated on far right), Fr Esposito (current pastor, seated to left of Bishop), and Fr. Mawhorr (seated to right of Bishop, he filled in for a couple months when a pastor was ill). Standing are Dcs Stepka and Clark, along with some Benedictine Sisters from Jonesboro (including Sr. Philippa Wavrick, center, daughter of Godfrey and Martha Wavrick,

founding family).

Outdoor Christmas Decorations 1989:



Christmas 1989



Christmas 1989

RCIA: Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults began here in 1989. These are the official classes now conducted in the Catholic Church for the instruction of adult Catechumens (those who are unbaptized) and adult Candidates (baptized Christians of other denominations) who wish to join the Catholic Church. The classes run from September to Easter, with Catechumens and Candidates being received into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil Mass.

1990's

Joyful Noise Kitchen Band: A Kitchen Band was formed in 1991, lead by Mel Hettinger. It was composed of mostly St. Michael's parishioners, but later others in the community joined in. They

participated in many annual Christmas Parades in Hardy and Ash Flat and put on 35 performances a year for various groups. There were no tryouts to join, the purpose was to just have fun and make people laugh with them. They stayed together until 1997.



New Organ; A new

organ was purchased and dedicated in October, 1991. We still have this organ today (2018).

Mortgage Paid in Full: In May of 1992, the loan for the new church was paid in full and plans were made to put a new roof on the church and rectory.

Fr. Esposito's 25th Anniversary of Ordination: In 1992, Bishop McDonald came for a Silver Jubilee Celebration for Fr. Ralph. He also ceremoniously burned the original mortgage with the parish.



Silver Jubilee Mass 1992



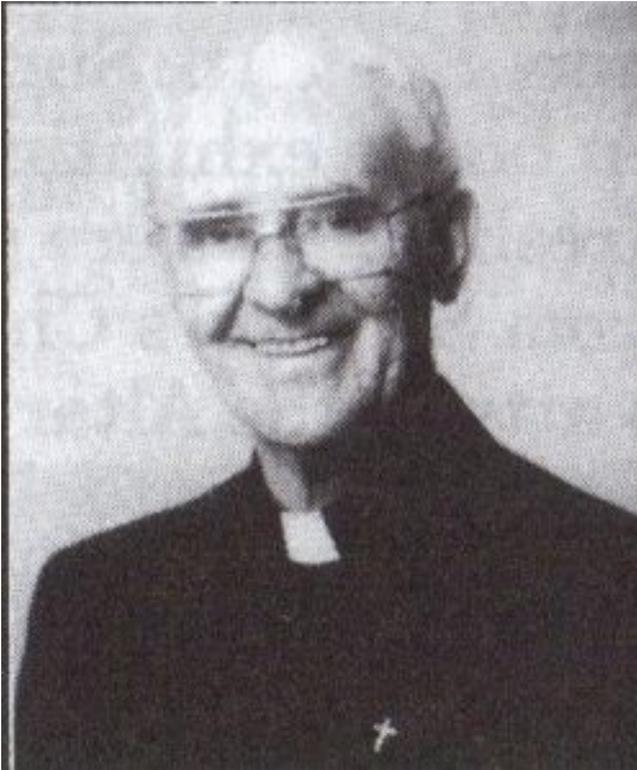
Bishop McDonald with Fr.



Esposito 1992 Assisted by Dc. Bob Clark, Bishop McDonald burns the original mortgage (1992).

I

In June of 1992, we bid Fr. Ralph goodbye and welcomed interim pastor, Fr. Laval Couture.



June 1992 – Jan 1993 Rev. Laval Couture



Fr. Couture at

Parish Picnic in 1992

Rev. Laval Couture: Fr. Couture was here for only 7 months until a more permanent pastor could be assigned. He left in January of 1993. Dc. Bob Clark and various visiting priests provided services for our Parish each Sunday until a new pastor could be assigned the following June.

New Railings Inside and Out: In 1992, new handrails were added along the walk way from the handicapped parking into the side door. New handrails were also added at the altar steps for the safety of Eucharistic Ministers and Lectors.

New Director of Religious Education: In the summer of 1992, Sr. Cecilia Shannon was reassigned from Jonesboro, and Cecilia Orosz took over as our new DRE.

Christmas Decorations 1992:



Indoor Nativity 1992



Outdoor Nativity 1992

St. Michael's Memorial Gardens: In April of 1993, a "Columbarium" was added to the outside of the building with the help of Trustees: Howard Gibbon, George Glass and Ernst Wege. A St. Francis Statue was purchased and placed inside the walls. When the Columbarium was expanded in November of 1997, St. Francis was moved to the front lawn during construction, where he remains today (2018). A Sacred Heart Statue was then purchased for the Memorial Gardens.



4/23/93 – Bishop McDonald Dedicated the



Memorial Gardens

St. Francis Statue 1993



St. Francis Statue 2018

In June of 1993 we welcomed our new pastor, Fr. Earl Johnson.



1993-97 Rev. Earl Johnson, SJ

Rev. Earl Johnson, SJ: Fr. Earl, a Jesuit from Shreveport, LA; served in a couple parishes in AR in the 90's before returning to LA. He developed Alzheimers and was cared for at an Ignatian Community in New Orleans. Fr. Earl was a rescuee from Hurricane Katrina in 2005; however, he developed pneumonia and died.

Feast of Corpus Christi 1993: We celebrated the Feast of Corpus Christi with a beautiful new canopy made by Ruth Zuercher and Mary Lorence. The Canopy is still used today for Eucharistic Processions. Dc. Bob Clark lead the Procession this year.



Corpus Christi 1993



Corpus Christi 1993



Corpus Christi 1993



Corpus Christi Celebration

1993 (Fr. Earl)

Christmas 1993 with new pastor:



1993 – Fr. Earl



Christmas Party 1993

St. Michael's Rosary Makers: In 1949, Br. Sylvan Mattingly, CFX, from Louisville, KY, founded Our Lady's Rosary Makers, after being hounded by the words of Mary at Fatima. There are now Rosary Makers Guilds in all 50 states and many foreign countries answering the call of the missionaries to send Rosaries to them. In February of 1994, Fran Pentengell saw a request for Rosaries for the Missions in our Sunday bulletin and brought this request to the **April 1994** Altar Society meeting. It was voted on and approved to start a Guild here at St. Michael's with 13 of the Altar Society members agreeing to be part of it. With no funding for supplies, the Altar Society agreed to give them a monthly donation. Later a Memorial Fund was started which then helped pay for supplies. (For a \$5 donation, 10

Rosaries would be sent to the missions with the name of the donor's deceased loved one. With these Rosaries, a letter was included with the request to pray for this deceased person while using the Rosary.) St. Michael's Rosary Makers officially joined Our Lady's Rosary Makers, and with their annual dues of \$2, they received a monthly newsletter listing the Missions who are requesting Rosaries, along with their mailing addresses. At their monthly Guild meeting, the members would decide which Mission they would send their rosaries to, usually mailing packages of 200 at a time. Today (2018) the Rosary Makers are still making Rosaries and hold their monthly meeting in the Church Hall after Mass during the Coffee and Donut social hour.



St. Michael's Rosary Makers –

1994

Oktoberfest: In 1994, at the annual Oktoberfest, organized by the Knights of Columbus, the St. Michael's Kitchen Band entertained. (Note the addition to the church was underway.)



Oktoberfest 1994



Oktoberfest 1994



Kitchen Band at Oktoberfest –

1994

Addition to the Church: In February of 1994, a meeting was held to discuss the addition of 6 classrooms in the upper level of the church, expanding the church hall, and adding a new kitchen. Ground breaking began in the Fall of 1994 and the new 4,000 sq. foot addition was completed in 1995. A formal Dedication was held on August 20th. The new addition included five new classrooms, two new offices, new kitchen and enlarged dining hall, which will seat up to 300 people. Total cost around \$240,000.





Expanding the church hall



Adding Classrooms &



Offices

New addition



complete

Adding an elevator

Dedication of the New Addition and Shrine to the Unborn: On August 20, 1995, Bishop McDonald came and formally dedicated the new addition. He also blessed the Shrine to the Unborn, a Knights of Columbus project.



Bishop McDonald in 1995

(Shrine to the Unborn behind him)



Shrine to the Unborn today

The Cry Room doubled as a Chapel for Weekday Mass: In 1995, after the addition was complete, in order to save on electricity for heating the main Sanctuary, Fr Earl would have weekday Masses in the Cry Room Chapel.



1995 – Mass in the Cry Room



Chapel celebrating Mass in the Cry Room Chapel

1995 – Fr. Earl

Mardi Gras 1996:



In June of 1997,
we bid farewell
to Fr. Earl and
welcomed our
new pastor, Fr.
James Mancini.



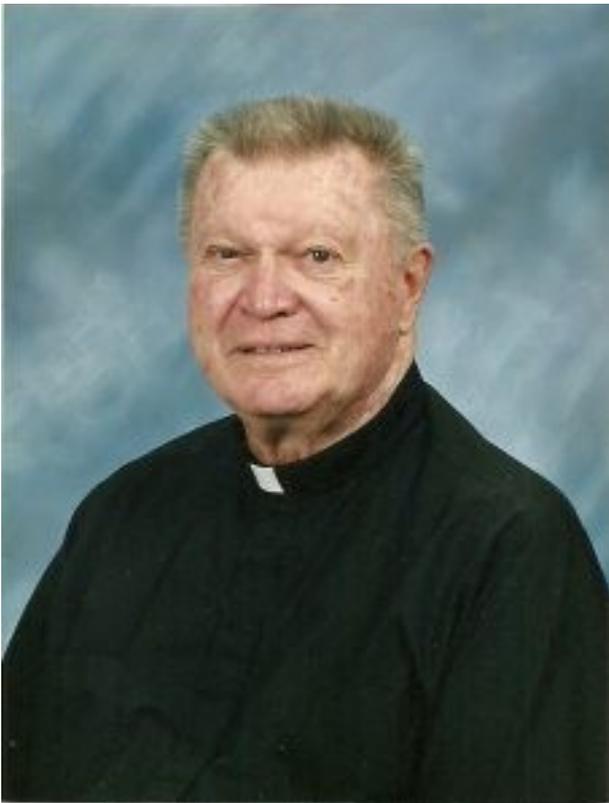
1997-2001 Rev. James Mancini



Welcome Party for Fr. Mancini

Rev. James Mancini: Fr. Mancini (not many called him Fr. Jim) was a very charismatic and prayerful man. He began many devotions here, and during his tenure, the parish grew in size and was very active. His prayerfulness was known in the community as well and people of all faiths came for his

intercessory prayer. Fr. Mancini came early every morning to set up for Mass and sat on a chair in the Sanctuary facing the Tabernacle to say his morning breviary. Then a half hour before Mass he would go into the Confessional for any last minute Confessions. He often was in the Confessional after Mass, as well. Fr. Mancini took Mondays off, but Tuesday – Friday could be found in his office 9am – 5pm. He was very active in the planning of Liturgical celebrations with the consultation of the Liturgy Committee. Fr. Mancini would always answer his phone, no matter what time day or night. If you called at 3am with an urgent prayer need, he'd stay on the phone praying with you, and when you hung up, he'd remain in prayer. Fr. Mancini was the diocesan liaison for the AR Catholic Charismatic Renewal; he was also the Diocesan Exorcist. Fr. Mancini was often away, performing Exorcisms, teaching at the Diaconate Classes once a month, giving spiritual direction, and had an active part in the diocesan Retroville Program for those needing guidance in a difficult marriage. While he was away, Fr. Preske, then retired and living locally, and Fr. Tony, see below, would fill-in. Fr. Mancini was loved by all and left some mighty big shoes to fill when he left.



1997 – 2004 Rev. Anthony Wilwerding

“Fr. Tony”: In 1997, Fr. Anthony Wilwerding (known as the “Rosary Priest”), a diocesan priest from Omaha, Nebraska, and retired Army Chaplain, moved into the area. He offered a Mass every day, in *addition* to the pastor’s Mass. Fr. Tony had a great devotion to Our Lady and began every Sunday homily with: *“Pray the rosary every day, and if you have a family, gather them together to pray the rosary. Young people need prayer; families need prayer; we all need prayer.”* The parishioners had this mantra of his memorized; in fact, you could hear the children saying it along with him! Fr. Tony loved going to the prisons to visit with the inmates; he’d catechize them, baptize and Confirm them, offer Mass and hear their Confessions. He also loved visiting the nursing homes and the homebound. Fr. Tony loved

being with people, and they with him. He would organize a social event just for the reason of getting together. Fr. Tony's favorite gathering was Saturday morning brunch after Mass in the Parish Hall; he'd pay for the groceries, ask the ladies (who all loved him) to cook the meal, and invite everyone present. In 2004, Fr. Tony moved back to Nebraska where he owned a condo in a complex for retired priests. He died in January of 2016.

Addition onto the Columbarium: In 1997, with most of the crypts sold, the Columbarium Committee decided it was necessary to build an addition to the Columbarium. The St. Francis statue was moved to the front lawn while the work was being done, and when finished, a Sacred Heart Statue was purchased for the Columbarium.



Columbarium Addition



1997 Sacred Heart Statue added 1997 (St Francis statue was moved to the front lawn)

BINGO: In 1997, after much discussion with Fr. Mancini about offering BINGO at St. Michael's as a means of paying off the debt from the new addition, as well as a means for socialization for

community members, Isabelle Wiest, along with her daughter, Dana, and other dedicated crew members, began organizing BINGO every Thursday evening, and every 1st Sunday afternoon, in the Parish Hall. Because gambling was not allowed in AR, all BINGO Halls were shut down for a period of 1 1/2 – 2 yrs around 2006-7. A law was passed in Nov. of 2007 allowing charitable gambling, and a year later, BINGO began again.



Dedicated Bingo Crew

December 1998 – Magnificat Ministry Began: Magnificat, a ministry to women, meets 3-4 times per year with a Luncheon (for women only) followed by a witness testimony. Fr. Mancini's first exposure to the Magnificat Ministry was while on retreat in LA. He decided to organize our diocese's first chapter of Magnificat here in our deanery. In the beginning, there was great involvement of the parishioners from Batesville, Mtn Home, Horseshoe Bend, as well as Cherokee Village. The Luncheons would be held at various restaurants in each of these areas. Due to the cost of the luncheons increasing, and board members being mostly from St. Michael's Parish, most of the Luncheons are held now at St. Michael's Parish Hall.



Magnificat banner made by Marguerite MacAulay



Ruth Anne Vitko, the first Coordinator, helped Fr.



Mancini get this organized.
Director, Fr. Mancini

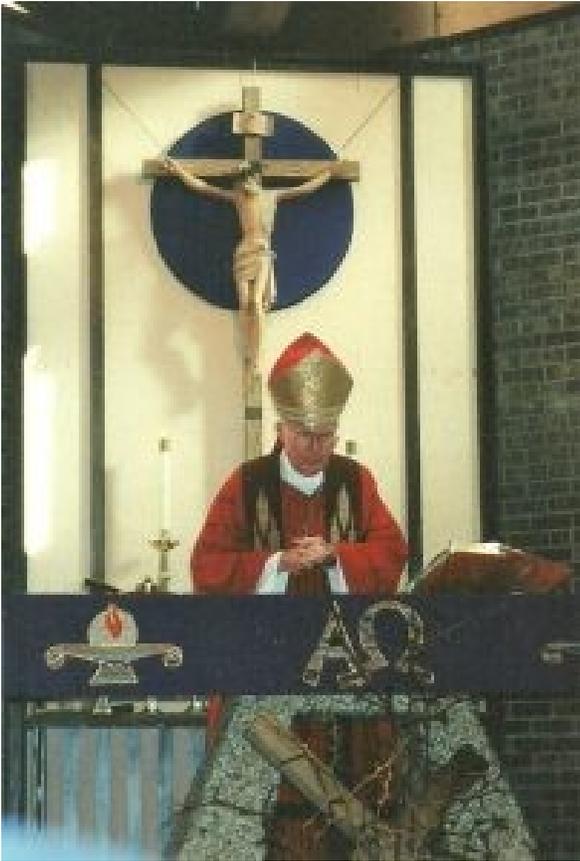
Magnificat's Spiritual

Latin Mass: In 1998, Fr. Mancini agreed to allow the priests, from the Order of the Fraternity of St. Peter, to offer the Traditional Latin Mass here at St. Michael's. The purchase of a local home was made by some who preferred the Latin Mass; this home was given to the Fraternity priests assigned here to use as a rectory. Mass at this time was offered 7 days a week. The Latin Mass was allowed to keep their weekend collection for purchasing needed vestments, sacred vessels, linens, etc, as well as paying St. Michael's Church rent for the use of the building.

St. Michael's Messenger: In 1998, with the encouragement of Fr. Mancini, Helen Shinavar undertook the task of editing a bimonthly parish newsletter, *St. Michael's Messenger*, (it became quarterly with the change of pastors in 2001). Fr. Mancini felt it was an important means "to inform and teach" his parishioners. Included in the newsletter was a section "Ask Father" to which parishioners were encouraged to submit questions. Parishioners and parish organizations were also invited to write informative articles for the newsletter; Anniversaries and Birthdays were listed; Holy Days and Saints Feast Days were discussed and explained; Bible Study Reflections were often included; a "Who's Who in the Parish" article in each publication would focus on a couple or family, where they were from, and what brought them to our area; and often a bit of humor. Helen spent a lot of time on these newsletters and did a spectacular job putting it all together and editing the articles (often writing many herself). Her health prevented her from continuing, and so the Summer 2007 edition of the *St. Michael's Messenger* was her last publication. (Helen died in Dec 2010, RIP!)

Prayer Chain: Helen Shinavar also began the Prayer Chain around this time. She set up a phone tree and would pass on urgent prayer messages when she received them. There was also an email Prayer

Chain. One of the persons on the phone tree would send out an email message with the prayer requests to those who signed up to be on the email side of the Prayer Chain; this saved making many phone calls. After Helen got too sick to continue making the calls, the Prayer Chain went to the email version only and still remains so today (2018).



Bishop McDonald – March 1999 – Confirmation Mass



Bishop McDonald poses for pictures with Confirmation

Candidates

Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration: Fr Mancini had a devotion to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Since his arrival, he promoted Eucharistic Adoration an hour after each weekday Mass, and until 6pm on Wednesdays. With donations from parishioners the Cry Room was converted to double as an Adoration Chapel: the pews, which were angled to face the main altar, were reinstalled to face the back wall; vertical blinds were purchased for the windows; 4 regal glass globes were purchased to hold the candles on the Chapel Altar; and a team of parishioners designed a hand woven tapestry (\$5,000) to place on the back wall behind the Monstrance. With all this done, St. Michael's began Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration (24/7, except during Mass) on December 8th, 1999. In 2007, with the realization our parish was growing smaller, we began to cut down the hours, omitting weekends; then the middle of the night hours were cut; by 2012 we had Eucharistic Adoration M-F, 10am to 10pm, which remains so today (2018).



Opening Day – Dec. 8, 1999 (the tapestry was not ready



yet)

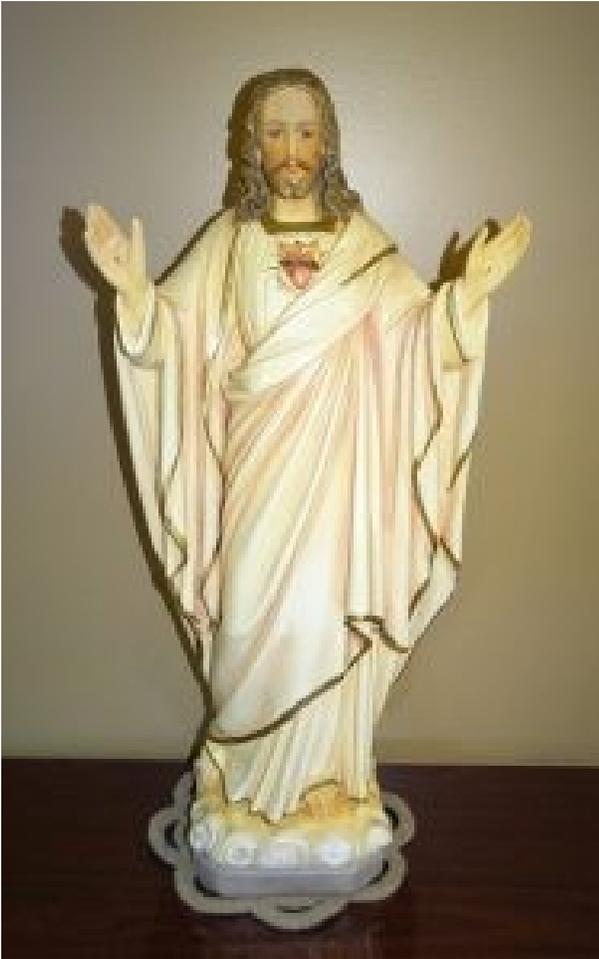
Adoration Chapel 2019



Adoration Chapel 2019

Burning the Mortgage: Due to the efforts of Isabelle Wiest, her daughter, Dana, and a team of dedicated BINGO workers, we were able to pay off the debt for the new addition. Seen below in Dec. of 1999, is Fr. Mancini and Isabelle Wiest, along with help of Tommy Tucker, burning the mortgage at the Parish Christmas Party.





Allegra Peterson donated this beautiful Sacred Heart Statue to the church around this time. It sat in the main Church Office until it was moved into the Adoration Chapel/Cry Room in 2019.

“Star of the Sea”: In the 1990’s, Founder, Bob Pearson, along with anonymous investors, developed the community known as Star of the Sea, for those conservative Orthodox Catholics who were finding it difficult to live in areas of the country with liberal Catholics attending liberal churches. Bob, his wife, Kathy, and their 3 biological children, along with 6 adopted children, traveled the countryside (always with several pregnant teenagers in tote, whom they were caring for) speaking at Conferences about the truths of Abortion (around the time of Roe v Wade). They opened several Pregnancy Centers; among their honored guests at the opening ceremonies of two of their Centers were Fulton Sheen and Mother Theresa of Calcutta. Everywhere Bob went he heard the same thing, “I wish I could live in a community with like-minded Catholics.” So begun the dream and development of Star of the Sea. (The Pearsons settled in this area of the country because they had relatives here.)

St. Michael’s was a flourishing parish at the time Fr. Mancini was here, mainly due to the many families that moved here because of Star of the Sea. Some who came ended up settling in nearby cities and towns due to the lack of housing at Star of the Sea. However, the differences of opinion among those who lived at Star of the Sea, stemming from which Mass they attended, Novus Ordo (English) vs Latin Tridentine, to how they raised and taught their children, to differences in home

construction, began to drive a wedge between the residents and drove many families away. Bob Pearson was a devout man with a big heart, he'd literally give you the shirt off his back whether you were a supporter of his or not. But he was not a businessman and made some errors in judgment trying to please everyone. He was taken to court over housing issues and ordered to leave the area. The judge declared the corporation of "Star of the Sea" dissolved.

At this time, there were also resentments felt at the parish level as arguments over which Mass was "holier and more reverent" were played out in the local paper. Parishioners began to feel negatively toward all Star of the Sea residents, making the assumption they were all part of the Latin Mass and part of a cult. With the extremists on both sides of the Latin Mass issue having moved away, negative resentments toward the Latin Mass attendees have settled down at church and it's quite peaceful.

The "community" of Star of the Sea is non-existent today (2018) with 3/4 of the homes there occupied by non-Catholics. The Catholic residents who still live there are devout Catholics, many attend daily Mass and who work hard for our Parish and neighboring community.

2000

Press conference reveals man who will lead diocese

By Mike Hargett
EDITOR

Pope John Paul II accepted the resignation of Bishop Andrew J. McDonald and appointed Archbishop Robert James (Peter) Sartain as the sixth bishop of Little Rock.

Bishop-designate Sartain, vice general and pastor in the Diocese of Memphis, is scheduled to be ordained Monday, March 6 in Little Rock. The location has not been decided.

The announcement was made Jan. 11 during a press conference at St. John Catholic Center in Little Rock. While both bishops were aware of the appointment since Dec. 22, it was a closely guarded secret until the announcement was made in front of the media and diocesan employees.

"I am a native. Transferring to serve both my people and having lived my entire life, except for seminary years in Memphis, there always felt a special longing to Arkansas," Bishop-designate Sartain (appointed "Sartain") said in a prepared statement.

The new bishop made his diocesan employees feel at ease when he said three of his experiences visiting family and friends in the state. He said he has played for the Cardinals in Arkansas every five days. In several of his sermons:

"I am pleased and excited that Arkansas will now be my home," he said.

He was quick to thank Bishop McDonald for helping him in the transition.

"John Paul II made the most expressive deep thanks to Bishop Andrew McDonald, who has helped others pay their own way to work with kindness and good humor," he said.

Bishop McDonald noted that the most of his necessary biblical brothers.

"The Holy Father has kept it in the family," he said with a laugh. "That makes us brothers."

— Bishop McDonald

See Announcement, page 9



Father J. Peter Sartain shakes hands with his predecessor, Bishop McDonald, before a press conference at St. John Catholic Center in Little Rock.

Rev. Peter Sartain of Memphis

appointed Bishop of DOLR 2000

[Click here to read newspaper article, "Press Conference..."](#)

[Click here to read newspaper article "Ordination...", Part 1](#)

[Click here to read newspaper article "Ordination...", Part 2](#)

St. Philomena: A statue of St. Philomena was ordered and donated by Marguerite MacAulay for our Adoration Chapel. Amazingly, she arrived on her Feast Day – August 11, 2000!!! St. Philomena adorns the walls of our Adoration Chapel still today (2018).

AN EPISCOPAL ORDINATION

Ordination joins two dioceses

2,600 Catholics get seat to watch Arkansas history

By Mike Hargett
EDITOR

The Mississippi River was no longer a barrier to the dioceses in Little Rock and Memphis joined Monday, March 6 in the ordination of Bishop J. Peter Sartain.

Archbishop Emile Francis Beckman of Oklahoma City ordained Bishop Sartain the sixth bishop of Little Rock, asking the 2,600 Catholics in attendance at Robinson Auditorium to "respect him as an apostle of Christ."

"Pray for him and the archbishop said, Bishop Sartain responded in his address at the conclusion of the three-hour Mass, saying, "My prayer has been that I will give myself generously, wholeheartedly and without reserve each day to our Heavenly Father, in imitation of Jesus Christ the Priest, accompanied by the grace of the Holy Spirit poured out today in the sacrament of holy orders."

The ordination Mass was a melding of the two neighboring dioceses. Bishop Sartain of one, two close friends.

See Ordination page 9



Bishop J. Peter Sartain blesses the congregation following his ordination at Robinson Auditorium in Little Rock.



St. Philomena

Fr. Tony celebrates his 80th Birthday: The parish celebrated Fr. Tony Wilwerding's 80th birthday with him in December of 2000. A new processional crucifix for the parish was purchased by parishioners in his honor. It is still used today (2018).



Fr. Tony with his two biggest fans on his



b'day.

New Processional Crucifix

St. Michael Statue: Around the year 2000, the St. Michael statue was added to the church grounds, greeting people as they turn into the parking lot. It was donated by the Corso Family, long time members of St. Michael's Parish, in memory of their deceased loved ones.



St. Michael – Donated by Corso Family

2001

Open House: In March of 2001, an Open House was held at St. Michael's. Each ministry set up a table in the Parish Hall and parishioners were invited to come get information with the hopes they would become active in some ministry. Of course, non-Catholics were also invited to come see all that we do at St. Michael's in hopes that they would be interested in joining our parish family.



Open House March 2001

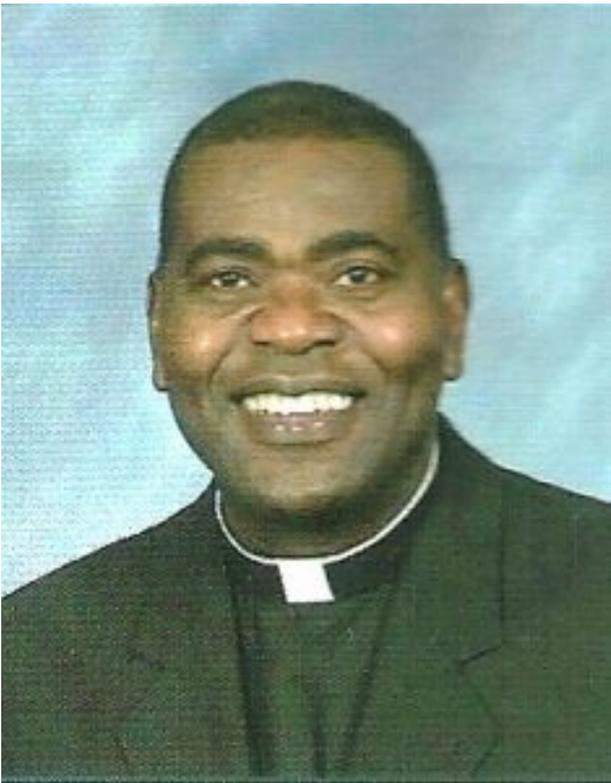
In June of 2001, we bid farewell to Fr. Mancini and welcomed our new pastor, Fr. Kevin Atunzu.



Farewell party for Fr. Mancini (Fr Preske and Fr. "Tony" Wilwerding on his right)



Farewell party for Fr. Mancini



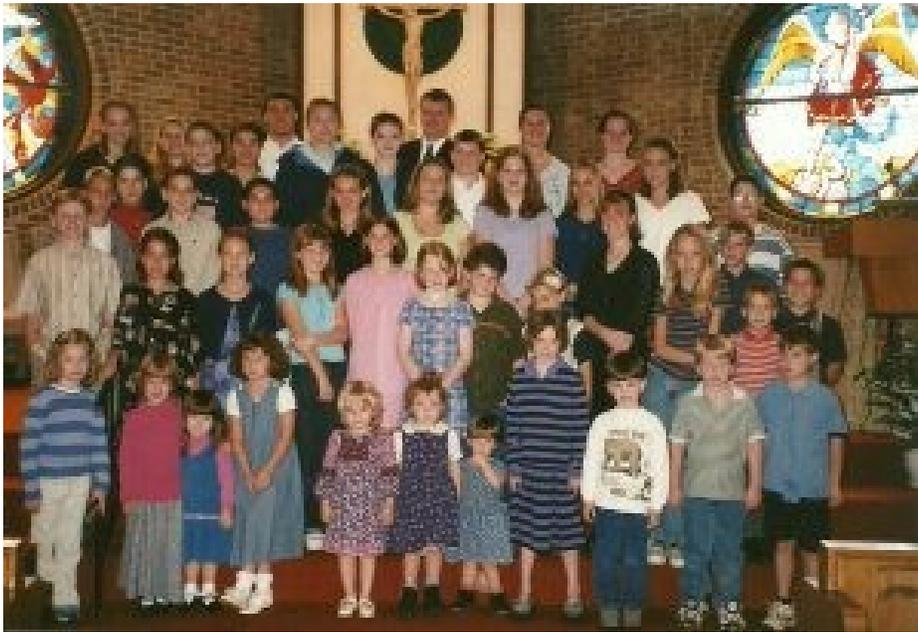
2001 – 2007 Rev. Kevin Atunzu



Welcome party

for Fr. Kevin

Rev. Kevin Atunzu: Fr. Kevin was an extern priest from Nigeria. He had studied in France and California and had degrees in Spiritual Direction and Psychology. He had a devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and began an hour of Eucharistic Adoration on the main altar before every Mass. He was a strong promoter of Eucharistic Adoration and Contemplative Prayer with parishioners; he also held classes while serving here on Centering Prayer. Fr. Kevin loved to spend time in prayer and spiritual reading; he felt exercise, as well as sleeping and eating well, were just as important in one's spiritual life. Fr. Kevin served in several parishes of the diocese after ours, and later, incardinated (joined) into our diocese. He is currently retired and living in Little Rock (2018).



Our CCD Children – 2001



Bishop Sartain visits St.

Michael's Parish 2001

St. Michael's and St. Mary's share a pastor: Before Fr. Preske was assigned to St. Michael's and St. Mary's Missions, we were a Mission Church overseen by the pastor in Engelburg, and St. Mary's was a Mission Church overseen by the pastor in Batesville. When Fr. Preske came to St. Michael's and St. Mary's Missions, he was given the assignment of "Priest in Charge" of both, and it remained so for many years. In 1995, a retired Franciscan Missionary, Fr. Fred Schneider, became pastor of St. Mary's Church. When he left in October of 2001, St. Mary's care came back to the pastor at St. Michael's Church. The parishioners of St. Mary's were used to a daily Mass while Fr. Schneider was there, but it was impossible for Fr. Kevin to offer daily Mass at both churches. So he asked Fr. Venantius Preske, at the time retired and living in Horseshoe Bend, to help offer the Masses there. Fr. Kevin offered the

Thursday and Sunday morning Masses at St. Mary's, while Fr. Preske offered the rest of the weekday Masses, as well as the Saturday Vigil Masses and Holy Day Masses.



Deacons Bob Clark, Tony Ludolph, Ray Siwek and Jim Thompson at the 2001 Altar Society Christmas Party (Dc. Mike Cumnock, at this time, was recovering from injuries resulting from a serious auto accident.)

2002

World Youth Day with Pope John Paul II: In July of 2002, Bernie and Rose Brandenburg, Youth Group Directors, along with 16 of our youth and 2 other adult chaperones, traveled in a converted school bus (which they hand painted) to Toronto Canada to see the Holy Father.

Catholic teens travel to Toronto to see Pope

DAVID COOK
2003
 Managing Editor

A busload of teenagers from St. Michael's Catholic Church in Charlevoix Village gathered last week on a cross-to-a-billion journey to see Pope John Paul II in Toronto July 28.

The group of 16 youths and four adult chaperones pulled out of a parking lot full of parents, friends and well-wishers from St. Michael's after Father Kevin

Amundt-Dowd they left.

Rene Brandenberg, who is making the trip along with her husband, Dennis, said the youths will return changed from the pope's World Youth Day.

"It's a pilgrimage," she said. "We are definitely hoping it will change their lives and make their commitment to Christ. You don't get to something like this and not come back a better person."

See Pope, Page A11

< [Click here to read article to left](#)

[Click here to read Part A of the 2nd article written upon return](#)

[Click here to read Part B of the 2nd article written upon return](#)

2003

New Holy Family Cabinet: In May of 2003, Bingo paid to have a new corner cabinet made for the Sanctuary to house our statues of St. Joseph with Baby Jesus and Mary.



Photo: George

TORONTO BOUND: Youth from St. Michael's Catholic Church was goodbye just before leaving for Canada's first Pope.

Pope

Continued from Front Page

He said the event is expected to draw around 1 million youths from around the world.

The group will camp three nights on the way to Toronto and two nights on the way back, with a night at Niagara Falls.

The highlights of the event will be a papal mass celebration July 28, Brandenberg said.

The teenagers have been preparing for the trip for two years. Preparations included painting the bus orange and yellow, buying clothes from the thriftstore, and a hair makeover of the pope is posted on the side.

A newspaper was carrying the teenagers' gear as well as news and songs from and before the trip.

The group from St. Michael's is the largest from Northern Brandenberg said. The youths will also meet with Bishop of Little Rock Peter Sartain.



Former Holy Family Cabinet



New Cabinet

Latin Mass Update: Fr. William Define was assigned here in the summer of 2003. Prior to him coming, it was decided by the FSSP superiors, that the priests assigned in CV and Little Rock needed to have some time in “community”. So Fr. Define would spend Monday evening through Friday morning

in Little Rock with the other Fraternity priest assigned there, then spend Friday evening – Monday morning here in CV. He offered a Latin Mass here every Friday evening and morning Mass on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Fr. Define was here the longest of all the Latin priests, 4 years. Most seemed to serve for a year or less; we hardly got a chance to know the others before they were reassigned. Fr. Define was very attentive to the needs of both the people who preferred the Latin Mass and those who preferred the Novus Ordo (English) Mass. He once said, “When we die, God is not going to ask which Mass we attended, just how much love we had in our hearts.” Fr. Define regularly visited our homebound parishioners and those in the Nursing Homes, and heard most of our Confessions. He was loved by all at St. Michael’s and in Little Rock.

Monsignor Rev. James Mancini: During Mass on Nov. 4, 2003 at Christ the King Church in Little Rock, Bishop Peter Sartain presided over an investiture ceremony to confer the title of “Chaplain to His Holiness John Paul II” on 6 priests of the Diocese of Little Rock, giving them the honorary title of Monsignors. Our former pastor, Fr. Mancini was among them. Below in the newspaper picture they are seen holding their papal documents. Msgr. Mancini is the second from the right. [Click here for a clearer picture and to read the caption below.](#)



2004

5 Year Anniversary of Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration – Fr. Venantius Preske, our former pastor, was retired and living in a private home in Horseshoe Bend. (He helped fill in at various parishes when their pastors were away.) When our 5th year anniversary of PEA was approaching, Fr. Preske offered to help us plan it and be with us to celebrate the occasion. It

was well attended.





2005



Confirmation with Bishop

Sartain & Fr. Linus

Feast of Corpus Christi: In the spirit of the "Year of the Eucharist", on the Feast of Corpus Christi, we set up the 4 traditional altars on the church grounds and celebrated with a Corpus Christi Procession, stopping at each of the altars for the traditional readings, hymns and prayers.



Corpus Christi Procession



2005

Corpus Christi



Procession 2005

CC

Procession – Awaiting the arrival of Our Lord at the last altar



CC Procession – Benediction

at the last altar

The Year of the Eucharist: Oct 2004 – Oct 2005 was designated by the Holy Father as the Year of the Eucharist. Our Diocese celebrated the end of the Year with a Eucharistic Congress in Little Rock. St. Michael's Church was represented by a bus load of parishioners who traveled to Little Rock with Fr. Kevin for this one day event.



Eucharistic Congress Procession



Eucharistic

Congress in LR

Goodbye Dc. Tony and Dolores: In 2005 we bid farewell to Dc. Tony and Dolores Ludolph and their adopted daughter, Michelle. Dc. Tony, who often gave us the weekday homily, and Dolores, were always filled with the Joy of the Lord. They also had a deep devotion to Our Lady of Schoenstat, which they brought to our parish. The Ludolphins moved back to the San Antonio, TX, area where they were formerly from.



Farewell Party for Dc. Tony and



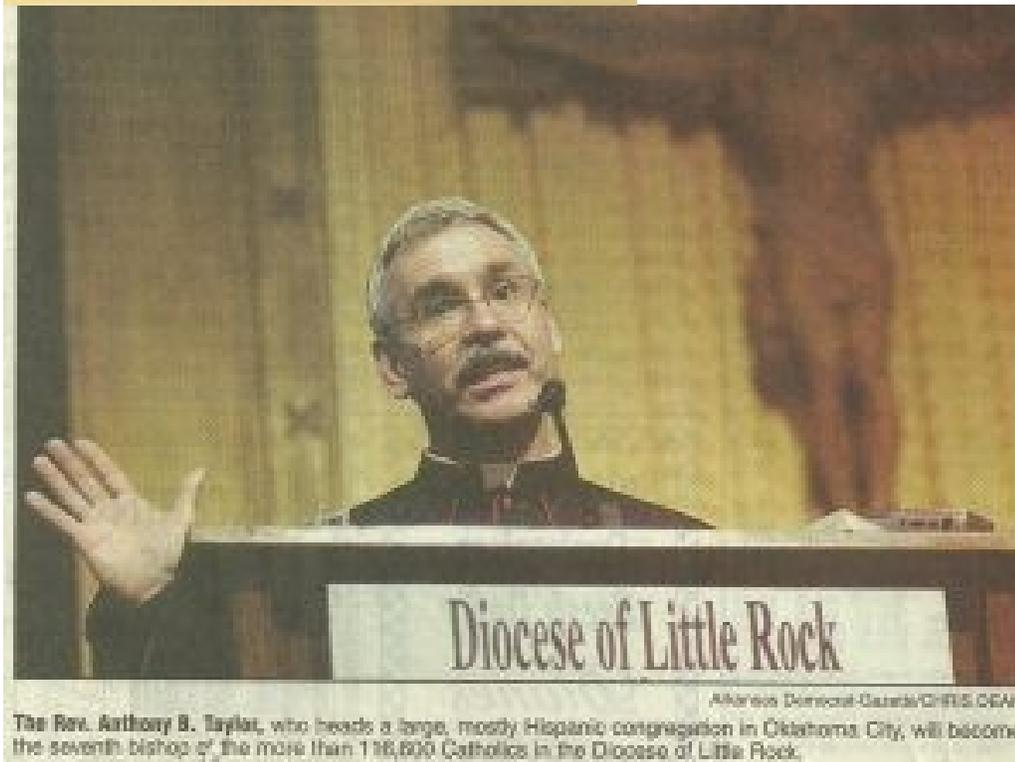
Dolores
Michelle

Dc. Tony, Dolores and daughter,



Dc. Tony and Dolores donated this picture of Our Lady of Schoenstatt, a devotion the Ludolphs introduced to St. Michael's parishioners. It is presently on the wall in the Adoration Chapel/Cry Room.

Bishop Anthony Taylor assigned to Diocese of Little Rock:



of Oklahoma City appointed Bishop of DOLR 2005

Rev. Anthony Taylor

2006



Parish Seder Meal April 2006



Seder Meal 2006 Organized by Ariela

LeGendre



Parish Seder Meal April 2006

2007

Parish Vocation – Rev. John O'Brien: “Johnny” O'Brien, son of John and Renee O'Brien of Hardy, moved here from the St. Louis area, with his family in the mid 90's. It was obvious that Johnny was a special young man with a deep devotion to God and destined to become a priest. Knowing his family would be moving back to St. Louis, Johnny joined the seminarians of the Diocese there, studying under Cardinal Burke. He also studied in Rome while Cardinal Burke was there. Fr. John was ordained a priest for the Diocese of St. Louis in May of 2007. He spent 2 more years in Rome studying after his ordination.

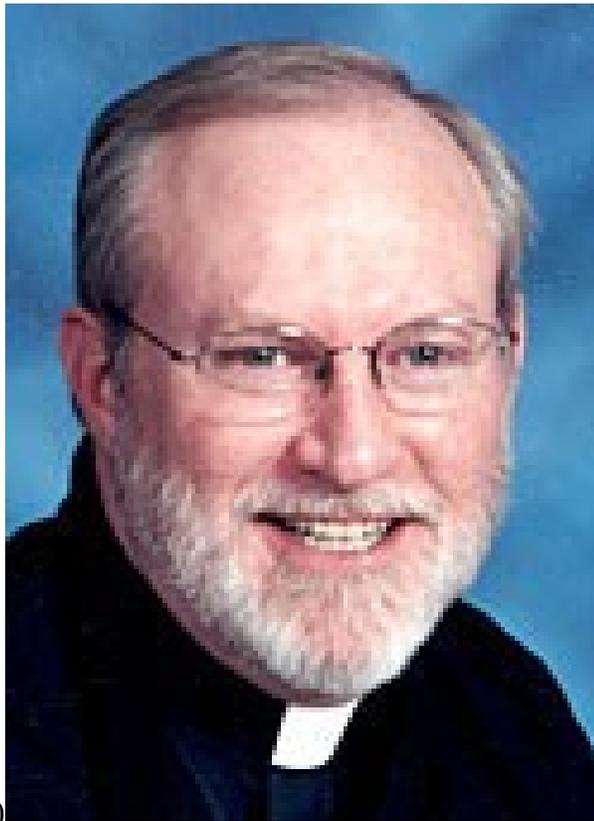


Rev. John O'Brien – May 2007

In June we bid farewell to Fr. Kevin and welcomed our new pastor, Fr. Tom Marks.



Farewell party for Fr. Kevin



(with PC Pres. Lillian Newburn)
Thomas Marks

2007 – 2011 Rev.



Welcome

party for Fr. Tom

Rev. Thomas Marks: One smiles when they think of Fr. Tom. The secretaries' first encounter with him was in a flannel shirt and baseball cap and he introduced himself as the gardener. That was Fr Tom, full of jokes. When Fr. Tom came, he changed the day the pastor had Mass in Horseshoe Bend from Thursday morning to Wednesday morning, and he moved our Wednesday morning Mass to the evening. He also moved the CCD Classes from Sunday to Wednesday after Mass in hopes some of the families would come to Mass. Fr. Tom loved to socialize and be invited for dinner. In fact, if you called to make an appointment with him, he'd insist on meeting at a restaurant over a meal. Fr. Tom's gift was ministering to the sick. And at funerals he won the hearts of Protestants and fallen-away Catholics with his charity and comforting words. He was very friendly when out in the community and several fallen-aways returned to Church because of him. Fr. Tom had an eye for beauty and made some changes to the sanctuary. His vision to return the Tabernacle to the center and enlarge the altar area didn't come to fruition until after he was transferred. He was dearly loved by many. Fr. Tom is currently semi-retired, serving as chaplain at 2 hospitals in Little Rock, offering Mass at the prison, and offering a daily morning Mass for the Sisters at the Carmelite Convent in LR (2018).

Latin Mass Update: In August of 2007, Fr. Demets was assigned to CV to replace Fr. Define. The Mass schedule remained the same. There was a desire at that time to begin saving for their own church. But that never came to fruition.

St. Michael's Christmas Parties: The Parish Christmas Party was held in mid-December each year. A potluck meal was shared by all, and after, a visit from Santa with gifts for all the children. (Thank you

Kenny and Linda Rodenbeck, aka Santa and Mrs. Claus, for your years of dedication to this.) Some years there would be entertainment, or games. One year we even had a Gingerbread House Contest!



Santa with child 2007



Santa & Mrs. Claus

with Fr. Tom 2007



Santa with



Dc. Jim & Helene 2007
Zollie Orosz, one of original St. Michael's Families

Christmas '07 – Cecilia &

2008

Statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe: Donated by Marcella Birckhead in memory of her late husband, Roy.



O.L. of Guadalupe

Christmas Eve Children's Mass: Due to the lack of parish children, Fr Tom got the adults involved!



2009

Mardi Gras: Before Lent in 2009, Mardi Gras was celebrated with fun for all.



Downstairs Classrooms Enclosed: in 2009 the downstairs classrooms, which were originally separated by accordion partitions (not very sound proof for Sunday CCD) were enclosed with

permanent walls. Due to the lack of storage at

church, the center classroom was made a permanent storage room; janitorial and Bingo supplies are mostly stored in here. The Bingo board, which was suspended from the ceiling with chains, has found a permanent home on the solid walls that were erected to enclose the classrooms.



Bingo Board installed on newly constructed solid classroom wall in 2009

Repair and Restoration Project – Phase I: With the worry of mold in our duct work, upper windows in the Sanctuary rotting, roof leaks and ceiling damage, brick work needing to be re-tucked and waterproofed, we realized it was time for some serious renovations of the church building. So began Phase I, cleaning out the duct work and installing UV lights to prohibit the growth of mold. Phase I was paid for with savings we had with the diocese.

2010

Repair and Restoration Project – Phase II: Phase II began, which included a new roof, replacing rotted windows above the altar, repair of water damage to the sanctuary ceiling, painting the main sanctuary, repair and restoration of the stained glass windows that were beginning to sag due to the extreme summer heat, tuck pointing and waterproofing the exterior of the building. The total estimate was over \$110,000. Parishioners were asked to consider making pledges for a 2 year period. A loan of \$70,000 was obtained from the diocese so the work could begin. With parishioners pledges and the help of Bingo, we were able to pay off the loan early. **Phase III**, expanding the altar and recarpeting, was put on hold for a few years until the diocesan loan was paid.

2011

New Oak Furnishings: In 2011, several of our altar furnishings were updated. Note: These pictures were newly taken, but the oak furnishings were replaced when we still had the orange carpeting throughout church and before the altar was expanded.



Altar donated in memory of Faye Lassiter



Podium donated in memory of Faye Lassiter



Baptismal Font donated by Klinge, Pieper & Davis



Families Paschal Candle Stand donated by Fr. Tom Marks in memory of his



Mother

St. Michael's cabinet donated in Memory of Elmer Newburn



Ambry donated by the Colles Family



Sound System Cabinet (in back by entrance)

donated in Memory of Elmer Newburn



Gift and Storage Table (at the back of church) donated in memory of Elmer Newburn

King of Glory Icon: Pat VanDyk donated this "King of Glory" cross. It is presently in the main Church Office.



King of Glory Icon



The roof after



New metal roof

addition complete in 1995
added in 2011; cross moved to ground and painted red to match roof at that time.



Securing the base of the cross –



April 2011 KC Members helped erect the cross 2011

In June we bid farewell to Fr. Tom and welcomed our new pastor, Fr. Linus Ukomadu.



Farewell party for Fr.

Tom

St. Michael's Welcomes ²⁰¹¹ New Pastor

Fr. Linus celebrated his 21st year as a priest on July 28, 2011

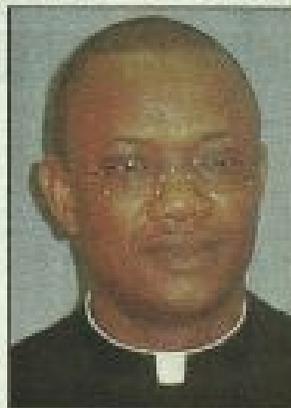
In June, St. Michael's Catholic Church welcomed a new pastor, Fr. Linus Ukamodu. Fr. Linus is also pastor of St. Mary of the Mount in Horatio Bend. Fr. Thomas Marks, who had been the pastor for four years, was relocated to Blytheville, Ark.

Fr. Linus was born in the eastern part of Nigeria, where he spent all of his growing up years and completed most of his education including his first Master's Degree which was in Moral Theology. He was a parish priest in Nigeria for seven years, when his Bishop asked him if he would mind serving in the United States. Being the obedient priest that he is, he answered "Of course not, wherever I'm needed." He was to be 'on loan' to the diocese of Little Rock, Ark. for three years, how-

ever, he has been here 12 years on September 12.

Fr. Linus's first assignment in Ark was to serve as pastor for four years at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Hot Springs. His next assignment was at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Mahram, where he served for eight years before coming to St. Michael's. Also, while in Arkansas, he has received his second Master's Degree in Counseling & Psychology and his Doctorate in Administration/Higher Education.

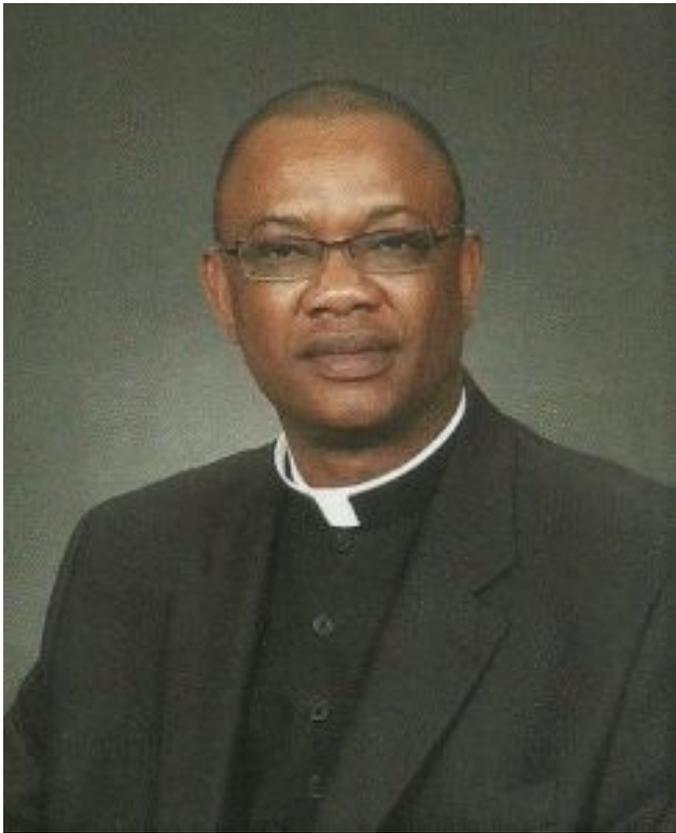
He misses his family (three brothers, two sisters and many nieces and nephews), friends and the 'drum beats of African Liturgy.' Fr. Linus said the weather isn't much different except that in Nigeria they do not get snow. When moving to the U.S., he also had to adjust to the different foods and to the language.



Fr. Linus celebrated his 21st year as a priest on July 28, 2011. When asked what is the one thing he wants people to know about him, his answer was "I love being a priest and serving God in the Catholic Church."



< [Click here to read newspaper article](#)



2011 – 2014 Rev. Linus Okomadu



Welcome Party for Fr. Linus

Rev. Linus Okomadu: Fr. Linus was also an extern priest from Nigeria. He was a scholarly man and wrote two books: 1) *21st Century Church Leaders: The Will and the Way*; and 2) *The Power and the*

Glory: To Forgive and be Forgiven, which can be found in our Parish Library. Fr. Linus had been in our country for several years furthering his studies while working for the diocese. He had completed his Doctorate in Psychology prior to coming to St. Michael's. He was a man of deep prayer and faith.

Oktoberfest: The St. Michael's Men's Club began organizing this event in the late 80's or early 90's. Eventually it became an annual Knights of Columbus fundraiser. Sausage, homemade sauerkraut, beer and a community band attracted the entire community to this fun event. With the membership in the KCs getting smaller and older, the last Oktoberfest was held in 2011.



Oktoberfest



Oktoberfest



KC Members: Ken Rodenbeck, Andy Ryan, and Tom Manganaro, along with Linda Rodenbeck



Faithful Workers: Gordon and Lila Hickert

Latin Mass Update: In November of 2001, Fr. Demets was asked to leave the diocese after striking a child. The FSSP superiors decided they would *not* send another Fraternity priest to Cherokee Village. Bishop Taylor found a diocesan priest who was willing to study the Tridentine Latin Mass, but it would take many months before he would be ready. In the meantime, all the sacred vessels, cruets, vestments, altar linens, etc, which had been purchased by the Latin people for the purpose of offering the Tradition Latin Mass, was removed from St. Michael's and brought to LR. And the home in CV that was purchased as a residence for the Fraternity priests was sold.

Christmas Party: The organizers of the 2001 Christmas Party decided to do something different...a Gingerbread House Contest. Many participated in this event. Surprisingly, it has not been a yearly addition to our Christmas Party, as it seemed to be popular.



Gingerbread House Contest



Winners 2011
Contest Winners 2011

Gingerbread House

2012

Bronze Missal Stand: In March of 2012, a Missal Stand was purchased by the parish, with the generosity of many parishioners, in memory of Lillian Newburn, who died one year prior. Lillian was a well loved parishioner who gave her life to the Church (PC President for 10+ yrs) and community. We joked of her stature of less than 5 feet saying, "She was small but mighty." RIP dear Lillian.



Missal Stand in Memory of

Lillian Newburn

Confirmation with Bishop Taylor:



Confirmation with Bishop

Taylor June 28, 2012

Holy Family Cemetery: Oaklawn Cemetery Committee gave St. Michael's Parish a back section of their public cemetery exclusively for the burial of our Catholic parishioners. When Bishop Taylor came for Confirmation, June 8, 2012, he stayed overnight and blessed the new "Holy Family Cemetery" the following day.



Latin Mass Update: In May of 2012, Bishop Taylor held a meeting at St. Michael's Church announcing the changes that would be taking place in regards to the Latin Mass here. Fr. Michael Bass, from North Little Rock, had volunteered to learn the Latin Mass. In July of 2012, Fr. Bass would be ready to begin offering the Tridentine Latin Mass here at St. Michael's at 11:30am, on the 1st and 3rd

Sundays each month. (The Nigerian Priest in Mountain Home was training to offer the Latin Mass there, as well. He will offer it on the other weekends, which gave an option to those who desired to attend the Latin Mass every weekend.) Those who preferred the Latin Mass were to register in their territorial parishes and use offering envelopes of that parish; their children were required to be enrolled in the Religious Ed program of that parish in order to receive the Sacraments. The collections at the Latin Mass will now be retained by St. Michael's (and St. Peter's in Mountain Home) or given to another parish if envelopes used were from their territorial parish. Each parish, St. Michael's and St. Peter's, was to supply for whatever special items were needed to offer the Latin Mass.

2013

Repair and Restoration – Phase III: In the Spring of 2013 we continued with Fr. Tom Mark's dream of expanding the Sanctuary. The altar area was enlarged and tiled, new shallower stairs were extended all the way across from one wall to the other; new wrought iron stair rails were installed (fabricated by Bernie Brandenburg); new altar chairs were purchased; the side altar was removed and a new Tabernacle (found in a supply of extra church items at the diocese) was installed in the center backdrop behind the altar; the backdrop was trimmed in oak to match the newer oak altar and

podium, and the grass cloth backing was replaced with the same upholstery as the new chairs; a credence table was made of oak to match the other oak furnishings; new carpeting was installed in the entire upstairs; the chapel, vestibule, hallway and offices were all painted. Parishioners donated toward the 5 new altar chairs; the altar renovations were paid for by the generosity of Helen Shinavar's Estate; Bingo paid for the new carpeting. We are blessed to have so many generous parishioners!



Former side Altar for

Tabernacle and former altar chairs



Former stone Altar and

podium, grass cloth backdrop, wrought iron railings and orange carpet



Altar Expansion and tile work complete



Tabernacle moved to center, new oak trim, grass cloth replaced



with fabric to match altar chairs
and donated by Bernie Brandenburg

New Railings fabricated



New Altar Chairs



New Oak Credence Table

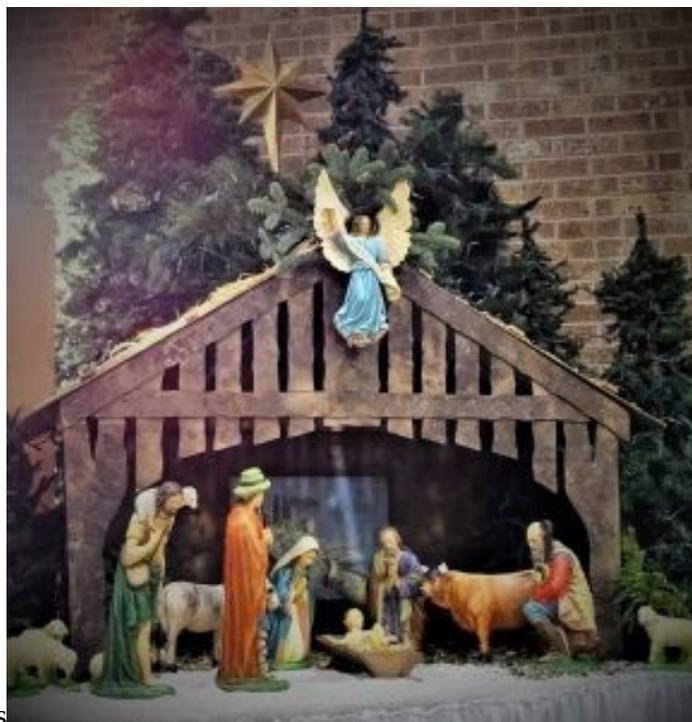


The Church Office wall is adorned with quilts, such as this beauty, compliments of master quilter, Ariela Wege.

Christmas 2013:



Renovations complete



and decorated for Christmas

Nativity Scene

New St. Michael's Sign along the Highway: The wood in the old St. Michael's Sign was beginning to rot, so a new metal sign was purchased in the Spring of 2013, with an area for changeable lettering to announce the activities happening at St. Michael's.



Original Sign



Original sign replaced in late 80's/early 90's, possible when addition was done, but no dates found in



records.
2013

New sign by road, replaced in

2014

The death of Fr. Linus: On May 20th, Fr. Linus did not show up for Mass; he was found collapsed on the floor in the Rectory. Scans revealed he had suffered a severe stroke and recovery was not likely. He was transported to a hospital in Springfield, MO, where further tests during the night revealed he was brain dead. He was declared deceased in the morning of the 21st. A Funeral Mass and Luncheon was held at St. Michael's Church on May 26th, followed by another Mass in Little Rock at St. Andrew's Cathedral (see picture below). His body was then transported to Nigeria for burial.

Pa mi Fa Uk

Ukomadu

(Continued from page 1)

Within three months of his 2011 arrival in Arkansas, Ukomadu in 2012 did his master plan to visit to continue to get where he wanted to be the diocese with Father Ukomadu. It was September 1999 that Father Ukomadu said, "It was still to be."

What he meant Father Ukomadu was that the church was going to be in Little Rock in the Spring as well as the sacramental ministry at St. Mary Church in Little Rock and St. John Church in Malvern. In 2004 he was assigned to be the pastor in Little Rock and Malvern in 2011 he moved to Cherokee Village and Horse Shoe Bend.

Central and South Arkansas transferred Father Ukomadu to Spring Branch, as well as his responsibilities and to provide pastoral care to the

parish of Father Ukomadu to several parishes including with the 2010 sacramental ministry of St. Mary of the Mount Church in Horse Shoe Bend. In fact, he died on the same anniversary day, according to parishioners. One Little Rock parishioner said that a candle on the celebration, Ukomadu said there was little doubt that the year would come off as planned, especially given the degree to which Father Ukomadu had been involved in its planning.

Most in general, in the May 20, 2012, he is 1986, but it "takes all of our parishioners' prayers."

"The diocese's priestly ministry" said Ukomadu, who stated the church's organizing committee. He declared whether we should be involved in it or not. But we decided to proceed from our perspective. It is truly one of our prayers, that it was what we needed."

Ukomadu and Father Ukomadu's leadership embodied this in the

commitment and his experience. He said that was his challenge of being a priest of two parishes' ministry.

"He made a real effort to stay in contact," he said. "He always seemed to have a plan for the church and the gift of his ministry. He was at every point in the way he celebrated Mass. He was very intelligent."

Father Ukomadu was the pastor of St. John Church in the Spring, another family ministry. Ukomadu was the pastor of St. John Church in the Spring and other parishes, such as Little Rock, Malvern, and Malvern. In fact, he died for the night he died in recognition for his service to the church. He was a priest of two parishes, a priest that had spent his years in the

"The thing I will remember is that he was not at all," she said. "He had a large heart and was a great priest and whatever we were about the church, you can find

"Probably the biggest thing I learned was how to listen to people with anxiety. Father Ukomadu demonstrated that to me and it's something I try to emulate in my ministry."

News and Events

for him to help. It just made sense."

Ukomadu's husband, Thomas, said that he was at Father Ukomadu's funeral service at St. John Church in Little Rock and St. Michael Church in Cherokee Village as well as the vigil service in Horse Shoe Bend. He called Father Ukomadu "Dad" as his comforting his studies for the diocese from both an academic and an administrative perspective.

"He was always very generous," he said. "He always encouraged me and all the time that I would be a great priest. I was not a lot but he probably the biggest thing I learned was how to listen to people

with anxiety. Father Ukomadu demonstrated that to me and it's something I try to emulate in my ministry."

A vigil service was held at the Cathedral of St. Andrew in Little Rock May 25. The first of two funeral liturgies was celebrated at May 24 followed by a reception in Malvern. Ukomadu's body was transported to Horse Shoe Bend May 23 and a vigil service was held that night at St. Mary of the Mount in Horse Shoe Bend.

A second funeral was celebrated at St. Michael Church in Cherokee Village May 26. Father Ukomadu's body was sent to Odu, Nigeria, for burial.

Services held in Little Rock and in two parishes

CHEROKEE VILLAGE — Father Linus Ukomadu, pastor of St. Michael Church in Cherokee Village and St. Mary of the Mount Church in Horse Shoe Bend, died May 21 at Cox South Hospital in Springfield, Mo., after suffering a massive stroke one day earlier. He was 55.

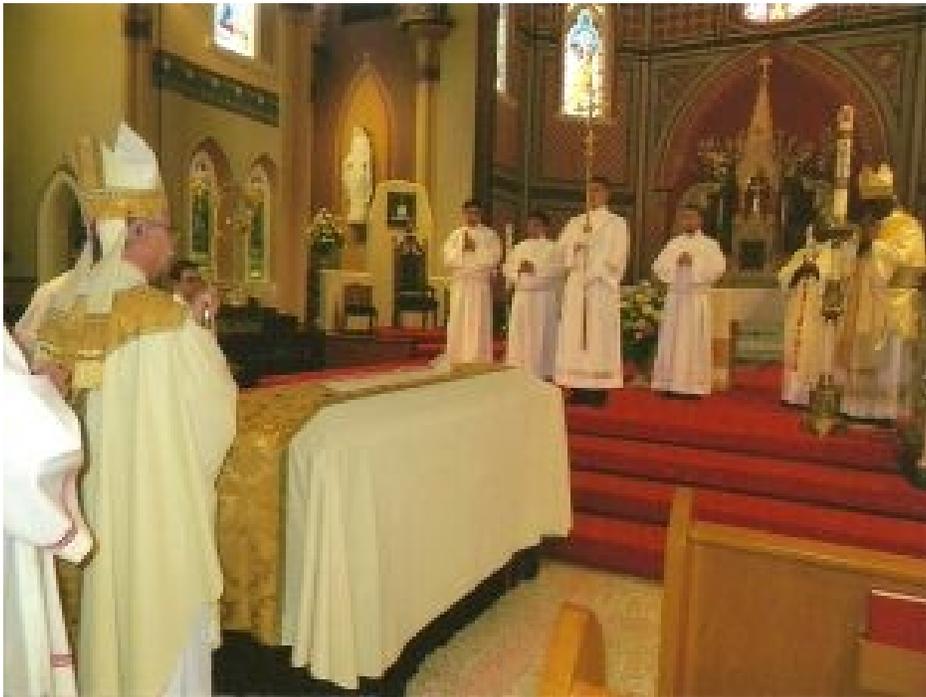


Father Linus Ukomadu

Father Ukomadu, a priest of the Diocese of Odu, Nigeria, had been serving in Arkansas since 1999. Father Nazarius Masuba of Altus and Father Chuma Ibebulike of Russellville were by his side when he died.

He was ordained a priest on July 28, 1990, in Odu.

[Click here to read newspaper article >](#)



Funeral Mass for Fr. Linus at St. Andrew's Cathedral with Bishop Taylor and other diocesan priests, May 2014.

Confirmation 2014: Being without a pastor, Bishop Taylor still came and celebrated Confirmation with us in early June.



Confirmation with Bishop Taylor in June of 2014

In June, as we were still mourning the passing of Fr. Linus, we welcomed our new Administrator, Fr. Nazarus Maduba.



2014 – 2017 Rev. Nazarus Maduba



Welcome party for

Fr. Naz

Rev. Nazarus Maduba: Fr. Naz was another extern priest from Nigeria. He was still fairly new to to the US when Fr. Linus passed. Fr. Linus was actually his sponsor and a personal mentor to him. Fr. Naz was also with him when he passed. He was quiet and reserved. It must have been hard for him to walk in Fr. Linus' shoes...living in his former home, wear his vestments, and ministering to his

grieving parish, not having time to grieve himself. When the diocesan priest who would come twice a month to offer the Latin Mass could no longer continue, Fr. Naz offered to learn the Latin Mass. Fr. Naz was familiar with the Latin language and was able to study the Mass while on his annual visit to Nigeria at a parish where the Latin Tridentine Mass was offered routinely. Three years later, Fr. Naz was transferred to Mountain Home where there was a need for an Associate Pastor who could also offer the Latin Mass. Currently he continues to come to Cherokee Village twice a month to offer the Latin Mass at St. Michael's (2018).

75th Anniversary: July 23, 2014 marked the 75th Anniversary of the first Mass offered in the new St. Michael's Mission Church in Hardy. On Saturday, August 16th, Bishop Taylor concelebrated a 75th Anniversary Mass here at St. Michael's. A potluck in the Parish Hall followed.





Cecilia Orosz (sitting), and daughter, Karen Burton – The Orosz family were founding members of the original church in Hardy.



Goodbye Dc. Jim and Helene:
In June of 2014, we also bid farewell to Dc. Jim and Helene Thompson. They were humble, kind and loving servants, loved by all and are truly missed.



Farewell Party for Dc. Jim and Helene

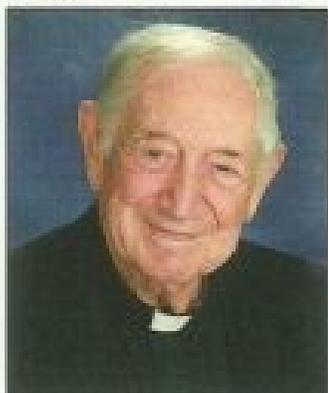


Dc. Jim and Helene in 2011

2015

The death of Fr. Preske: On November 9, 2015, Fr. Venantius Preske entered Eternal Life. He was pastor in the 70's of St. Michael's and St. Mary's Parishes. When he retired in '95, he decided to live in a private home in Horseshoe Bend instead of joining the other diocesan priests at St. John's Center in LR. Fr. Preske loved nature and solitude and so chose this lifestyle instead. He was like St. Francis...he had dogs, cats, bees, and whatever other creature wanted to inhabit his garage or nibble off the weeds in his yard. He not only fed the birds from his feeders, but poured bird seed on the ground so the squirrels didn't have to work so hard for it. His "Holy Honey" was a very popular item every fall and could be found for sale at St. Michael's and St. Mary's Church Offices. Fr. Preske filled-in for priests around the northern part of Arkansas for many years, including at St. Michael's. He even offered the Latin Mass, on occasion, when the Fraternity Priest was not able to be here or was sick. In

2001, the Benedictine Missionary Priest, who had pastoral care of St. Mary of the Mount in Horseshoe Bend, Fr. Fred Schneider, from 1995 – Oct 1, 2001, decided to retire. St. Mary's, once again, became a second parish for the pastor at St. Michael's. Fr. Kevin Atunzu was pastor at the time. Seeing the people of St. Mary's were used to a daily Mass, which would be impossible for Fr. Kevin to offer seeing there is daily Mass as well at St. Michael's, he asked Fr. Preske if he would offer the weekday Masses at St. Mary's. Fr. Preske also offered First Saturday Masses, and the Vigil Mass each Saturday afternoon. (Fr. Kevin offered the Masses on Thursday and Sunday.) Fr. Preske began more of a pastoral role at St. Mary's. With the pastor's permission, he planned all their Liturgies with a group he started called the Liturgical Committee. He planned and gave retreats, heard all their Confessions, buried their dead, counseled those who were depressed, was Chaplain of their Knights of Columbus Council, and offered all the Holy Day Masses including the Easter Triduum and Christmas Midnight Mass. People came from far and wide to hear Fr. Preske's homilies and go to Confession to him. When he could no longer offer a public Mass, his armchair became his pulpit. He conducted Bible Studies in his home, people came for Confession and Spiritual Direction, and he would always answer his phone, no matter what time day or night you called. His absence has left a big whole in our Community as he was the one everyone went to when they just needed someone to listen. Well done good and faithful servant...R.I.P. Fr. Preske! Fr. Preske's deacon brother, Dc. Richard Preske, wrote a book on Fr. Venantius' life titled: ***The Meek and Gentle Servant***; it is available in our Parish Library.



Venantius Paul Preske

Born - May 24, 1924

Ordained to Priesthood - May 31, 1952

Entered into Eternal Life - November 9, 2015



*Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon him.*

*May his soul, and the souls of all
the faithful departed, through
the mercy of God, rest in peace.*

Amen.

Fr. Preske's Memorial Card

A PRIEST
by Lacordaire

To live in the midst of the world
without wishing its pleasures;
To be a member of each family,
yet belonging to none;
To share all suffering;
to penetrate all secrets;
To heal all wounds;
to go from men to God
and offer Him their prayers;
To return from God to men
to bring pardon and hope;
To have a heart of fire for Charity,
and a heart of bronze for Chastity.
To teach and to pardon,
console and bless always.
My God, what a life;
and it is yours,
O priest of Jesus Christ.

Back of Memorial Card – The motto Fr. Preske lived

by, his favorite prayer

2016

Latin Mass Update: In April of 2016, Fr. Bass, having health issues, had to discontinue offering the Latin Mass here at St. Michael's. Fr. Nazarus, our Administrator, knowing the Latin language, volunteered to train so he could offer it. In July, Fr. Naz began offering the Latin Mass here twice a month, on the 1st and 3rd Sundays at 2:30pm (giving himself time to return from Sunday Mass in Horseshoe Bend).

Parish Picnic: In 2016, the Parish Council decided to reinstate the Annual Parish Picnic. Food was plentiful and games enjoyed by all.



Parish Picnic Oct. 2016



Parish Picnic Oct 2016



Men at the Picnic taking their turn at

the Cake Walk Oct 2016

2017

In June we bid farewell to Fr. Naz and welcomed our new pastor, Fr. Amal Raju Punganoor Lourduswamy, AKA "Fr. Amal".



Farewell Brunch for Fr. Naz



2017 – Present Rev. Amal Raju Punganoor

Lourduswamy

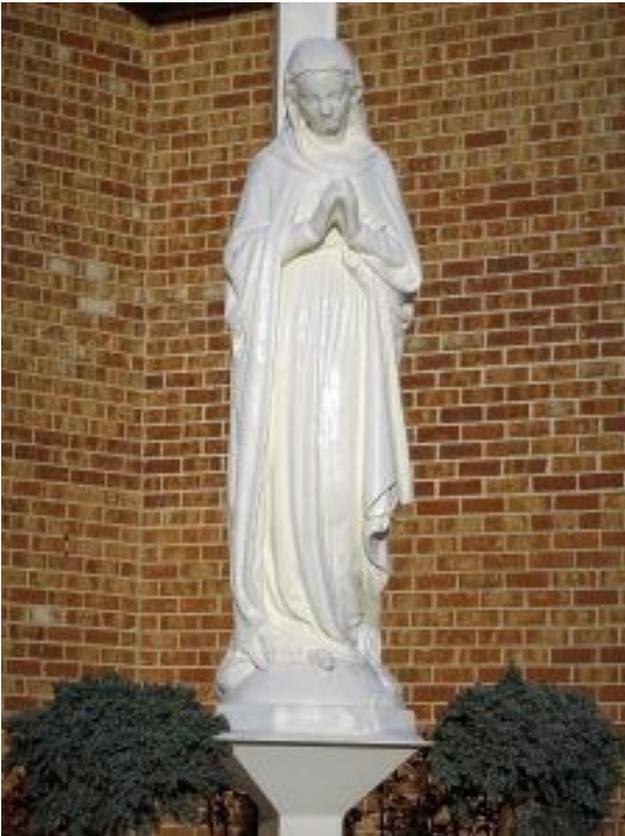
Rev. Amal Raju Punganoor: Fr. Amal, as he liked to be called, was an extern priest on loan from the diocese of Nellore, India. He had a big heart and warm smile.

Latin Mass Update: Fr. Nazarus' assignment in Mtn Home included him traveling to St. Michael's twice a month to offer the Latin Mass (as well as offering it in Mtn Home on the weeks he didn't offer it here). The time remained the same, 1st and 3rd Sundays at 2:30pm. In 2018 it was changed to 12noon.

Statue of Mary: Fr Amal asked for the Cross on the front lawn to be painted a cream color (instead red). He also asked the Knights of Columbus if they could find a statue of Mary to put at the base. Dean Beardslee had a statue, which he donated to the church; Bernie Brandenburg made a base for it to rest on. The Knights of Columbus then painted it. What a beautiful addition to the front of the church!



Painting the Cross



Statue of Our Lady added to base

Holy Honey: In the Spring of 2016, we noticed some bee activity at the peek of the church (on the side closest to the upper parking lot). The bees would find their way into the Sanctuary but not find their

way back out. Being trapped, the bees would swarm around the upper windows until they died and then fall to the floor, so we were constantly sweeping up dead bees. By summer we had honey dripping down the inside of the brick walls. Seeing it was unlawful to spray the bees killing them, and not knowing what we could do, we just ignored this through the fall and winter in hopes they wouldn't return the following year...but they did. In October of 2017, with the aid of parishioner and bee keeper, Michael Orosz, a section of metal roofing was removed allowing Mike to locate the hive and smoke them to calm them. (The bees had built a hive in between the old roof and the new metal roof.) Using the suction of a vacuum and a long flexible hose, he sucked the bees out of the hive in the roof into a mobile hive on the ground (see photos below). After he removed all the bees he could, Mike then proceeded to remove as much of the hive as he could reach. When all was put back together, the seams and cracks were sealed with silicone and prayer in hopes that any bees who had left the hive while he was working would not be able to get back in when they returned. To date, Dec. 2018, we have not seen any sign of them. Good job, Mike!



2018

In June of 2018, Bishop Taylor came to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation on 9 students, and also blessed our new sanctuary statues. The Divine Mercy statue was donated by the Altar Society and BINGO; Our Lady of Grace statue was donated by the Knights of Columbus. The shelving was handmade by a craftsman in Jonesboro and paid for with anonymous donations.





statues, June 2018

Bishop blessing new



Divine Mercy Statue



Our Lady of Grace Statue

New Oil Cabinet: In November, Fr. Amal had a smaller Ambry made for the Holy Oils. It is fastened on the front right wall in church. The larger oak cabinet donated by the Colles Family was moved to the Church Hall on the wall by the Gift Shop.



New Ambry

2019

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