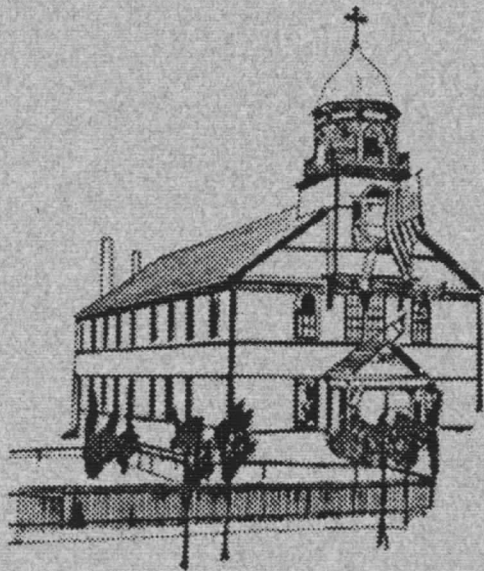


# **History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish**



**1894 - 1994**

# **History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish**

**written by**

**William Radeker  
and  
Glenn Sobola**

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William Radeker and Glenn Sobola  
Cleveland, Ohio**





His Holiness John Paul II

lovingly imparts  
His Apostolic Blessing  
as a pledge of divine protection  
and graces to the people of

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish  
on their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
on May 3, 1994

*Et Aedificavit Vaticanus die 9-XII-1892.*

+ Oscar Rizzuto

Archiepiscopus  
Eleemosynarius Apostolicus



DIocese OF CLEVELAND  
1027 SUPERIOR AVENUE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO 44114 - 2560

1/1993

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

May 16, 1993

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

It is with great joy that I extend to you my congratulations as you commence yearlong celebrations in anticipation of the **One Hundredth Anniversary of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish**. Anniversaries are a special time; they offer an opportunity to rejoice in the past and an opportunity to look into the future.



It is almost a cliché to say that times were very hard one hundred years ago, but they were. Cleveland and America were in the midst of a depression that devastated the heavy industries and brought great suffering to the workers. The immigrants who were the workers, the ones who had come to America with nothing and had very little opportunity to create any security for themselves, suffered the most.

The Polish community in Cleveland was extremely impoverished, but its generosity and self-sacrifice had helped create the beautiful church of Saint Stanislaus. The charismatic pastor of Saint Stanislaus took a part of the ever-growing congregation and organized an independent church under the patronage of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Despite crushing financial pressures and some misunderstandings, the little church struggled to maintain itself and to provide religious education for its children and assistance to its elderly.

The year 1908 saw the regularization of the status of the parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The people were still imbued with the same spirit that had seen the continuance of the parish against great odds. Over the following years they built a church and school and a complete parish plant. They were ever willing to make any and all necessary sacrifices for the good of the parish community. They were proud of their Polish heritage and it provided a bedrock of support for them. They faced difficult times with great courage, secure in the knowledge that an all-loving Divine Father would provide for them.

It is my prayer that the spirit and zeal of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish will be ever present. I pray that your heavenly patroness, our beloved Mary, will ever watch over you and yours.

With my blessing and best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Anthony M. Pilla  
Bishop of Cleveland

Archdiocese of Philadelphia

222 N. 17th Street

Philadelphia, Pa. 19103

Office of the Cardinal

May 18, 1992

A parish is indeed fortunate that can boast of a Cardinal among its former associate pastors. Our church was so blessed when John Cardinal Krol was given his first priestly assignment at Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1937. His Eminence has kindly shared some of his recollections of our parish during his appointment here.

It was on April 1, 1937 that I received my first appointment as a priest. I was appointed an assistant to Monsignor John Mlotkowski and present as assistants with me were Father Ed Osowski, Father Herudaj and Father Zabawa. I must say that ours was a very interesting life. We did not attend formal meetings but every morning at breakfast or at lunch at noon or at dinner in the evening we exchanged information that we had about the parishioners, those of whom were sick, those who were in the hospital, those who needed help of one kind or another. At that time, we travelled the parish to visit all the people and, while they were inclined to give us a few dollars, the fact is that in some places we left more than that to cover the expenses of shoes for the children or other bits of clothing that they needed.



At the time, I was assigned to teach catechism in the lower elementary grades and I enjoyed that task very much. I was given the young Holy Name Society. At that time, the radio and television programs did not interfere too much and as a result when we had our meetings we learned among other things to sing in harmony. Eventually, the lads sang for each others' weddings and family celebrations.

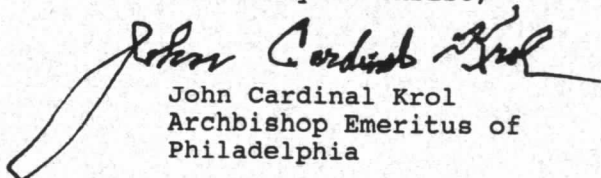
I must say that I enjoyed the modest and humble people of Immaculate Heart of Mary. I was complemented by being selected for graduate studies in Rome but actually I felt sorry that I had to leave the pleasant work as assistant of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish.

All in all I enjoyed the parish, the faith of the people who used to attend daily devotions to Mary in the month of May, at least twice a week devotions to Mary in October, and devotions to the Sacred Heart in June. Father Ed Osowski was ever anxious and ready to preach at any or all of these celebrations. We appreciated his priesthood and his work.

I might add that Monsignor John Mlotkowski was a great pastor. He was a very holy man and he took care of many things.

With prayerful best wishes, I am

Sincerely in Christ,

  
John Cardinal Krol  
Archbishop Emeritus of  
Philadelphia



*This history of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Rozalia Piotrowski, whose love for God, the Blessed Virgin, and this church, inspired me as a child and nurtured my faith and love of this place of God.*

*-Glenn Sobola*

## *Introduction*

Displaced loyalty, the strength of forceful personalities, confusion, misunderstanding, poverty, jealousy, righteousness, and plotting -- all had consequential effects in the establishment of the Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Our church was born on May 3, 1894 amidst the controversy of ecclesiastical wrath. The defiant confidence of our founding trustees encouraged their survival through fourteen dark years of censure to eventual grace and union with the Church. A national Polish heritage of dominance and poverty forged a people of fortitude to embrace a freedom fraught with its own perils in the new land of America. The forbears of our church were first Catholic Poles, then Americans.

Our story is as much the story of the founding of a church as it is the documentary of an immigrant people's painful struggle in a country foreign to them in language, custom, and liberty. Authority may have been mistaken for repression; impatience may have led to misinterpretation.

The narrative of our history is abundant with personalities and their ideals. We in the present will more fully understand our place in this history if we learn from those who preceded us in the struggle for our existence. Only then can we face the uncertain future with the faith that the Good Lord will provide.

### *Acknowledgements*

Christine Krosel, *Archivist for the Diocese of Cleveland*, for providing much of the information and reviewing the history for accuracy; Dr. John Grabowski, *Curator of Manuscripts at the Western Reserve Historical Society*, for his help and guidance through the writing of our parish history; Rita Drabek, who edited the manuscript for typing errors, and who proofread the final manuscript; Judith Cetina, *Cuyahoga County Archivist*, for providing information on parish properties and buildings; Sister Mary Josephine, for translating Polish documents; Diocese of Syracuse; Catholic University of America; University of Notre Dame; Wicks Organ Company; John E. Sperling, of the Wicks Organ Company, for the specification list for the Wicks organ installed in our church in 1962; Donald Borden, organ builder who installed the Wicks organ in our church; William Rozeboom, salesman for the Wicks Organ Company; Walter Hoag, who helped dismantle the original Felgemaker organ in our church; Randy Wagner, *Organ Supply Industries, Erie Pennsylvania*, for the information about our original Felgemaker organ; Helen Bell and Leonard Zbikowski, parishioners of St. Stanislaus Church; Richard Kaliszewski, parishioner of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church and National Secretary, *Union of Poles in America*; Mae Daugherty, *IHM parishioner*, for her recollections of the church fire; Emily Szymanski, *IHM parishioner*, for permission to photograph the tabernacle section of our church's original main altar, now in her possession; Patricia Harpole, *Principal Reference Librarian, Minnesota Historical Society*, for the census information on the church architect, A.F. Wasielewski; Rev. James White, *Archives of the Diocese of Tulsa*, for the photograph of A.F. Wasielewski; Mrs. Laura Rust, independent researcher from St. Paul, Minnesota, for her research on A.F. Wasielewski; Thomas Powers, representative of The Daprato Company, remodelers of the church interior in 1958; the Cleveland Public Library, and the staffs of the History and Fine Arts Departments; the staffs of the Newspaper Reading Room and Map Department; and the Photograph Collection; The Plain Dealer Publishing Company; The Catholic Universe Bulletin; The Cleveland Press; The Cleveland Leader; Terry Fise, *History Works, Inc., Oak Park, Illinois*, for her research of The Munich Studio; Frank Drehobl, Jr., *Drehobl Bros. Art Glass Company, Chicago, Illinois*, for his reminiscences of the artists of The Munich Studio; Rev. Jerome Lucachinsky, *St. John Nepomucene Church*, for permission to photograph the stained glass windows installed by The Munich Studio; Rev. Michael Furlan, *St. Leo Church, Chicago, Illinois*, for permission to photograph the stained glass windows installed by The Munich Studio in 1905; Martin G. Phillips, *Administrative Assistant, St. Joseph Church, Tiffin*, for permission to photograph the stained glass windows installed by The Munich Studio in 1906; Rev. Raymond Ensman, *St. Mary Church, Tiffin*, for permission to photograph the stained glass windows executed by The Munich Studio in 1906; Rev. Phillip G. Racco, *Holy Rosary Church*, for permission to photograph the stained glass windows installed in 1908 by The Munich Studio; Rev. Paul Suprenant, *St. Anthony Church, Lismore, Minnesota*, for his information regarding the stained glass windows rendered by The Munich Studio in 1911; Rev. Jerome Steinbreunner, *St. Adalbert Church*, for permission to photograph the stained glass windows installed by The Munich Studio in 1912; Rev. Thomas Petry, *St. Dominic Church, Columbus, Ohio*, for permission to photograph the stained glass windows installed by The Munich Studio in 1915; Don Peters, *Administrator, Harvard Grove Cemetery*.



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# Chapter 1

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## attorney, advisor, confidante, protector, priest

To comprehend the beginnings of our parish requires an understanding of its founders and the time in which they lived. The history of Immaculate Heart of Mary parish is a part of the history of this city. Cleveland in 1894 was growing in population; immigrant Poles flooded the city as steel mills imported cheap labor willing to work for \$10.00 per week.<sup>1</sup> These Catholic Poles were predominately from the German occupied Pomerania and Poznan sections of Poland and later from the Russian and Austrian occupied parts of Poland.<sup>2</sup> Many of these poor Catholic Poles settled in our neighborhood, then and still now, called Warszawa, the Warsaw of Cleveland.

The extraordinary variety of ethnic groups in Cleveland at this time was a constant threat to the peace and unity of the diocese governed by Bishop Horstmann. Waves of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe were beginning to flood Cleveland, bringing with them old national rivalries. In addition to the English, Irish, German, and French who had preceded the new arrivals, there came Slovenians, Croatians, Czechs, Hungarians, Italians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Poles, Slovaks, and Lebanese.<sup>3</sup> Throughout his tenure Bishop Horstmann was faced with the dual tasks of providing for their spiritual and material care and leading them to become real American citizens. Dealing with the immigrants was not easy.<sup>4</sup>

The Diocese of Cleveland of Horstmann's day was comprised of thirty-six counties covering 15,032 square miles, and, in addition to Cleveland, included such cities as Toledo, Akron, Youngstown, and Sandusky.<sup>5</sup>

In 1886 Rev. Anton Francis Kolaszewski began the construction of the grand Polish Victorian Gothic cathedral that is St. Stanislaus Church. With this singular event begins the historical account of our church. For his perhaps overzealous building expenses, he was

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<sup>1</sup>John Grabowski, "The Polish Community of Cleveland," Polish Americans and Their Communities of Cleveland, edited by John J. Grabowski, Judith Zielinski-Zak, Alice Boberg, and Ralph Wroblewski (Cleveland: Cleveland State University, 1976), pp. 151-154. Also: Nelson Callahan, "Fr. Kolaszewski's Letter to His Bishop," Polish Americans and Their Communities of Cleveland, p. 202, in Joseph H. Lackner, S.M., M.A., Bishop Ignatius F. Horstmann and the Americanization of the Catholic Church in the United States, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #12, ADC, Folder: IHM.

<sup>3</sup>Michael S. Pap, ed., Ethnic Communities of Cleveland (Cleveland: Copy Center, John Carroll University, 1973), passim., in Lackner, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>4</sup>Lackner, op. cit., p. 61.

<sup>5</sup>Catholic Encyclopedia, s.v. "Cleveland, Diocese of," by George Houck, in Lackner, loc. cit.

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voluntarily exiled to Syracuse, New York in 1892. Rev. Benedict Rosinski replaced him as pastor, only grudgingly accepted by some of Kolaszewski's loyal adherents.



Bishop Richard F. Gilmour.

On August 5, 1883, Rev. Anton F. Kolaszewski, who established the Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was appointed pastor of St. Stanislaus Parish by Bishop Gilmour. He was born on September 5, 1851 in Elzbietow, Poland, near Sokolow in the Russian occupied territory, of John and Catherine Kolaszewski. This immigrant priest was most proud of his American education. After completing his priestly studies in the Classics at the Franciscan College in Teutopolis, Illinois and St. Mary Seminary in Cleveland, he was ordained by Bishop Gilmour on July 1, 1883 at the seminary.<sup>6</sup>

Father Kolaszewski was a charismatic figure, capable of arousing strong emotions.<sup>7</sup> His personality could cause people to choose up sides.<sup>8</sup> He rallied his people to support his projects. Despite their subsistence wages, on Sunday, November 15, 1891 he was able to dedicate St. Stanislaus Church.<sup>9</sup> This church, the largest in the diocese at that time measured 85' by 200' with twin spires reaching 232' in height<sup>10</sup> and costing \$150,000, was second in size only to St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. Kolaszewski could command the respect of his congregation. A city official once commented that Kolaszewski's mere presence was worth fifty policemen in the Polish wards.<sup>11</sup>

This strong undercurrent of loyalty courses throughout the story of our history. At this same time during the late nineteenth century, two movements fomented turmoil in the Catholic Church. The Diocese of Cincinnati barely avoided bankruptcy precipitated in part

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<sup>6</sup>Christine Kroesel, Archivist, ADC.

<sup>7</sup>John Grabowski, "The Polish Community of Cleveland," Polish Americans and Their Communities of Cleveland, in Lackner, op. cit., pp. 64-65.

<sup>8</sup>Lackner, op. cit., p. 94.

<sup>9</sup>Rev. George F. Houck, Diocesan Chancellor, A History of Catholicity in Northern Ohio and in the Diocese of Cleveland from 1749 to December 31, 1900, I, pp. 286-287.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>John Grabowski, "The Polish Community of Cleveland," Polish Americans and Their Communities of Cleveland, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 65.

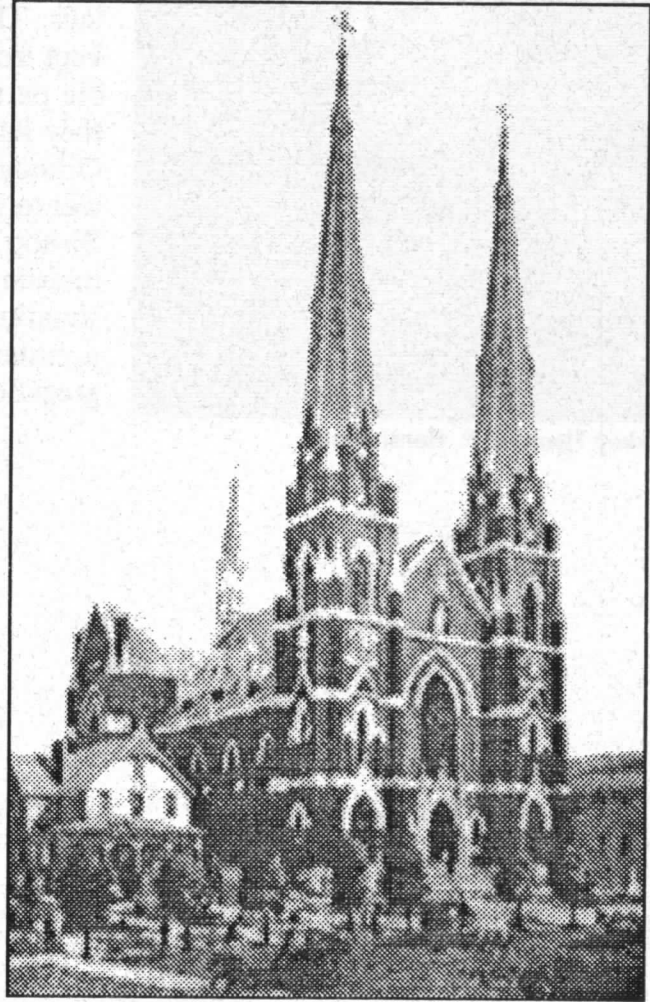
*attorney, advisor, confidante, protector, priest*

by over-spending on church construction among its burgeoning Catholic population. Bishops across the country warily tightened their purse strings and in Cleveland, parishes could not build churches unless the money was firmly in hand. A movement was also afoot toward the establishment of trustee churches, churches governed by lay committees who held title to church property and appointed their own pastors.

In the Cleveland of 1894, Rev. Kolaszewski personified these very controversies which Bishop Horstmann tried unsuccessfully to suppress. How to describe this Kolaszewski who defied his bishop and established his own church? How to describe the people who followed him to become the congregation of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary?

These fiercely loyal Poles had come to America seeking peace, freedom, and prosperity. They lived and worked in America now, but in protective insular Polish neighborhoods which could have been transplanted from Poland. They were first Polish Catholics, then remotely Americans. With a national history of a country never their own, they held on to what was theirs with tenacity.

Kolaszewski was their confidante, their attorney, their advisor, their liaison with the unfamiliar, sometimes even hostile, new country. He was also their priest and friend. Personally commanding, fiercely independent, ever loyal to Catholic dogma, Kolaszewski doggedly withstood ecclesiastical wrath for his people. His intemperate language and behavior bespoke a man unwilling to compromise.<sup>12</sup> Though proud of his education, he did not know how to deal with Roman officials.<sup>13</sup>



St. Stanislaus Church in 1891.

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<sup>12</sup>Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>13</sup>Satolli to Horstmann, Washington, D.C., 3 July 1894, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, Kolaszewski and Rosinski, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 93.



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**Bishop Ignatius F. Horstmann.**

A group of the St. Stanislaus parishioners opposed Kolaszewski, probably because of some of his techniques for collecting money to pay off the enormous church debt which stood at approximately \$100,000 when Kolaszewski left St. Stanislaus. The actual amount of this debt had been kept from the knowledge of Bishop Horstmann.<sup>14</sup> He personally sought donations from workers as they left their jobs on payday. Following Bishop Gilmour's death in April 1891, Bishop Horstmann was to inherit this conflict when he was appointed Bishop in June 1892.<sup>15</sup> Msgr. Boff, appointed interim Administrator, reported a worsening situation at St. Stanislaus. Wrote Msgr. Boff, "His accusers are many, and a great many of his congregation believe him guilty."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Houck, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

<sup>15</sup>Houck, *Catholicity*, 1:172, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>16</sup>Boff to Elder, 7 September 1891, AAC, Box 1890 O - 1891 E, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

## Chapter 2

### innuendos, allegations, and accusations

Accusations against Kolaszewski continued to mount and one parishioner suggested that Kolaszewski was in contact with a Rev. Kolasinski, an ex-priest who was establishing schismatic churches throughout the United States.<sup>1</sup> Added to these complaints was an innuendo of impropriety which was never substantiated.<sup>2</sup> The mere hint of such scandal had its effect on Kolaszewski's reputation.

Friction had also arisen between Kolaszewski and his assistant at St. Stanislaus, Fr. Motulewski, whom Kolaszewski requested be changed. Kolaszewski accused Fr. Motulewski of going amongst members of St. Stanislaus telling them they are not obliged to contribute to the support of the church.<sup>3</sup>

In April 1892, Fr. Motulewski responded to Kolaszewski's accusation in a letter in Bishop Horstmann in which he exposed a common practice in some ethnic parishes of the time, confession tickets. If it is any indication at all, Motulewski's letter reveals an account of the Kolaszewski personality which, no doubt, in part contributed to the problems at St. Stanislaus.<sup>4</sup>

Motulewski's letter denied Kolaszewski's accusations. He explained that many of the poor parishioners from St. Casimir's were coming to St. Stanislaus for Easter confession because they had no priest of their own. These people could not be required to pay for confession because they had to support their own church, yet, Motulewski wrote, Kolaszewski required money of everyone coming to confession. Those whom Motulewski knew were able to pay he sent to Kolaszewski for tickets; the others' confessions he himself would hear. Motulewski complained:



Rev. Anton F. Kolaszewski.

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<sup>1</sup>Lewandowski to Horstmann, 25 March 1892, ADC, Box PH 6, in Joseph H. Lackner, S.M., M.A., Bishop Ignatius F. Horstmann and the Americanization of the Catholic Church in the United States, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup>"Report of Testimony," 26 March 1892, ADC, Box PH 6, in Lackner, loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup>Horstmann to Motulewski, 14 April 1892, ADC, J, p. 676, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 68.

<sup>4</sup>Motulewski to Horstmann, Cleveland, 16 April 1892, ADC, in Lackner, op. cit., pp. 68-69.

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I do not undermine my pastor. ... All his accusations are groundless, the motive of them is hatred toward me and insatiable desire of money. ... Having lost the belief of getting the same assistant priest as he is himself, he does not want any now. He would like such an assistant, who would not have conscience and would help him in his every crime. ... I am so tired with this place that I do not think there is any worse in the whole world. Here is the best place for rascals and criminalists.<sup>5</sup>

"The struggle and pathos of immigrant life, the desire of this peasant people to be faithful to the church and its frustrations, the cruel insensitivity and calculated manipulation of some of the clergy and the compassion of others -- all this shines through Motulewski's broken English to give us a glimpse not only of St. Stanislaus parish, Cleveland, but the immigrant church, U.S.A."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>6</sup>Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 70.



## Chapter 3

### the contention continues

There seemed no end to the difficulties unfolding at St. Stanislaus. A group of parishioners wrote to Bishop Horstmann complaining how Protestants jeered them in derision about Kolaszewski.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile accusations continued between Kolaszewski and his assistant, Fr. Motulewski. Kolaszewski was summoned before Bishop Horstmann to explain claims of Motulewski's drunken behavior and neglect of the parish.<sup>2</sup> About a week following this meeting, it seems that an agreement was reached whereby Kolaszewski would leave the diocese. In a letter to Bishop Horstmann dated May 2, 1892, Kolaszewski explained that he was penniless. He had given the church \$21,060 and the property of Sacred Heart Church. Now he asked the congregation to pay his personal debt of \$4,393 and to give him \$5,000.<sup>3</sup>

A Mr. Stafford, president of a bank involved with Kolaszewski, also wrote to Bishop Horstmann on the same day, essentially corroborating Kolaszewski's plea of poverty.<sup>4</sup> Mr. Stafford appeared to be somewhat of a financial and personal advisor to Kolaszewski as well as a liaison with Bishop Horstmann in financial matters.

On May 5, 1892, Bishop Horstmann wrote to Kolaszewski telling him that his diocesan consultors advised him to add Kolaszewski's personal debts to St. Stanislaus parish. The bishop also promised to give Kolaszewski \$1,000 in cash and a promissory note for \$2,000 to be paid at year's end if he resigned as pastor and left the diocese. Horstmann concluded the letter by praying that Kolaszewski accept the settlement and to say nothing about it to his congregation.<sup>5</sup>

In the month preceding the appointment of Rev. Benedict Rosinski as new pastor of St. Stanislaus, Fr. Kolaszewski held a meeting of the parishioners to vote on resolutions



Rev. Benedict Rosinski.

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<sup>1</sup>Parishioners of St. Stanislaus to Horstmann, nd, ADC, Box PH 6, in Joseph H. Lackner, S.M., M.A., Bishop Ignatius F. Horstmann and the Americanization of the Catholic Church in the United States, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup>Horstmann to Kolaszewski, 26 April 1892, ADC, J, p. 718, in Lackner, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

<sup>3</sup>Kolaszewski to Horstmann, 2 May 1892, ADC, Box PH 6, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 71.

<sup>4</sup>Stafford to Horstmann, Chicago, 2 May 1892, ADC, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>5</sup>Horstmann to Kolaszewski, 5 May 1892, ADC, J, pp. 733-734, in Lackner, op. cit., pp. 72-73.

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supporting him as pastor. Most of the people abstained from voting on the resolutions, which were worded differently in English and Polish.<sup>6</sup>

This problem of language aggravated the many difficulties at St. Stanislaus. The bishop and his advisors did not speak Polish, so they relied on those who spoke both languages, like Fr. Kolaszewski. This communication problem lent itself to misunderstanding and deception.<sup>7</sup>

Also during this interim month, Bishop Horstmann had received communication from Cardinal Ledochowski, the new Prefect of the Propaganda in Rome, regarding Kolaszewski. Included was a letter for Kolaszewski ordering him to leave for Rome within 15 days. If Kolaszewski disobeyed the order he was to be suspended.<sup>8</sup> Since Kolaszewski had left the area before the letter's arrival, it was never delivered to him.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>"Report of the Meeting of May 8th," Cleveland, 16 May 1892, ADC, Box PH 6, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>7</sup>Lackner, *loc. cit.*

<sup>8</sup>Ledochowski to Horstmann, Rome, 21 May 1892, ADC, Box: Letters to and from Bishop Horstmann, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-74.

<sup>9</sup>Horstmann to Elder, Cleveland, 6 June 1892, AAC, Box 1891 T - 1892 L; Ryan to Horstmann, 11 June 1892, ADC, Box PH 6, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

## Chapter 4

### Kolaszewski resigns

On May 24, 1892, Rev. Anton Kolaszewski finally sent in his resignation. His reasons for resigning his position as pastor of St. Stanislaus were the peace and unity of the parish, but he denied all charges of conspiracy. Kolaszewski reminded Bishop Horstmann that he advanced \$21,060 to the congregation and that the bishop promised to pay him back \$3,000. Kolaszewski asked that a note or check be sent to that effect. In turn, Kolaszewski promised to leave St. Stanislaus after Mass on June 8. He ended his letter of resignation with another appeal to destitution, asking for a return of the \$413 sent for the new seminary and requesting a good reference from the bishop.<sup>1</sup> The debt of St. Stanislaus Parish stood at over \$90,000 at the time of Kolaszewski's resignation.<sup>2</sup>

A few days after Kolaszewski's resignation, Bishop Horstmann received a letter from the bank president, Mr. Stafford, acknowledging a receipt from Horstmann to pay Kolaszewski \$1,000. He also mentioned that he understood Horstmann intended to send Kolaszewski a note for \$2,000 payable in the future. Mr. Stafford asked the bishop to send the note directly to him to deliver to Kolaszewski as there were some personal matters to attend to between the bank and Kolaszewski.<sup>3</sup>

The relationship between Stafford and Kolaszewski seemed somewhat unusual. It is suspected that Stafford had been involved in some of the financial schemes that resulted in opposition to Kolaszewski at St. Stanislaus.<sup>4</sup> In a letter to Bishop Horstmann dated June 7, 1892, Kolaszewski thanked the bishop for the money he sent and told him that he had given \$2,000 to the Church, instructing Mr. Stafford about



O.M. Stafford.

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<sup>1</sup>Kolaszewski to Horstmann, 24 May 1892, ADC, Box PH 6, in Joseph H. Lackner, S.M., M.A., Bishop Ignatius F. Horstmann and the Americanization of the Catholic Church in the United States, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup>Rev. George F. Houck, A History of Catholicity in Northern Ohio and in the Diocese of Cleveland from 1749 to December 31, 1900, I, pp. 172-173.

<sup>3</sup>Stafford to Horstmann, 28 May 1892, ADC, Box PH 6, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>4</sup>Lackner, loc. cit.



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whom to give the money.<sup>5</sup> It is debatable whether Kolaszewski gave the money to the "Church" out of generosity or Stafford's pressure.<sup>6</sup>

Along with his heartfelt thanks, in this same letter, Kolaszewski insisted that a great injustice had been done to him and that he could, if necessary, defend himself in the public news against the jealous priests who incited the people against him; however, for the sake of peace and the avoidance of scandal, he refrained from taking action, content to suffer the wrong done to him. He concluded his letter by assuring the bishop that he did not blame him for what happened but those jealous priests.<sup>7</sup> Kolaszewski's words were threateningly prophetic, when, a few years later, the news of his return from "exile" became fodder for Cleveland's press. Kolaszewski's position as a martyr for his cause was a popular theme.

Who were the jealous priests of whom Kolaszewski spoke? He certainly accused his assistant Motulewski. Also, Rev. Rosinski, the soon to be appointed new pastor of St. Stanislaus and a native son of the parish, had jostled with Kolaszewski and desired to be pastor. Finally, it was said that the German priests of the diocese were jealous of Fr. Kolaszewski for having built the most magnificent church in the diocese. There is no proof of Kolaszewski's claims nor evidence to identify which priests he meant.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Kolaszewski to Horstmann, 7 June 1892, ADC, Box PH 6, in Lackner, loc. cit.

<sup>6</sup>Lackner, loc. cit.

<sup>7</sup>Kolaszewski to Horstmann, 7 June 1892, ADC, Box PH 6, in Lackner, op. cit. pp. 75-76.

<sup>8</sup>Lackner, op. cit., p. 76.

## Chapter 5

### **persistent dissension**

**E**ven with Kolaszewski's departure in 1892, peace did not come to St. Stanislaus parish. Though a part of the St. Stanislaus congregation was thankful for Kolaszewski's resignation, another group was disgruntled over it and had demonstrated against the new pastor, Fr. Rosinski.<sup>1</sup> On Wednesday, June 13, 1892, Bishop Horstmann answered Rev. Rosinski's request to speak to the parishioners and arrived at the parish to address them. The bishop urged restraint rather than rebellion and warned that opposition to Rosinski would risk denial of the sacraments. A reporter for the Catholic Universe<sup>2</sup> stated that the bishop's speech seemed to have the intended effect of calming the listeners.<sup>3</sup> Prematurely, Bishop Horstmann happily thought the difficulties at St. Stanislaus were over. In a letter to Archbishop Elder he said, "The Polish trouble I think is settled. I have not heard anything since my address to the congregation. Deo gratias."<sup>4</sup>

However, further difficulties were to come in the Kolaszewski case. Cardinal Ledochowski, Prefect of the Congregation of the Propaganda in Rome, wrote Bishop Horstmann that on July 27, 1892, the Supreme Tribunal of the Holy Office had ordered a trial be started by Bishop Horstmann against Kolaszewski. Horstmann was also instructed to give notice to him of Kolaszewski's whereabouts so that his power to hear confession could be suspended.<sup>5</sup>

Intimations of the continuing unrest at St. Stanislaus also came on this same day in a letter from Rev. Rosinski, the new pastor of St. Stanislaus to Fr. George Houck, Chancellor of the Diocese of Cleveland. In his letter, Fr. Rosinski, who came from German Poland, complained to the Chancellor of the unfounded nationalistic dislike directed against him by some of his parishioners. With an assistant, he said, peace would come quicker to the parish.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Committee of St. Stanislaus to Horstmann, 11 June 1892, ADC, Box PH 6, in Joseph H. Lackner, S.M., M.A., Bishop Ignatius F. Horstmann and the Americanization of the Catholic Church in the United States, p. 76.

<sup>2</sup>This was the original name of the present Cleveland diocesan publication, The Catholic Universe Bulletin.

<sup>3</sup>"Rt. Rev. Bishop Horstmann and St. Stanislaus' Parishioners," Catholic Universe, 16 June 1892, p. 8, in Lackner, loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup>Horstmann to Elder, 21 June 1892, AAC, Box 1891 T - 1892 L, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 77.

<sup>5</sup>Ledochowski to Horstmann, Rome, 2 August 1892, ADC, Box: Letters to and from Bishop Horstmann, in Lackner, loc. cit.

<sup>6</sup>Rosinski to Houck, 2 August 1892, ADC, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 78.

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Although for almost a year no correspondence concerning the problems at St. Stanislaus can be found, this did not signal an end to the developing factionalism. Seemingly unable to obtain satisfaction from diocesan officials, two representatives of St. Stanislaus sought redress with Rome by meeting in Washington, D.C. with Archbishop Satolli, Apostolic Delegate to the United States. They claimed that Rev. Rosinski was responsible for Kolaszewski's removal and as long as Rosinski was pastor, they refused to receive the sacraments. Archbishop Satolli wrote Bishop Horstmann regarding the St. Stanislaus situation on May 12, 1893. Satolli recommended that Horstmann appoint a new pastor to halt the rebellion. This could be done without embarrassment to the bishop as Canon Law permitted it.<sup>7</sup> There was no doubt that Horstmann could do what the wise Satolli had suggested; however, to do so might set a precedent in future nationality conflicts.<sup>8</sup>



Archbishop Satolli, Apostolic Delegate to the United States.

Archbishop Satolli's involvement with Kolaszewski continued when on June 15, 1893, Bishop Horstmann wrote him concerning the claim of a group of parishioners of St. Stanislaus that Satolli promised them the reinstatement of Kolaszewski as pastor. Satolli denied the claim and said that he had sent a letter to the leader of the delegation that had come to Washington in May, instructing them to obey their bishop.<sup>9</sup>

These dissatisfied parishioners from St. Stanislaus pleaded to Satolli for an end to the division in their parish, a division they claimed was exacerbated by Rev. Rosinski. They claimed that both Kolaszewski and Rosinski had too many personal friends and relatives in the parish who were able to unduly influence them. What was needed to restore peace and harmony was a stranger unacquainted with the problems in the parish, "a priest who will threaten one member as well as another, all in like manner -- a priest who will forgive and forget is in our mind the only salvation for the congregation. ... It seems that Father Rosinski tries to enlarge the cleft between the priest and lay members. ... A strange pastor will settle it and bring peace and harmony to the congregation."<sup>10</sup> Similar sentiments were presented to Bishop Horstmann in a petition carried to him on October 31, 1893 by

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<sup>7</sup>Satolli to Horstmann, Washington, D.C., 12 May 1893, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, Kolaszewski and Rosinski, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79.

<sup>8</sup>Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

<sup>9</sup>Sbarretti to Horstmann, Washington, D.C., 28 June 1893, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, Kolaszewski and Rosinski, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

<sup>10</sup>"His Removal Sought," *The Cleveland Leader*, 31 October 1893, p. 12.



*persistent dissension*

Mr. Joseph Pawlowski, a butcher, who evidently was the leader of the faction seeking Rosinski's ouster.<sup>11</sup>

The friction at St. Stanislaus was but fitfully restive as complaints continued against Rev. Rosinski. By February of 1894 Bishop Horstmann was facing grave difficulties with the dissidents at the parish. Again a group from the parish petitioned Apostolic Delegate Satolli to remove Rosinski and reinstate Kolaszewski as pastor. Bishop Horstmann, having been informed of this event, also presented the case to Satolli who replied and assured Horstmann that twice he had supported and upheld the bishop's decision in regard to the delegation from St. Stanislaus. Satolli urged the bishop to deliver a stern warning to his people.<sup>12</sup>

Fearing Kolaszewski's return to Cleveland, Bishop Horstmann made a desperate written appeal for help to Mr. Stafford, the bank president with whom Kolaszewski had financial dealings. Horstmann's letter implied that there were legal suits still pending against Kolaszewski that made it impossible for him to return to Cleveland from Syracuse, without prosecution. Stafford was told that since Kolaszewski was dismissed from Syracuse, Horstmann feared he would return to Cleveland and lead some of the St. Stanislaus parishioners into schism. The letter appealed to Stafford not to help Kolaszewski in his return, Said the bishop, "His return would be indeed a calamity in every way."<sup>13</sup>

By now the story of the Polish agitation at St. Stanislaus had been published in the newspapers of the day. During March of 1894, Bishop Horstmann, Archbishop Satolli, some of the St. Stanislaus parishioners, and Fr. Kolaszewski all exchanged letters over the situation.<sup>14</sup>

On Friday, April 20, 1894, a representative committee of the Kolaszewski faction from St. Stanislaus met with Bishop Horstmann to voice their dissatisfaction with Rosinski. They demanded the reinstatement of Kolaszewski as pastor of St. Stanislaus and title to the church property. In return the 800 represented parishioners would pay off the church debt and be peaceable; if not, they would organize an independent parish and build a new church. The bishop said he would take the proposition under consideration for a month and

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Satolli to Horstmann, Washington, D.C., 16 February 1894, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, Kolaszewski and Rosinski, in Lackner, op. cit., pp. 80-81.

<sup>13</sup>Horstmann to Stafford, 20 February 1894, ADC, 8:763, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>14</sup>Satolli to Horstmann, Washington, D.C., 9 March 1894, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, Kolaszewski and Rosinski; Satolli to Committee of St. Stanislaus, Washington, D.C., 9 March 1894, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, Kolaszewski and Rosinski; Satolli to Kolaszewski, Washington, D.C., 9 March 1894, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, Kolaszewski and Rosinski; Satolli to Horstmann, 19 March 1894, Washington, D.C., ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, Kolaszewski and Rosinski; Horstmann to Papi, 20 March 1894, ADC, 8:773; Horstmann to Rosinski, 21 March 1894, M, p. 319, Horstmann to Papi, 28 March 1894, 8:774, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 82.

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he promised to replace Rosinski with another priest as soon as a suitable replacement could be found, but did not say whether his successor would be Kolaszewski. When he remarked to the committee that Kolaszewski might not want to return to Cleveland, the committee hastened to answer that he would be glad to return.<sup>15</sup> The bishop expressed ignorance of the extent of the parishioners' dissatisfaction with Rosinski but was handed a petition with 650 names on it, with affirmation of another 300 if necessary. When asked if another church would be organized if Rosinski were not removed, the bishop was told, "That is a hard question."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>"Visited the Bishop," The Cleveland Leader, 22 April 1894, p. 12.

<sup>16</sup>"A Bishop's Promise," The Cleveland Leader, 23 April 1894, p. 8.

## Chapter 6

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### Kolaszewski returns

**R**ev. Kolaszewski had been visiting his friend Kolasinski in Detroit in early May 1894 and when his loyal followers in Cleveland were telegraphed of his proximity, a committee hurriedly traveled to Detroit to fetch him. As Kolaszewski said, they were most powerfully persuasive, "... they begged and implored me so hard to come to Cleveland that I could not stay away."<sup>1</sup> So on Wednesday, May 2, 1894, this welcoming committee escorted Kolaszewski to Cleveland and thrust headlong into the furious division at St. Stanislaus.<sup>2</sup> From this point on events moved swiftly and inevitably.

Upon his arrival in Cleveland, after stopping just briefly for breakfast and coffee, Kolaszewski's first stop was an unannounced visit to Bishop Horstmann's home.<sup>3</sup> Despite Kolaszewski's assertion to Archbishop Satolli that he would not return to Cleveland, he barged into Bishop Horstmann's office on this Wednesday morning with three parishioners and made his intentions known in no uncertain terms.<sup>4</sup> Here is an account of the confrontation as it appeared in The Cleveland Leader:

We did not give our name and was obliged to wait some time before we could see the bishop. He had not the slightest idea that I was anywhere near Cleveland, and when he saw me he said, 'Mr. Kolaszewski, I do not care to see you or talk with you.' I waited till he was through and then I bowed low and said, 'Good morning, reverend bishop.' 'I do not want to talk to you,' he cried. 'I have nothing to say to you.' 'But I have to you, most reverend bishop,' said I. 'I wish you to leave this house,' he cried in the same loud tones. 'I have a right in this house,' I said. 'It is my house. My people helped to build it.' 'I do not want to have anything to say to you,' he declared again. 'In the name of justice,' I said, 'give me my church for which my people paid and which they own.' 'Never,' he said. 'Then permit us to build another church,' I said. 'Never,' he said again. 'Then, reverend bishop,' I said respectfully, 'we will build our own church and keep it in our own name and ever look to you as its spiritual head. If you impose a tax on us we will cheerfully pay it, but we will keep our own property in our own name.' 'I forbid you to build a church,'

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<sup>1</sup>"No Mass Celebrated," The Cleveland Leader, 7 May 1894, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>"Embraced His Knees," The Cleveland Leader; the clipping at the ADC was undated, but probably was 4 May 1894, page unknown.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Horstmann to Papi, 2 May 1894, ADC, M, p. 411, in Joseph H. Lackner, S.M., M.A., Bishop Ignatius F. Horstmann and the Americanization of the Catholic Church in the United States, p. 82.



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he cried. 'We wish you a good morning, most reverend bishop,' I said, and we withdrew.<sup>5</sup>

One gets the impression that Kolaszewski enjoyed this verbal repartee with his bishop which perhaps bordered on harassment. This clash of Titans exploded the unrest that had seethed at St. Stanislaus ever since Kolaszewski's unceremonious resignation as pastor in 1892.

Bishop Horstmann wasted no time in reporting this incident to Dr. Papi, Archbishop Satolli's personal secretary. In the same letter Horstmann wrote that Kolaszewski had been forced to leave Syracuse to avoid a criminal suit. He also asked Dr. Papi if Kolaszewski should not be excommunicated if he started his own church.<sup>6</sup>

In another desperate plea for help, Bishop Horstmann had written to Kolaszewski's superior in Syracuse, Bishop Luddens, for clarification of the criminal charges against Kolaszewski, hoping for his extradition to Syracuse.<sup>7</sup> Rumors of the charges which probably involved an abortion apparently were false since no one tried to arrest Kolaszewski upon his return to Cleveland. Certainly Bishop Luddens was not eager to have Kolaszewski return to Syracuse either.<sup>8</sup>

Bishop Horstmann again wrote to Dr. Papi on May 3, 1894, thanking Apostolic Delegate Satolli for such prompt reply to his questions regarding the Kolaszewski case. He also thanked Dr. Papi for informing him that someone had accused him (Horstmann) of criticizing Satolli and the Apostolic Delegation.<sup>9</sup> Horstmann was extremely sensitive to any criticism that he was disloyal and unresponsive to authority, especially Roman authority; he protested his allegiance both out of conviction and fear of repercussions. It could also have been someone from the rebellious faction of St. Stanislaus who claimed Horstmann had criticized Satolli; however, this accusation would not be the only one brought against the bishop during his tenure.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>"Embraced His Knees," The Cleveland Leader.

<sup>6</sup>Horstmann to Papi, 2 May 1894, ADC, M. p. 411, in Lackner, loc. cit.

<sup>7</sup>Horstmann to Luddens, 2 May 1894, ADC, M., p. 414, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 83.

<sup>8</sup>Lackner, loc. cit.

<sup>9</sup>Horstmann to Papi, 3 May 1894, ADC, 8:778-779, in Lackner, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

<sup>10</sup>Lackner, op. cit., p. 85.

## Chapter 7

### a renegade church is formed

Kolaszewski began to carry out his plans to begin a schismatic church. Bishop Horstmann kept Satolli appraised of the unfolding drama.<sup>1</sup> He also had Msgr. Thorpe, a mutual friend of his and Kolaszewski's, deliver the two years old summons to Rome to Kolaszewski.<sup>2</sup>

The Kolaszewski faction of St. Stanislaus parish organized an independent church on Thursday, May 3, 1894. It was to be called the Church of the Sacred Heart of St. Mary. That morning a meeting was announced at Szach's Hall at #136 Fleet Street.<sup>3</sup> A committee of three men escorted Kolaszewski in a closed carriage from the home where he was staying to the hall, passing the open doors of St. Stanislaus Church and the homes of hundreds of Polish families. A reporter from The Cleveland Leader eloquently described the scene:

They were expected and hundreds of people were on the lookout for them. Some cheered and many waved their hands in greeting to the returned priest. They found Szach's Hall crowded almost to suffocation and perhaps a thousand people standing in the street. When Kolaszewski ascended the platform of the hall there was intense excitement in the audience. Women wept and two score persons pressed forward to embrace the knees of the priest and to kiss the hem of his coat. There was jostling and confusion and some of the men cheered to relieve their pent up emotions.

Kolaszewski spoke for two hours. He said he was present not because he chose to come, but by the will of people. The day was the anniversary of the Polish Constitution which the patriots of a hundred years ago sought to enforce. Kolaszewski took occasion to say: ' . . . I would not be here but for the conviction that my presence is for your welfare. We should not establish a schismatic but a good Catholic church. . . . we shall proceed with the organization of a church that will be of our ancient faith. If we are excommunicated then I shall be the first to suffer and the first to enter hell because I

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<sup>1</sup>Horstmann to Papi, 4 May 1894, ADC, 8:780, in Joseph H. Lackner, S.M., M.A., Bishop Ignatius F. Horstmann and the Americanization of the Catholic Church in the United States, p. 85.

<sup>2</sup>Horstmann to Bauer, 4 May 1894, ADC, M, p. 421, in Lackner, loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup>This hall was later known as Budny's Hall and was located at the present corner of East 54th Street and Fleet Avenue. Cleveland's street naming system was changed on December 1st, 1906.



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stand as your leader. . . . We shall build a church of which you will hold the title. You will decide upon the priest you want."<sup>4</sup>

A formal constitution was adopted at this historic meeting to satisfy requirements to exist as a legal corporation in the State of Ohio. The constitution stated the purpose for the establishment of the church was:

. . . for the instruction and education of the people in the religious sense of the Polish Catholic Church; the religious and secular education of the children of its adherents; the employment of teachers and the adoption of all means for the intellectual moral religious and secular education of the Polish people. The sermons and instructions are to be in the Polish, English and German languages. All secular education is to be principally conducted in the English language in accordance with the plan adopted in the public schools of Ohio.<sup>5</sup>

At the annual meeting each first Monday of January, seven trustees would be elected or their terms renewed.<sup>6</sup> The priest was to be the sole authority in religious matters while the trustees would handle the business affairs of the parish. A financial committee composed of a president, secretary, and a cashier was to be elected from among the trustees. The books of the church were to be balanced every Monday and an accounting presented to the congregation from the pulpit each subsequent Sunday.<sup>7</sup>

The congregation of Kolaszewski's church would select its own priest or approve of one sent by the bishop.<sup>8</sup> The plan of the constitution was known as Independent Catholicism and was to serve as the model for other such churches who together would select from among their priests, a Pole to serve as their bishop.<sup>9</sup> All such independent congregations would support their Polish bishop and the Polish Independent Catholic Seminary which would be built.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>"Embraced His Knees," The Cleveland Leader; the clipping at the ADC was undated, but probably was 4 May 1894, page unknown.

<sup>5</sup>Constitution and Regulations of the Polish Catholic Congregation Known as 'The Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary' of Cleveland, Ohio, #3, p. 4, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Archives.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., Article III, pp. 8-9.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., Article IV, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., Article XV, p. 14.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., Article XVI, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., Article XVII, pp. 14-15.



*a renegade church is formed*

To show their devotion to Kolaszewski at this meeting, the congregation proposed that he should be their priest forever, but since legal contracts had to have a limit, they fixed his term at ninety-nine years. Plans were made to begin soliciting funds for building a church. A lot on Fremont Street<sup>11</sup> was to be purchased within a week.<sup>12</sup> The parish property was officially purchased from the Ruggles Estate on June 6, 1894 for \$7,000.<sup>13</sup> Its valuation was set at \$25,000 on July 1, 1894.<sup>14</sup> The original 16 lots measured 320' in width and 280' in depth from Fremont to Oakwood Streets.<sup>15</sup> A parish school would be opened in a few weeks and then a modest frame building surmounted with a cross, would be constructed. A home would be provided for the priests and then the new church organization would be complete. Until the erection of the church, services were to be held at Szach' Hall. The congregation elected as their first trustees: A. Sharupski [sic]; A. Rafulski [sic]; John Kniola; Joseph Pamowski [sic]; John Kotiemski [sic]; and Frank Lewandowski [sic].<sup>16</sup>

Kolaszewski and the founding trustees of the parish adamantly reaffirmed their right to the title of their own property in Article VI of the Constitution:

... The trustees as well as Father Kolaszewski or his successors are strictly forbidden to sell, transfer, or donate for any consideration and under any circumstances to Bishop Horstmann or anybody, this property acquired by hard work and devotion of the parishioners. It is forbidden once and forever. It can only be done by the unanimous wish of all the members of the parish.<sup>17</sup>

These same strictures were recorded in the Parish Book of Minutes at the annual meeting held January 7, 1895 when the congregation

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<sup>11</sup>Fremont Street is the present Lansing Avenue.

<sup>12</sup>"Embraced His Knees," The Cleveland Leader.

<sup>13</sup>County Index Number: Vol. 581, p. 250, deeded to Trustees of IHBVM; redeeded to A.F. Kolaszewski on 11 February 1896, County Index Number: Vol. 630, p. 217.

<sup>14</sup>Constitution, Article VI, p. 11.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>16</sup>"Embraced His Knees," The Cleveland Leader.

<sup>17</sup>Constitution, Article VI, p. 11.

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. . . Strongly and unanimously resolved that never would the parish give Bishop Horstman [sic] the deed designating the good of the church.<sup>18</sup>

This day of our founding was ever to be a cause for celebration. Provisions for this occasion were written in the Constitution:

The anniversary of the day [our founding] will be celebrated every year as a holiday by all the members. If this holiday comes on a work day, it will be postponed until the nearest Sunday and celebrated with pomp.<sup>19</sup>

The organization of the new church proceeded amidst the excitement of these events.

No Mass was held at Szach's Hall on Sunday, May 6, 1894 as planned, the reason being that it would be unbecoming to hold such a sacred service in a building housing a saloon. During the afternoon on this day The Society of St. Francis was formally organized.<sup>20</sup> Kolaszewski had complained that before his expulsion from St. Stanislaus there were several flourishing societies with 400 to 600 members in each which had all but disappeared. He had begun to build them up again at the new church.<sup>21</sup> The first Mass of the new church was to be held the following Sunday if a suitable place could be found. Kolaszewski was staying at 75 Union Street<sup>22</sup> until moving into his new house within the next few days.<sup>23</sup>

It was important for the new church to establish a presence, if not with a physical building, then at least with a worshipping congregation. Once Mass had been said for the newly formed parish, its establishment would be validated and, it was hoped, Bishop Horstmann would be forced to officially acknowledge the existence of this independent church. Though independent in its existence, it is recorded in the parish minutes that the church would be in union with Bishop Horstmann and it would be organized according to the rules and regulations of the Diocese of Cleveland.

. . . But as the Bishop Horstman [sic] refused to consent [sic], treated the people worst [sic] than cattle [sic], called them the worst names any dictionary

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<sup>18</sup>Parish Book of Minutes, 1895, p. 5, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Archives.

<sup>19</sup>Constitution, Article XII, p. 13.

<sup>20</sup>"No Mass Celebrated," The Cleveland Leader, 7 May 1894, p. 8.

<sup>21</sup>"Ready for a Charter," The Cleveland Leader, 11 May 1894, p. 8.

<sup>22</sup>75 Union Street is equivalent to the present 6607 or 6609 Union Avenue.

<sup>23</sup>"No Mass Celebrated," The Cleveland Leader, 7 May 1894, p. 8.

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could produce [sic], we separated [sic] from Bishop Horstman [sic] and refused to give to him the title of the property.<sup>24</sup>

Mass was to be said the following Sunday, May 13, 1894, at a private residence.<sup>25</sup> In the midst of all this feverish activity which engulfed the earliest days of the church, the parish recorded Fr. Kolaszewski's first baptism on May 15, 1894. On this day he baptized Sophia Wawrzyniak, born on the same day to Martin Wawrzyniak and Theophila Balcerzak.<sup>26</sup>

The Cleveland Leader of the day followed the story of our church's organization intently and with near daily accounts. Kolaszewski and his followers were receiving support from many people in America and Europe.<sup>27</sup> Many Poles offered their scanty savings to help build a church, materials for which were to be hauled to the Fremont Avenue site on Wednesday, the 9th of May.<sup>28</sup> Formal application was made to the Secretary of the State of Ohio for the incorporation of the Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, its official name, on Thursday, May 10, 1894. Signers of the document were Rev. Anthony Francis Kolaszewski and the eleven church trustees: Alexander S. Karupski [sic]; Anthony Rafolski [sic]; John Kniola; John Kotlewski [sic]; Joseph Pawloski [sic]; Frank Lewandowski; August Westwalt [sic]; Julius Bedriarski [sic]; Ludwig Falurski [sic]; Andrew Rominski; and Anthony Pilarowski.<sup>29</sup>

The independent church movement was not unique to Cleveland. In addition to the church in Detroit established by Rev. Kolasinski. Polish congregations were forging ahead with the establishment of their own churches in Buffalo, Baltimore, Nanticoke and Reading, Pennsylvania, and Meriden, Connecticut.<sup>30</sup> The people of Buffalo sent our Kolaszewski as a present a large and handsomely illustrated Bible which bore an inscription and the seal of a large church society. Mr. M.A. Chrostowski, Editor of the weekly Polish journal, Jutrzenska, predicted that when several churches had been organized, a general meeting of delegates would probably be held in Cleveland to demand that a Polish auditor be appointed to the staff of the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Satolli, to attend to the affairs

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<sup>24</sup>Parish Book of Minutes, 1894, p. 2.

<sup>25</sup>"The Bishop's Wrath," The Cleveland Leader, 9 May 1894, p. 8.

<sup>26</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of The Immaculate Heart of Mary Cleveland, Ohio from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #7, ADC.

<sup>27</sup>"Much Interested," The Cleveland Leader, 12 May 1894, p. 7.

<sup>28</sup>"The Bishop's Wrath," The Cleveland Leader, 9 May 1894, p. 8.

<sup>29</sup>"Ready for a Charter," The Cleveland Leader, 11 May 1894, p. 8.

<sup>30</sup>"Much Interested," The Cleveland Leader, 12 May 1894, p. 7.



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of the Polish churches in America. They would also demand freedom from the bishops who ruled them.<sup>31</sup>

Bishop Horstmann, ever hopeful for a peaceful settlement to the scandal erupting in the Polish neighborhood, kept the Apostolic Delegate informed of the unsettling events occurring at Kolaszewski's unauthorized church. In a letter dated May 11, 1894, Archbishop Satolli gave Horstmann some strange advice regarding the Kolaszewski case. He told Horstmann that if he were in "... your situation I would ask Rev. Kolaszewski to officiate for the Polish Congregation who want to be with him. I would give him permission to build a new Church but at the same time I would closely examine Rev. Kolaszewski's behavior, and give him advice." Satolli concluded his letter to Horstmann by telling him to do all in his power to avoid excommunication which would result in more scandal.<sup>32</sup> Kolaszewski's followers were claiming to have the approval of Archbishop Satolli to establish a new church. He adamantly denied this claim.<sup>33</sup> Of course, Satolli's advice to Horstmann, had it been publicly known, was just what the Poles were claiming.<sup>34</sup>

On the same day Horstmann received the admonition from Satolli, he wrote a letter directly contrary to Kolaszewski, notifying him he was forbidden to publicly celebrate Mass, to exercise any priestly function in Cleveland, or to do anything toward establishing a congregation. Horstmann ended his letter with the threat of excommunication if his orders were violated.<sup>35</sup>

Cleveland's Catholic newspaper, The Catholic Universe, unequivocally condemned the events going on at the Polish parish of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary and assumed an accusing stance towards Rev. Kolaszewski. A commentary appearing in the May 12, 1894 issue, scathingly editorialized Kolaszewski's stormy encounter with Bishop Horstmann during which he threateningly demanded restoration of the pastorate of St. Stanislaus:

Every Catholic knows that in the appointment of pastors the Bishop alone is the judge and the faithful are bound to receive him whom he appoints.

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<sup>31</sup>"Asked for a Priest," The Cleveland Leader, 21 May 1894, p. 8.

<sup>32</sup>Satolli to Horstmann, Washington, D.C., 11 May 1894, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, Kolaszewski and Rosinski, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 86.

<sup>33</sup>Satolli to Horstmann, Trenton, N.J., 20 May 1894, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, Kolaszewski and Rosinski, in Lackner, op. cit., pp. 88-89.

<sup>34</sup>Lackner, op. cit., p. 88.

<sup>35</sup>Horstmann to Kolaszewski, 11 May 1894, ADC, M, p. 437, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 86.

*a renegade church is formed*

If the Poles be ignorant of these elementary truths, we can only pity them. . . . For him (Kolaszewski) there is only one way to proceed. The Ecclesiastical Courts are open to him. . . .

He is schismatic himself because he is in rebellion against the Bishop of the diocese and what is still worse he is seeking to lead many Polish Catholics into schism with himself. . . .

The reason given by the Poles for their rebellion is that they wish to hold the title to the church property in their own name. We declare this to be pure hypocrisy. They were perfectly willing to have the property in the Bishop's name, provided they could have their idol for their pastor. This has been and is their sole grievance. . . .

The Catholic Church in this country has seen in the past too much of the so-called 'trustee churches.' Their history has been one of uninterrupted dissensions and scandals. . . .

There never will be peace and harmony in the Polish congregations of this country until the Poles learn that they must live like their fellow Catholics and fellow citizens: obedient to the laws of the Church and the laws of the land. It is a shame and a disgrace that the Poles, and the Poles alone, are the only Catholics who are openly disobedient to ecclesiastical authority all over the land.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>"Rev. Kolaszewski and the Fractious Poles," The Catholic Universe, 12 May 1894, p. 4.

## *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

It was in the year of 1885 that the first Mass was celebrated in the parish of Immaculate Heart of Mary. The Rev. Father, who was then the pastor, was a man of great piety and devotion. He was a native of the State of New York and had spent many years in the study of the Scriptures and the lives of the saints.

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## Chapter 8

### a church is erected

About one hundred unemployed men assisted in the construction of the frame church building which began on Saturday, May 19, 1894. Grocers' wagons were used for hauling dirt in grading the lot. The contractor had promised completion by August.<sup>1</sup>

The original church was a frame combination structure. The upper floor served as the church and the lower floor as the parish school.<sup>2</sup> City water was available in the neighborhood of Oakwood (Worley) since 1885 and Fremont (Lansing) since 1894. It is unlikely the building had indoor sanitary facilities because city sewer service was not available until 1904. Contemporary plat maps show an outbuilding to the rear of the church. Telephone service was accessible in the neighborhood by 1897. The building was probably lit by gas since electricity did not become available until 1913 with the first connection being made on East 66th Street.<sup>3</sup>

While the new parish church was being built, Rev. Kolaszewski's house on the corner of Poland and Oakwood Streets<sup>4</sup> served as his congregation's place of worship. High Mass was celebrated there for the first time on Sunday, May 20, 1894.<sup>5</sup> An organ was provided and Mr. W. Pociachowski was organist and appointed to instruct in the school and have charge of the musical interests of the parish. Services were held at 8 and 10:30 AM and the congregation filled the house and overflowed into the yard. The weekly Sunday offering of between \$40 and \$50 was claimed to exceed that of St. Stanislaus. Several societies were also formed that day. The women of the parish organized



The house at 3945 East 66th Street, where first Masses were said.

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<sup>1</sup>"Land for a Cemetery," The Cleveland Leader, 21 May 1894, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of The Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #5, ADC, Folder: IHM.

<sup>3</sup>City of Cleveland, Utilities Department records.

<sup>4</sup>Poland Street is the present East 66th Street; Oakwood Street is the present Worley Avenue.

<sup>5</sup>The location of the house was actually 59 Poland Court which is equivalent to the present 3945 East 66th Street.

### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

the societies of the Holy Rosary, Sacred Heart, St. Joseph, and a young ladies' sodality.<sup>6</sup> The ladies of the Holy Rosary Society voted to present the church with a statue of the Blessed Virgin reputed to cost \$200. The Cecilia Society of young men and women (choir) decided to donate an organ at an expense of between \$800 and \$1,000.<sup>7</sup> A children's choir was also formed on Friday the 18th of May. A choir of a hundred adults was formed and Mr. Pociachowski organized the young men into the Moniuszko Polish National Singing Society.<sup>8</sup>

With this first public celebration of Mass, the new church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary was officially established in the eyes of its pastor and his congregation. There was no turning back despite even ecclesiastical censures which seemed only to focus the determination of this congregation's independence.

The loyal members of St. Stanislaus parish were now living in daily expectation of a visit from Bishop Horstmann to excommunicate the seceders. An unidentified reporter for The Cleveland Leader reiterated their feelings:

They are looking forward with calm assurance to that day when retribution will overtake the seceders. It makes them feel rather uncomfortable to think that one of these fine days their enemies will be condemned to spend eternity in even a worse place than Cincinnati with the additional possibility that when the dreaded edict (excommunication) is issued the earth may open up and swallow the seceders or they may be withered by a thunderbolt from heaven. With absolute freedom from fear that anything unpleasant is in store for them the seceders are proceeding to carry out the plans for their new church with about as much enthusiasm as was ever displayed in a similar enterprise in this city.<sup>9</sup>

The day on which the first Mass was publicly celebrated for the new congregation was a busy one indeed. On this same day arrangements were made for the purchase of land for a cemetery. A committee comprised of Alexander Skarupski, Anton Rafalski [sic], Stanislas Kniola, and Anton Pilorowski [sic] was appointed to secure a tract of land for a burial ground. This cemetery would be a part of the church property. None of the members of the new church had died yet, and there were no plans for them to do so soon, but they wanted to avoid the sad experience of a similar church in Detroit.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>"Land for a Cemetery," The Cleveland Leader, 21 May 1894, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup>"Not at All Afraid," The Cleveland Leader, 4 June 1894, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup>"Land for a Cemetery," The Cleveland Leader, 21 May 1894, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.



*a church is erected*

Rev. Kolasinski, a friend of Kolaszewski's from Detroit and with whom he had stayed while in Detroit, had started an independent church. Within a week of its organization seven deaths occurred amongst the 10,000 members of the parish. The first six were buried in a Catholic cemetery with no problem. While the burial of the seventh was in progress, the local bishop ordered that the bodies of all seven were to be removed from the cemetery. The coffins were exhumed and set out in the street. The people thought that since the bishop had been responsible for the exhumation, he should also be responsible for finding another burial place for them. So the seven coffins were lined up in a row at the entrance to the bishop's residence. They were finally removed for burial in a vault at the city cemetery and then to a plot of land bought by the congregation for use as a cemetery.<sup>11</sup>

Continued threats of excommunication only served to heighten the resolve of Kolaszewski and his followers. Kolaszewski said he would never hand over the church property of his new parish to the church authority of the diocese. He said, "A deed of the property we have acquired would be accepted as a passport to heaven."<sup>12</sup> When asked if he was excommunicated, Kolaszewski retorted, "And who should excommunicate me, pray? I would not care a snap for it. Let the thunderbolt come. They say that if we are excommunicated we will all go to hell. Yet we have done so little wrong that if we surrender our property we will all go to heaven. It is nonsense. . . . The world is too far advanced for people to accept such ideas."<sup>13</sup>

Kolaszewski claimed that since he was not officially a priest of the Cleveland diocese, Bishop Horstmann could not excommunicate him. Kolaszewski was probably under the jurisdiction of a bishop of the Syrian Catholic Church, Rene Vilatte, who was the head of a community of maybe a thousand in Wisconsin.<sup>14</sup> Kolaszewski also communicated that Archbishop Satolli, the Apostolic Delegate to the United States, had sanctioned the formation of a new church in a personal meeting on April 5, 1894.<sup>15</sup> "He laid his hand on my shoulder, looked in my face and told me that I was a hardworking priest and would have his protection."<sup>16</sup>

Regarding Archbishop Satolli's supposed sanctioning of the establishment of Kolaszewski's independent church, the Archbishop sent a letter to the Polish adherents of the rebellious Kolaszewski. In this letter, dated May 20, 1894, Satolli denounced Kolaszewski's actions and warned his followers:

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>"Defiant as Ever," The Cleveland Leader, 27 May 1894, p. 9.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>"Hot Shot for Satolli," The Cleveland Leader, 7 June 1894, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup>"Defiant as Ever," The Cleveland Leader, 27 May 1894, p. 9.



*History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

I reprobate and condemn it most energetically and with my full authority. Moreover, I protest most earnestly against his allegation that I have authorized him, or given him the least encouragement as regards his going to Cleveland. He has not my authority for any religious act which he performed, or which he will perform in the future. He has not even permission for saying Mass. He is a disgrace to the priestly character, and is leading the poor people who confided in him, because he is a priest, away from the flock of Christ. Therefore, the only thing that remains for him to do is, to leave Cleveland immediately and to betake himself to some place, in order to do penance for his sins, and to atone for the great scandal he has caused to the faithful.

It is my wish and order that all the Poles of Cleveland should be informed and enlightened as to the falsity of Father Kolaszewski's statements, and the sacrilegious character of his actions. They should no longer have any relations with him as a priest; they should be faithful and obedient to their Bishop, the only one who has the right of governing the Catholic Church in Cleveland; no act of worship exercised against his will can be lawful, or in any sense Catholic.<sup>17</sup>

In an emotional appeal to Polish ethnicity, Satolli further wrote, "Let them consider it a duty to be obedient to their Bishop, according to the most notable traditions of their nation, so eminently Catholic, and most agreeable to our Holy Father who . . . has proven his paternal solicitude for the Polish people."<sup>18</sup>

In recalcitrant reply Kolaszewski said, "It does not frighten us in the least. . . . Our people fiercely ridicule his letter."<sup>19</sup> In the letter Satolli admitted surprise at the actions of Kolaszewski and his constituents. Kolaszewski said his people had written to Satolli at least thirty times, and Kolaszewski had been to see Satolli. Kolaszewski claimed that Satolli's surprise was due either to his forgetfulness or the deliberate destruction of all the letters.<sup>20</sup>

Over and over again Kolaszewski reiterated his position:

We are not in any sense criminals. We are ten thousand good, religious Polish Catholic people. . . . All that we ask is to hold our property in our own name,

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<sup>17</sup>"Most Rev. Archbishop Satolli, Apostolic Delegate, on Rev. A.F. Kolaszewski's Scandalous Schism," The Catholic Universe, 26 May 1894, p. 4.

<sup>18</sup>"Mgr. Satolli Admonishes Polish Catholics," The Catholic Universe, 2 June 1894, p. 4.

<sup>19</sup>"Not at All Afraid," The Cleveland Leader, 4 June 1894, p. 5.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

*a church is erected*

to elect our priests, and to establish good American schools. . . . We also want our own cemetery.

This thing will not last forever. . . . Finally they will settle with us. We are ready now to settle with them on almost any terms, but they will probably not be ready to settle with us till we rear the grand cathedral which we will one day put up. . . . In the meanwhile our people are not afraid. Polish Catholics all over the country have been so tyrannized over and abused by bishops that they are tired of it. . . . it would make no difference to them whether their bishops or Satolli, or even the Pope himself, excommunicated them; it would not alarm them.<sup>21</sup>

This raging discontent with Satolli took form in an official response to the Poles of Kolaszewski's new church. Twenty men of the parish met at Kolaszewski's house on the evening of June 4, 1894 to prepare a formal reply to Satolli's letter. Satolli was reminded in the letter that many communications had been sent to him and all were ignored. He was accused of ignoring them and denying their statements and his own promises. The letter reminded Satolli of his meeting with Kolaszewski on April 5, 1894 during which Kolaszewski claimed Satolli promised him justice and protection. Satolli was accused of being afraid of the bishops he was leading. The letter stated that the committee could not understand that Satolli could be surprised by the events in Cleveland:

You have declared that you know all about the good Polish people in Cleveland. You have been told that this same good Polish people would become another Kolasinski<sup>22</sup>, would build their own church unless you do justice to them. Now you are surprised, you know nothing about them. You must have a very poor memory. . . . We all think you are a living and walking insult to our church here, to our great institution, to our glorious country. . . . But if you fail to give us justice, we shall establish our own diocese, have our own bishop, establish our own seminary, etc.<sup>23</sup>

On July 2, 1894 Kolaszewski again wrote to Archbishop Satolli, seeking one last chance for redress. Satolli had been in Columbus, Ohio attending to some difficulties when Kolaszewski read about his visit in The Cleveland Leader. Kolaszewski wrote:

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<sup>21</sup>"Not at All Afraid," The Cleveland Leader, 4 June 1894, p. 5.

<sup>22</sup>Rev. Kolasinski was the pastor of a Polish schismatic Catholic church in Detroit. Kolaszewski stayed with him for a time in Detroit, just prior to his return to Cleveland.

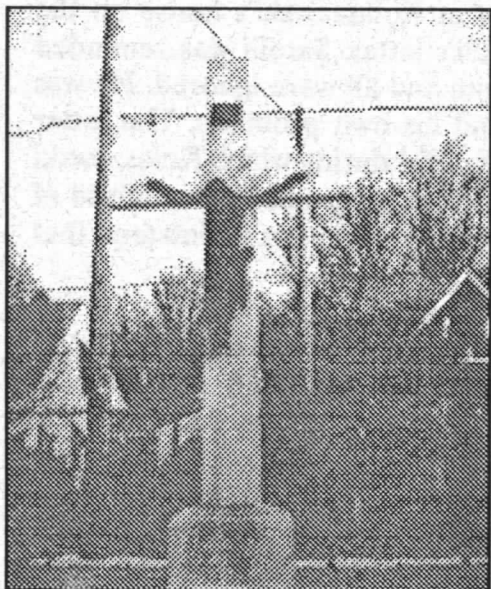
<sup>23</sup>"Hot Shot for Satolli," The Cleveland Leader, 7 June 1894, p. 7.



### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

Why will you not come to Cleveland? to examine our case? to do us Justice? Everything could be settled. . . . Come give us justice. We shall pay all the expenses. If not, we shall have here very soon an Armanian [sic] bishop to bless our church, cemetery and to consecrate a polish national bishop . . . Come our new church is ready for dedication. Come, see and you will gain the victory. . . . Come, give us justice. We do not wish to separate us from the Union of the Church, but we will be driven to do it if you do not give us Justice.<sup>24</sup>

Satolli did not dignify Kolaszewski's "invitation" with an answer; he instead directed his reply to Bishop Horstmann, including with it Kolaszewski's letter to which he referred:



Dedicatory monument at St. Mary Cemetery, erected in 1899.

. . . to be another evidence of his great malice, craziness, together with the most uncommon impudence. After having trampled on the holy laws of the Church, after having profaned his sacerdotal ministry, this miserable man continues to commit the most grievous sacrileges, and continues to uphold the gravest scandal in your diocese. . . .

He dares to demand justice! What justice can he demand after having trampled upon the laws of the Church? The only justice that must be given him is that called by theologians punitive. May God grant a speedy end to the great evil this priest is working in your Church in Cleveland.<sup>25</sup>

Satolli informed Bishop Horstmann that this letter could be forwarded to Kolaszewski, "that wretched man," if he wished.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Kolaszewski to Satolli, Cleveland, 2 July 1894, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, Kolaszewski and Rosinski, in Joseph H. Lackner, S.M., M.A., Bishop Ignatius F. Horstmann and the Americanization of the Catholic Church in the United States, p. 93.

<sup>25</sup>Satolli to Horstmann, Washington, D.C., 3 July 1894, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, Kolaszewski and Rosinski, in Lackner, loc. cit.

<sup>26</sup>"Mgr. Satolli on Kolaszewski," The Catholic Universe, 7 July 1894, p. 4.



*a church is erected*

Following the signing of the responsorial letter to Satolli on June 4, 1894, the monthly trustees meeting of the new church was held. It was reported that in May \$2,004.68 was collected towards payment of the parish land and construction of the parish buildings and church. It was expected that in two weeks the church building would be ready for occupancy and that the first services in it would be conducted on June 17, 1894. On June 6, 1894, nine acres of ground on Marcelline Avenue<sup>27</sup>, a mile from the city limits, was purchased for a cemetery from Jacob and Waronika Noch for \$1,100.<sup>28</sup> The St. Francis Beneficial Society donated a bell to the new church on June 3, 1894 which weighed 1,400 pounds and cost \$200.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Marcelline Avenue is the present East 71st Street.

<sup>28</sup>County Index Number: Vol. 573, page 316, deeded to A.F. Kolaszewski, -- Trustee et al.

<sup>29</sup>"Hot Shot for Satolli," The Cleveland Leader, 7 June 1894, p. 7.

## *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

## Chapter 9

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### excommunication

**W**as Satolli's promise of justice and protection overzealously interpreted by Kolaszewski as approval to establish an independent church? Did the fledgling congregation of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary understand the implications of their rebellious actions or did they unequivocally trust Kolaszewski's decision to lead them into independence and schism? Their motives are questionable.

Under the Polish and American flags, the new independent Roman Catholic church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary gathered for the first service in their own church on Sunday, June 17, 1894. The members of the parish assembled at Kolaszewski's home on Poland Street<sup>1</sup> and marched behind a brass band to the church at 166 Fremont Street.<sup>2</sup> They marched four abreast in a long line. The police feared trouble but there was no violence on either side.<sup>3</sup>

Excerpts from an article in The Cleveland Leader yield a picturesque depiction of the day:

The great parish of St. Stanislaus was early awake. Especially was this true of the dissenting members. A frontier appearance was borne by the new church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was far from complete and only an enthusiastic company would have thought of occupying it. The ground floor was in place, but the sky was discernible through the roof. No seats were provided, and the congregation was compelled to stand throughout the service. Few departed before the last word was said. An entrance way from the street was built of young maple trees and branches supported by framework. The little steeple was only outlined and the largest birds could fly here and there at will within its borders. At the top was a flag of white and red - colors of Poland - and a little below was fastened a smaller emblem of liberty. A score or more of other flags fluttered in the breeze from different parts of the tower. The exterior of the building was adorned with a plain coat of yellow ochre. Some portions were devoid of even that, not yet having been painted. Maple branches were freely used on the inside of the building to relieve the coarse effect of the uncovered boards. The altar was fixed, temporarily, and was draped with a streamer of the national colors

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<sup>1</sup>Poland Street is the present East 66th Street.

<sup>2</sup>Fremont Street is the present Lansing Avenue.

<sup>3</sup>"A Pledge to a Priest," The Cleveland Leader, 18 June 1894, p. 2.



### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

which reached across the entire front. A large American flag on a gilded pole stood at the side of the altar.<sup>4</sup>

The procession assembled quietly near the front of St. Stanislaus on the cornerstone of which is carved the inscription, 'Rev. A.F. Kolaszewski, pastor.' Four societies marched in the line bolstered by a large number of women and a company of little girls. The Cleveland Light Artillery Band headed the procession. A Polish band had been hired the preceding Friday but decided on this Sunday morning not to play for fear of excommunication from St. Stanislaus to which many of the members belonged.<sup>5</sup>

The church was crowded to the doors when the time arrived for morning services. Since there were no kneelers, men and women alike knelt on the floor. "Nearly all bore from the church the evidence of their kneeling -- a fact for which the dust was responsible."<sup>6</sup> A choir of nearly fifty surrounded the organ in the back of the church and led the singing.<sup>7</sup>

Rev. Kolaszewski preached to his loyal followers about their position in the Roman Catholic Church in Polish and English:

We do not despise authority. We only ask that we be treated like men and not as beasts or dogs. We strike for justice and liberty. We will honor and respect the bishop if he will regard us as men. We are and intend to remain good Catholics and Christians.<sup>8</sup>

At the close of Kolaszewski's address the congregation raised its hands and promised him that they would not instigate a conflict with the opposing faction at St. Stanislaus. Following services, the played and the people dispersed to their homes. A vesper service was held in the afternoon.<sup>9</sup>

Rev. Benedict Rosinski, pastor of St. Stanislaus, was interviewed by The Cleveland Leader shortly after Kolaszewski's first service in his new church. He said:

The Kolaszewski faction have separated themselves from the unity of the church. When Kolaszewski says mass it is no less than a sacrilege. He knows

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

### *excommunication*

enough theology to understand that whatever he does without the authority of the bishop is not valid. . . . The bishop is the real pastor of the flock. When a priest separates himself from this authority he is no longer a Catholic.<sup>10</sup>

However, never did Kolaszewski waver from the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church. Our parish never became a part of the Polish National Catholic Church. Kolaszewski adamantly affirmed repeatedly that he professed the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church. His argument was with the authority of the bishop. Threats of excommunication had no effect on Kolaszewski's resolve, other than to intensify it. Kolaszewski moved rapidly, perhaps even hastily, to build his church and hold the first service in it as a symbol of that determination. This realization led to official excommunication by Bishop Horstmann on Wednesday, June 20, 1894. On the Sunday following, the 24th of June, 1894, the sentence of excommunication was read from the pulpits of all the Roman Catholic churches of the diocese<sup>11</sup> and subsequently ignored by Kolaszewski and his followers.

Bishop Horstmann enumerated the reasons for the order of excommunication against Kolaszewski. On May 11, 1894, the bishop served notice to Kolaszewski forbidding him to celebrate Mass or exercise any priestly function in the diocese of Cleveland or to do anything toward establishing an independent church.

- (1) In total disregard, Kolaszewski celebrated Mass in public in the city of Cleveland;
- (2) he established an independent church under the title of the 'Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary;'
- (3) two letters were sent to Kolaszewski inviting him to personally discuss his grievances with Bishop Horstmann and both were ignored;
- (4) a summons was served to Kolaszewski to appear in ecclesiastical court on Wednesday, June 20, 1894 at 10 AM and he failed to appear.<sup>12</sup>

Notice was also given in the excommunication order to all Catholics of the diocese, especially those in Kolaszewski's church, that they must not disobey the bishop's command, under pain of mortal sin.

- (1) They must not become members of the schismatic congregation of 'The Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary;' those who are must relinquish membership;

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>"They Came to Blows," The Cleveland Leader, 25 June 1894, p. 8.

<sup>12</sup>"Sentence of Excommunication Promulgated Against the Rev. A.F. Kolaszewski," The Catholic Universe, 23 June 1894, p. 4.

### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

- (2) they must not aid or support the schismatic church;
- (3) those acting as trustees or officers of the church must immediately resign their positions or also risk excommunication.<sup>13</sup>

All Catholics of the diocese were also forbidden to attend services in Kolaszewski's church, or to receive any religious ministrations from him, or to hold any religious communication with him.<sup>14</sup>

During services on Sunday, the 24th of June, Kolaszewski criticized Bishop Horstmann's excommunication order on five counts:

- (1) Horstmann had no jurisdiction over him since he did not receive him into the diocese;
- (2) in both civil and ecclesiastical court, either the defendant or his attorney must be present when a sentence is pronounced;
- (3) Kolaszewski was condemned without a trial;
- (4) a man cannot be punished except for some serious crime and it was no crime that his people had been fighting for him for two years;
- (5) Kolaszewski answered both letters the bishop said he ignored.<sup>15</sup>

The Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary ignored the order of excommunication and continued the business of its organization. On this same Sunday an organization of men called the King John Society was formed. It was to be a marching company and on state occasions the men would wear black coats, silk hats, white vests, white gloves, and canes.<sup>16</sup>

Also on this Sunday it was decided to organize a band at the church. The Polish band had refused to participate in the opening ceremonies a week ago fearing excommunication from St. Stanislaus. To avoid that difficulty in the future, it was decided to organize another band. Some of the St. Stanislaus musicians were expected to join it.<sup>17</sup>

The St. Joseph Society of St. Stanislaus parish was a large group and the Kolaszewski dissension had split its membership. On this busy Sunday the society held a meeting at St. Stanislaus' hall and the question was raised whether the seceders were allowed membership in the group. Rev. Rosinski, pastor of St. Stanislaus, walked into the meeting and announced that all schismatics must leave the society. He had obtained a list of all the men who had

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.



*excommunication*

taken part in the opening of the new church a week prior. The first name read was John Bosiacki, treasurer of the society, who said he would leave, but assumed that the society would return to him the dues he had paid during the past five years. He got up to leave but was asked to stay until the end of the meeting, but he had had enough. More names were read. An argument and then a fight ensued. A Tod Street<sup>18</sup> shoemaker punched Joseph Klaris in the nose and then assaulted Paul Stawicki. Only ten men paid their dues and the society lost more than half its members that day.<sup>19</sup>

The parish of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary recorded its first marriage of John Cohen and Mary Ellen Lynch on June 28, 1894. Sadly, the first recorded burial was of the infant Otto Hergenroether, age 1 year, 14 days, buried on June 22, 1894.<sup>20</sup>

The expelled members of the St. Joseph Society were expected to reorganize at Kolaszewski's church on the following Sunday, July 1, 1894. They claimed to now have a majority of the membership and the treasurer was with them and had \$500 of the society's funds, a fact which prompted a reporter for The Cleveland Leader to remark that, "One faction has the cash and the other the flags."<sup>21</sup>

At a parish meeting called July 9, 1894, annual church dues were set at \$6 per family; \$4 for a single person; and \$3 for widows able to pay. The children of the parish would be sent to the parish school but their parents were free to send them to public school if they so wished. School fees would be 30¢ and 35¢. The price for cemetery plots was set at \$6 for large graves; \$3 for children up to twelve years of age; and free to the poor. The cemetery was to be called the Cemetery of the Heart of Mary.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Tod Street is the present East 65th Street.

<sup>19</sup>"They Came to Blows," The Cleveland Leader, 25 June 1894, p. 8.

<sup>20</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of The Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, items #7 and 8, ADC.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Parish Book of Minutes, 1894, pp. 3-4, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Archives.

## *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

## Chapter 10

### the church is dedicated

**K**olaszewski's church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary assumed a position of impeccable nonviolence in its dealings with the opposing faction at St. Stanislaus Church. They repeatedly pledged their peace to Kolaszewski and suffered several times in confrontations with those who resented their defiance.

Though steadfast and stern in his convictions, Kolaszewski found humor in some of Rev. Rosinski's remarks towards him. He said,

The priest of St. Stanislaus (Rev. Rosinski) keeps on excommunicating us every Sunday. He said yesterday (July 16, 1894) that in a few weeks thirty priests would come to Cleveland and excommunicate me. He probably referred to the convention of the Polish National Alliance which will soon be held in this city. That is the society of which they said Jews and Protestants would be admitted, but no schismatics.<sup>1</sup>

Though the new church had not been formally dedicated, services continued there during July of 1894 while construction neared an end. By the middle of July all that remained was the completion of frescoing which was delayed because an addition to the building would soon be needed. It was determined that the present large building would be too small for both a school and a church. The school was to be conducted with the textbooks and methods of the public schools. In addition to the present instructor, some teacher who had experience in the public schools would also be employed.<sup>2</sup>

During services on the 15th of July, 1894, some men from St. Stanislaus decided to hold a beer picnic on a lot adjoining Kolaszewski's church on Fremont Street. They made a lot of noise, but the services continued in ignorance of them. Forty-eight children received their First Communion this Sunday.<sup>3</sup>

The emphasis on education in our parish was clear from its beginning. Our first parish building was a combination church and school, with the upper floor serving as the church and the ground floor as the school.<sup>4</sup> One of the first hired workers of the parish was a teacher. Sacrifice for the education of the children of the parish was to be the source of the need to constantly expand the educational facilities of the parish. The Annual Reports

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<sup>1</sup>"All Ties with Rome," The Cleveland Leader, 17 July 1894, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

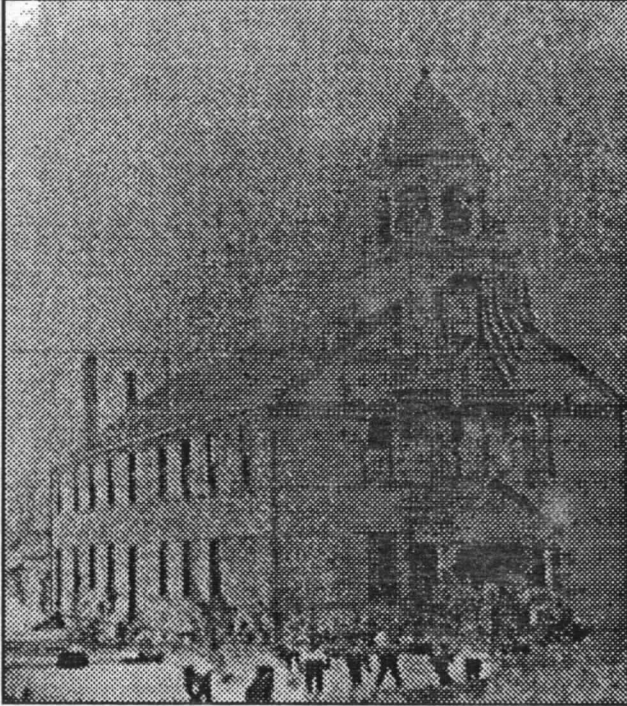
<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of The Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #5, ADC.



### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

of the parish repeat the necessity for more space to accommodate the growing school population which peaked at some 1,350 students in 1929.<sup>5</sup> To the present day our school is a source of parish pride and a willing financial responsibility.



The Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Dedication ceremonies of the Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the consecration of its cemetery were marred by violence on the part of the Polish people opposed to the new independent Catholic church movement. The dedication of the new church was attended by three times as many people as could be seated in the church.<sup>6</sup> The Plain Dealer reported that thousands of people looked on either with approval or dislike dependent upon whether they favored or disfavored the new American Catholic movement.<sup>7</sup> Exercises began on that Sunday, the 19th of August, 1894 at 9 AM when the parish military and civic societies gathered at the church and formed in line to march to Kolaszewski's house and escort him and Archbishop Vilatte to the church. There were the Knights of St. Kasimer, the Knights of St. Michael, the Society of St. Francis, two Societies of St.

Joseph, the Society of St. John Sobiecki, the Society of Rose Marie, the Society of the Sacred Heart of Mary, and the Society of St. Cecelia, the choir of the church.<sup>8</sup> Polish and American flags flew everywhere. Men and women dressed in their Sunday garb gathered at every street corner to watch the dedication of Rev. Kolaszewski's handsome little church. Little girls wore their Communion dresses, their heads wreathed in flowers. The gaily decorated members of the mounted Knights of St. Casimer and St. Michael, with their flat topped hussar helmets and uniforms of yellow, blue, and gold, galloped around in eager anticipation. Band Master Shoel led the Columbia band playing Polish and American

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., item #14.

<sup>6</sup>"Attacked," The Cleveland Leader, 20 August 1894, pp. 1-2.

<sup>7</sup>"Bloodshed," The Plain Dealer, 20 August 1894, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup>"Attacked," The Cleveland Leader, 20 August 1894, pp. 1-2.

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tunes.<sup>9</sup> The clergy entered the waiting carriages which were escorted by the societies to the church. Visiting clergy included Archbishop G.R. Vilatte of Green Bay, Wisconsin; Rev. W. Debski of Chicago; Rev. De Rustroph, a resident Cleveland priest without assignment; the secretary of the Archbishop, Brother Hieronymous; Rev. Frederick Raeder of Detroit; Rev. Leo E. Czerwinski of Milwaukee; and Kolaszewski.<sup>10</sup>

It was 9:30 AM when the ceremonies began. Archbishop J.R. Vilatte, resplendent in his episcopal robe of purple and gold, with cincture, alb, and stole, carried his crozier, symbol of authority. He was followed by his personal secretary and the other clergy, all arrayed in full ecclesiastical robes. Following them came the acolytes and censer bearers.<sup>11</sup> Upon arriving at the church the clergy and Archbishop passed around the church, blessing the building at all four corners on the outside, a constantly growing crowd following them. Then they went inside where no one but the choir boys were permitted to follow them. The church was then similarly blessed on the inside.<sup>12</sup>



Archbishop Vilatte.

When the blessing was completed, the doors were flung open and the congregation permitted to enter. So many attended the ceremonies that they stood in the rear and in the aisles though the seating capacity of the large building was a thousand. Still more were unable to enter at all.<sup>13</sup>

The celebration of the Solemn High Mass then began at once.<sup>14</sup> Fr. Deleski [sic] of Chicago read the gospel and Fr. Czernowski [sic] read the epistle. A choir of fifty boys and

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<sup>9</sup>"Bloodshed," The Plain Dealer, 20 August 1894, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup>"Attacked," The Cleveland Leader, 20 August 1894, pp. 1-2.

<sup>11</sup>"Bloodshed," The Plain Dealer, 20 August 1894, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup>"Attacked," The Cleveland Leader, 20 August 1894, pp. 1-2.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

girls sang the responses, while a tenor soloist sang the 'Ave Maria.'<sup>15</sup> At the sermon, Archbishop Vilatte addressed the crowd:

This church is for the worship of God by his children. It is for the promulgation of the Catholic religion, for we are nothing less than Catholics and remain so, leaving our Catholicism a precious heritage for our children. Yes, we are Catholics, and I am a Catholic bishop empowered to minister to you as such by those who received the authority in direct succession from Peter; and you know that where Peter is there is the Catholic Church. . . . Yes, yes, we are Catholics. Let us ever remain so, never relinquishing an iota of our Catholic dogma even though we do insist on our right to hold our property in our own name. . . . In this church you will receive the holy sacraments, your children will be baptized and confirmed. From this church you will be buried and the prayers of the faithful will follow you to the better land. . . . Let us be ever faithful to the Catholic religion, pure and undefiled, being guilty of neither adding to its dogma nor subtracting therefrom as many who have expounded its faith have done in the past. . . . Love your much persecuted and wronged pastor. Hold up his hands in the work that he will do for you in this church which will stand for so much to you. Understand his love for you and his great willingness to serve you, and your joint work in this place will be crowned with success.<sup>16</sup>

Rev. Kolaszewski then preached a sermon in Polish which was for the most part a translation of the bishop's sermon. He added a few personal comments:

Let no one here for a moment think that this is other than a Catholic church. . . . Do not for a moment believe that we are schismatics. We are as truly Catholic in doctrine as anyone on earth, but we do not believe that the minute a bishop comes here, a stranger, he should immediately become a millionaire and a boss. The money of the poor is hardly earned, and when it is put into a church the people who have earned it are entitled to the ownership of that church property.<sup>17</sup>

In the afternoon the weather turned rainy and the streets muddy and the clergy were about to give up on the dedication of the cemetery for the day, but the crowd gathered at the church urged them on in the rain. The clergy and visiting delegates rode in carriages at

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<sup>15</sup>"Bloodshed," The Plain Dealer, 20 August 1894, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup>"Attacked," The Cleveland Leader, 20 August 1894, pp. 1-2.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.



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either side of which were mounted knights of the church societies. The carriages were last in the line of march. The procession was headed by a band, then came the civic societies of the church, and lastly the carriages. Archbishop Vilatte and Kolaszewski were in the first of the two carriages. When the head of the procession reached the corner of Marcelline (East 71st Street) and Deveny, a crowd of 300 Poles stood by a saloon at the corner. Most had been drinking and were in an ugly mood. As the head of the parade reached Deveny, the crowd began to hoot and yell, hurling insults and jeering the participants. The street was lined on both sides with church members who were going to the cemetery to see the archbishop bless it. They became alarmed and began to be afraid. The men in the rear of the procession cried out to 'Go on,' 'Go ahead,' and those in the front forged ahead with somewhat renewed courage. Suddenly a huge stone was thrown into the procession. It raised some dust but no one was hurt. The mounted escorts galloped to the front of the parade with the intention of pursuing the culprit with their swords. But Alexander Skarupski, the marshal of the day, forbade it saying the three policemen on duty would find the offender. The procession continued to the cemetery without further incident. In the cemetery Skarupski declared that the rock had been thrown by a prominent member of St. Stanislaus, the brother of its priest.<sup>18</sup>

At the cemetery the archbishop and priests went from place to place and blessed the crosses in the names of all the saints on the Catholic calendar.<sup>19</sup> The cemetery grounds were blessed at the cardinal points of the compass and the 'Miserere' chanted and benediction pronounced.<sup>20</sup> The archbishop also scattered holy water. Many hundreds of people walked to the cemetery in the rain.<sup>21</sup>

On the return march from the cemetery the coaches carrying the clergy and delegates were at the head of the procession while the societies mingled with the crowds on the sidewalk. At the same point, the corner of Marcelline and Deveny, the procession encountered the same crowd, now larger and more ominous. As soon as the band reached the rioters, they began to hoot and scream derisively in Polish. No violence was attempted until the carriages and armed knights went by. The carriages were about 300 feet beyond Deveny when the demonstration began again.<sup>22</sup> Three policemen were detailed to control 1,000 people or more. One of them rode the carriage containing the Archbishop. 'They hurled their anathemas at their Polish sisters and glowered like so many Amazons as the

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

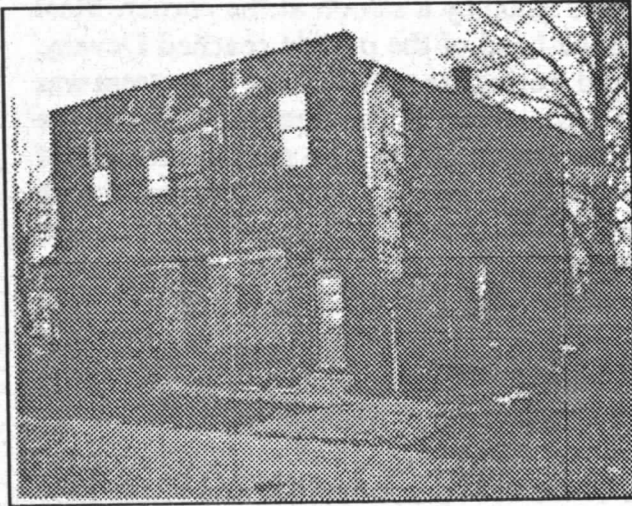
<sup>20</sup>"Bloodshed," The Plain Dealer, 20 August 1894, p. 1.

<sup>21</sup>"Attacked," The Cleveland Leader, 20 August 1894, pp. 1-2.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

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mud stained crowd passed by.<sup>23</sup> Marshall Skarupski threateningly rode back with a drawn sword and shook it at the crowd while shouting in Polish, 'You people had better let us alone. We are going about our business and doing you no harm. Let us alone and avoid



The Wales Street police station, 7th precinct.

trouble.'<sup>24</sup> Skarupski was once a policeman and his voice carried some authority with the demonstrators. Skarupski rode away thinking he had subdued the rioters. The procession was about 500 feet farther away when a fight started so quickly that it was difficult to determine how it started. 'At any rate the melee was on in a minute and did not end till two men were painfully wounded and many good umbrellas made hopeless wrecks.'<sup>25</sup> Someone in the crowd assaulted a young man named Gwizdalski with an umbrella. The women and children were terrorized by the ensuing fight. Gwizdalski received a painful scalp wound and his father was shot through the calf of his leg.<sup>26</sup> As the elder Gwizdalski rushed to

help his son who was hit with the umbrella, a man standing on the steps of a saloon on the corner pulled out a revolver and fired it into the crowd. The elder Gwizdalski was hit.<sup>27</sup> As soon as the shot was heard, the crowds dispersed, members of both factions running away.<sup>28</sup>

The police of the Wales Street<sup>29</sup> station gave the name of the assailant as J. Browsheski and he was not captured. The elderly man who was shot was taken to his home at #216 Third Avenue<sup>30</sup> and attended by a Dr. Hawley.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>"Bloodshed," The Plain Dealer, 20 August 1894, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup>"Attacked," The Cleveland Leader, 20 August 1894, pp. 1-2.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>"Bloodshed," The Plain Dealer, 20 August 1894, p. 2.

<sup>28</sup>"Attacked," The Cleveland Leader, 20 August 1894, pp. 1-2.

<sup>29</sup>Wales Street is the present East 86th Street. The building housing the jail was converted into a store and is now vacant; it housed the 7th Precinct Police Station.

<sup>30</sup>Third Avenue is the present Gertrude Avenue.

*the church is dedicated*

Calmer heads prevailed later that day when another multitude of people came out again to attend evening services. The church was overcrowded. There were vesper services at 7:30 PM. The special ceremony was the blessing of the statues of the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph and the blessing of the church organ. Archbishop Vilatte delivered a sermon in English and Kolaszewski in Polish.<sup>32</sup>

As might be expected, The Catholic Universe described the dedication ceremonies at Kolaszewski's church as a farce which could have been considered amusing had it not been so sacrilegious.<sup>33</sup> In a condescendingly accusatory editorial, the dedication was described as an event

. . . fraught with direful consequences to the spiritual welfare of the poor creatures who have been deluded into joining the camp of the contumacious Kolaszewski.

By various deceptions the latter has worked upon the feelings of a few of the more ignorant members of the Polish community, and induced them to join him upon the representation that to do so did not involve a departure from that ancient fold, to which, through all forms of persecution, their race and nation have been ever loyal and devoted. Kolaszewski has cunningly appealed to the nationalistic prejudices of his followers, and maliciously hoodwinked them . . .

Few of them have any acquaintance with the English language, and to this fact chiefly, the schismatic priest owes whatever success he has had in procuring a following. He has not only viciously misrepresented the attitude and counsels of the Rt. Rev. Bishop, but he has persistently [*sic*] and falsely posed as a martyr to episcopal tyranny and thus played upon the weak susceptibilities of thoughtless and poorly instructed members of the flock to which he formerly ministered.<sup>34</sup>

The Catholic Universe was no less kind in alluding to Archbishop Vilatte who consecrated the church and cemetery. Vilatte was accused of never having had an interest in the religious affairs of the Poles in this country or anywhere else. Of Vilatte's episcopal authority The Catholic Universe said:

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<sup>31</sup>"Attacked," The Cleveland Leader, 20 August 1894, pp. 1-2.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>"Kolaszewski-Vilatte Imposture," The Catholic Universe, 25 August 1894, p. 4.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.



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Kolaszewski knows as well as Vilatte that the so-called Archbishop has no authority in the role which he assumes, and they both know they are leading their dupes down the straight path to destruction.<sup>35</sup>

Three students from Catholic seminaries were to be examined the morning of Monday, August 20th for ordination in Kolaszewski's church.<sup>36</sup> During the afternoon Fr. Kolaszewski took Archbishop Vilatte on a streetcar tour of the city while preparations were made for the opening of the convention of Independent Catholic Churches to be held at the Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary the next day.<sup>37</sup>

On Tuesday, August 21st, 1894, the Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in seeming opposition to a similar assembly going on at St. Stanislaus, hosted a convention of delegates who proposed to organize a national independent Catholic church for Poles. Our church constitution was presented to the delegates as a model for the new national church. Article XX of the constitution was especially significant to them because of its reference to disbelief in the Pope's infallibility and the fact that our constitution was modeled after the Constitution of the United States.<sup>38</sup>

Simultaneously during this week the convention of delegates from the Roman Catholic National Polish Union was held at St. Stanislaus Church.<sup>39</sup> Its purpose was to discuss religious, racial, and social questions affecting the Polish people in Poland and the United States and was composed of delegates from all the Catholic parishes in Chicago. Over 200 delegates were attending. No trouble was expected between them and the Independent Catholic Church meeting at Kolaszewski's church.<sup>40</sup> As expected, accusations flew from both meetings. A Chicago delegate to the St. Stanislaus convention said:

Rev. Mr. Rosinski is pastor of St. Stanislaus Church. His congregation comprises 90 per cent of the Poles in Cleveland. There is only a small number of disaffected Poles in Cleveland notwithstanding unfavorable reports to the contrary. Those who are disaffected by no means represent the line of Poles

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>"Attacked," The Cleveland Leader, 20 August 1894, pp. 1-2.

<sup>37</sup>"The Polish Convention Will Open in Father Kolaszewski's Church - A Convention Also in St. Stanislaus," The Plain Dealer, 21 August 1894, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup>"Attacked," The Cleveland Leader, 20 August 1894, pp. 1-2.

<sup>39</sup>"Faithful to Rome," The Cleveland Leader, 21 August 1894, p. 5.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

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who recognize Bishop Horstmann primarily and Mr. Rosinski as their spiritual rulers and advisers.<sup>41</sup>

Mr. Peter Kielbasso, an ex-city official from Chicago, said Kolaszewski should have remained in the church and appealed to Rome for vindication of his grievances. People were already meddling too much in the affairs of the church, and women, too, should stop their interference in the church. He also attacked sensational newspapers for stirring up the public with stories of such news.<sup>42</sup>

On the second day of the Polish Catholic Union convention at St. Stanislaus, Bishop Horstmann celebrated Pontifical High Mass at the church. He addressed the congregation in English and referred to Kolaszewski as an ex-priest who should be ignored by all good Catholics.<sup>43</sup>

On Thursday, August 23, 1894, Archbishop Vilatte performed his final ecclesiastical rite at Kolaszewski's church before returning to his home in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Stephen Kaminski was ordained a priest at the church and was to say his first Mass in the church on Sunday, the 26th of August and then proceed to his assignment in Omaha, Nebraska. The former Church of St. Paul in that city was at odds with its bishop.<sup>44</sup>

Fr. Kolaszewski was pleased with the attention his church was getting in Cleveland and other cities. He said other nationality congregations were looking to the Independent Catholic Church movement for guidance. Of the Polish Catholic Union convention at St. Stanislaus, he said, 'So far as the criticisms made by the Polish council were concerned, they disturb us as little as the blowing of the wind.'<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>"Faithful to Rome," The Cleveland Leader, 21 August 1894, p. 5.

<sup>42</sup>"Its Twenty-First," The Plain Dealer, 22 August 1894, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup>"Second Day of the Convention in St. Stanislaus' Church," The Plain Dealer, 23 August 1894, p. 1.

<sup>44</sup>"Ordained," The Plain Dealer, 24 August 1894, p. 8.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

## *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*



# Chapter 11

## the reality of running a church

**D**espite ecclesiastical maneuvering against Kolaszewski's church, the congregation and trustees of the new church struggled to establish a legitimate presence by attending to the rudimentary affairs of operating a parish. Financial reality eclipsed good intentions.

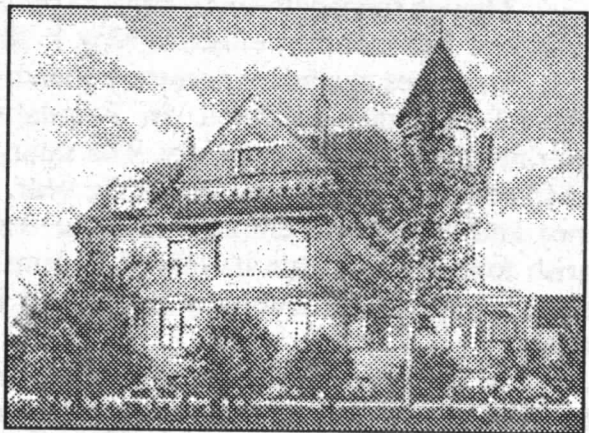
By the time of the January 7, 1895 annual meeting, all the parishioners still unanimously agreed that they were satisfied with the parish and wanted it to continue. Their initial conviction was unshaken. They still

. . . Strongly and unanimously resolved that never would the parish give Bishop Horstman [sic] the deed designating the good of the Church.

However venomously this resolution was worded, the congregation also resolved to dismiss with Christian contempt all the name-calling and abuse of Fr. Rosinski (pastor of St. Stanislaus) and Bishop Horstmann.<sup>1</sup>

Stations of the Cross were to be purchased for the amount of \$140 with voluntary offerings. All parishioners were urged to join a church society, including the women. In retrospect, this would become beneficial in later years to the financially struggling church. The parish would come to borrow from its societies to help fund various projects. Since the parish had no rectory yet, it was also decided to take a loan of about \$15,000 to pay off all the old debt and to build a parish house.<sup>2</sup> At a later meeting the same month, it was decided to proceed with the construction of a rectory with a loan of \$3,000.<sup>3</sup>

In a conciliatory gesture to the parishioners of St. Stanislaus Church, it was also decided that full membership benefits should be extended to any active St. Stanislaus member who joined the parish. These benefits included



Rectory of the Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 1895.

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<sup>1</sup>Parish Book of Minutes, 1895, p. 5, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Archives.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. pp. 4-6.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

support in illness and death. In the case of a husband's death, the wife would receive \$600; in the case of a wife's death, the husband would receive \$300.<sup>4</sup>

Tough financial times were ahead in 1896. That the fledgling church was striving to remain solvent is evident in opening statements of the annual meetings of the next several years. It was decided at the January 1, 1896 meeting not to buy or build anything until the parish debt was substantially diminished. By March 1896 the congregation had decided not to hold any public celebrations because of the difficult financial times and the need to avoid unnecessary costs. In August of that year the parish decided to send all of the school children to public schools and to keep only one class for beginners and to teach only in Polish.<sup>5</sup> The organist could teach the Polish class and no teacher would have to be hired to teach the secular subjects.

By 1897 a substantial loan of \$25,000 was negotiated with the Diocese of Salford, England through a Canadian agency as a fifth loan to consolidate parish debts, especially a recent \$15,000 outstanding loan.<sup>6</sup> Rev. George F. Houck, Chancellor of the Diocese of Cleveland, intimated that the large loan was necessary to enable Kolaszewski to continue his schismatic church which was diminishing in size.<sup>7</sup>

Though financially uncertain, the parish voted to pay the organist, John Tomaszewski, a salary of \$40 monthly, effective May 1, 1897.<sup>8</sup>

Strictures against unnecessary spending continued through subsequent years even as financial demands escalated. In February of 1898 a contract was negotiated for a superintendent for the cemetery. The salary of the church sexton was increased from \$12 to \$15 per month for six months of the year. In June it was decided to spend \$400 for a new fence and a beautiful entrance gate for the cemetery.<sup>9</sup> Through these difficult years, the parish toiled to maintain its school. Parents were always free to send their children to the public schools.<sup>10</sup> Undoubtedly this would have been less of a financial burden on the parish.

At the annual meeting marking the dawn of the twentieth century on January 1, 1900, Mr. W. Walkowiak was hired as organist. First Friday devotions to the Sacred Heart would

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<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup>*Parish Book of Minutes*, 1896, pp. 11-13.

<sup>6</sup>*Parish Book of Minutes*, 1897, p. 16.

<sup>7</sup>Rev. George F. Houck, Diocesan Chancellor, *A History of Catholicity in Northern Ohio and in the Diocese of Cleveland from 1749 to December 31, 1900*, I, p. 176.

<sup>8</sup>*Parish Book of Minutes*, 1897, p. 16.

<sup>9</sup>*Parish Book of Minutes*, 1898, p. 18.

<sup>10</sup>*Parish Book of Minutes*, 1899, p. 19.

*the reality of running a church*

continue. School money was to be paid monthly for each child. Pew rentals remained at \$6. House collections this year would be made twice a month. Tickets for Easter confession would be used.<sup>11</sup>

By 1901 it was quite evident that some parishioners were not adequately supporting the church so it was decided to give no religious service whatsoever to those who refused their support. Though revenue was decreasing, disbursements were not. The rectory exterior needed painting. The cemetery needed a new fence. The salary of the cemetery superintendent was increased from \$2 monthly to \$7.<sup>12</sup>

The celebration of Polish Independence Day on May 5, 1901 climaxed the year with special festivities and a parade. The neighborhood was gaily decorated with bunting, flags, and emblems of Poland. Some house flew the Stars and Stripes which fluttered in the breeze alongside the colors of Poland. Bands marched while the people of Cleveland's 'Warsaw', dressed in their best, turned out to watch.<sup>13</sup>

Services at the church were conducted by Independent Bishop Kozlowski of Chicago. As early as 7:00 AM, a parade of about forty men on horseback and members of the societies of the church, marched to the Forest City House<sup>14</sup> where they welcomed the bishop and escorted him to the church.<sup>15</sup> The day was especially memorable because it also marked the seventh anniversary of the founding of the church. This observance was celebrated with the confirmation of seventy children and the distribution of communion to over 500 people. In the evening a grand program of entertainment was performed by over 100 participants.<sup>16</sup> Speeches were given by the bishop and Rev. Kolaszewski and others. Special musical selections were sung by the choir and the events closed with the singing of the Polish National Anthem, "God Save Poland."<sup>17</sup>



Independent Bishop Kozlowski.

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<sup>11</sup>Parish Book of Minutes, 1900, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup>Parish Book of Minutes, 1901, p. 24.

<sup>13</sup>"Independence Day of Poland Is Celebrated," The Cleveland Leader, 6 May 1901, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup>The Forest City House Hotel was one of Cleveland's premier hotels; it stood on the southwest corner of Public Square, where Stouffer's Tower City Center Hotel now stands.

<sup>15</sup>"Independence Day of Poland Is Celebrated," The Cleveland Leader, 6 May 1901, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup>"Cleveland Poles Have Gala Day," The Plain Dealer, 6 May 1901, p. 8.

<sup>17</sup>"Independence Day of Poland Is Celebrated," The Cleveland Leader, 6 May 1901, p. 7.



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Of note in the parish minutes of 1903 was the resignation of the church sexton due to old age. Mr. Frank Klosowski succeeded him.<sup>18</sup>

After ten years, the church roof needed to be resingled and new gutters were installed in 1904.<sup>19</sup>

In an effort to discourage scofflaws, it was decided at the annual meeting in 1905 that absolutely no cemetery graves would be given for free. All of them had to be paid for and a committee was appointed to oversee this resolution. Mr. Koslowski's salary was raised to \$17 monthly.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Parish Book of Minutes, 1903, p. 26.

<sup>19</sup>Parish Book of Minutes, 1904, p. 27.

<sup>20</sup>Parish Book of Minutes, 1905, p. 28.

## Chapter 12

### the return of the prodigal church

Such was the unsanctioned founding of the Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary accomplished in 1894. In an ever optimistic return of the lost sinners, Cardinal Ledochowski, Prefect of the Propaganda in Rome, wrote to Bishop Horstmann about the Kolaszewski affair about six weeks after the dedication of the church. He had received reports that the schismatic church was gaining in membership and had instructed Bishop Horstmann to publish his statements to Cleveland's Catholic Poles in a pastoral letter. The Cardinal appealed to the Poles as their brother from the same nation:

How can you forget the traditional faithfulness of our nation to the Catholic Church? How can you forget the examples that our ancestors left to us? No, do not present yourselves as degenerated sons of Christian heroes.<sup>1</sup>

Ledochowski's appeal had no effect on the situation at Immaculate Heart of Mary. While Horstmann was in Rome for a mandatory call, Kolaszewski made advances at returning to the Church through the Administrator of the Diocese and sometimes friend, Monsignor Boff.<sup>2</sup> These attempts too came to nothing.<sup>3</sup>

Following Horstmann's return from Rome two months later, the Kolaszewski affair became even more serious. On February 22, 1895, Cardinal Ledochowski again wrote to Horstmann informing him that on January 30, 1895, the Inquisitors, approved by the pope on January 31st, issued a formal declaration of excommunication of Kolaszewski and demanded that he go to Rome to repent.<sup>4</sup> In the middle of March 1895, notice of this Roman decision was sent only to the Polish parishes of St. Stanislaus, St. Casimer, and

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<sup>1</sup>Ledochowski to Horstmann, Rome, 8 October 1894, ADC, Box: Letters to and from Bishop Horstmann, in Joseph H. Lackner, S.M., M.A., Bishop Ignatius F. Horstmann and the Americanization of the Catholic Church in the United States, pp. 96-97.

<sup>2</sup>Houck to Boff, 22 November 1894, ADC, Letters, p. 265; Houck to Papi, 24 November 1894, CDA, Letters, p. 270, in Lackner, op. cit., p. 99.

<sup>3</sup>Houck to Bauer, 11 December 1894, ADC, Letters, p. 303, in Lackner, loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup>Ledochowski to Horstmann, 22 February 1895, ADC, Box: Letters to and from Bishop Horstmann, in Lackner, op. cit., pp. 99-100.

### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

Sacred Heart of Jesus<sup>5</sup> because Bishop Horstmann did not want to publicize the Roman excommunication beyond the Polish Church.<sup>6</sup>

During Bishop Horstmann's episcopacy, there were two different indications of Kolaszewski's possible return to the Church,<sup>7</sup> but on June 4, 1898, Horstmann wrote his last letter to Kolaszewski, calling upon him to recant his errors.<sup>8</sup> Disappointingly, no reconciliation took place during Horstmann's lifetime.<sup>9</sup>

What negotiations could not accomplish, disaster did. Tragedy struck Father Kolaszewski's church on Wednesday, May 12th, 1908 when an accidental fire nearly destroyed the church and school, perhaps playing no small role in the congregation's movement toward reconciliation with the diocese.

A funeral had just left the church only a few minutes before the fire was discovered. The fire probably started from a smoldering censer left burning following the funeral. Children were at their lessons in the school on the first floor of the same building.<sup>10</sup>

The funeral had just ended and Rev. Kolaszewski went home about the time when recess was called at 2:00 PM. One of the children outside for recess saw the fire in the church upstairs and ran back into the school through his classmates who were filing out for recess.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Horstmann to Members of St. Stanislaus, St. Casimer, and Sacred Heart, 16 March 1895, ADC, Letters, pp. 680-681, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>6</sup>Ledochowski to Horstmann, 5 April 1896, ADC, Box: Letters to and from Bishop Horstmann, in Lackner, *loc. cit.*

<sup>7</sup>Martinelli to Horstmann, Washington, D.C., 29 October 1896, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, St. Stanislaus, 1893-1907; Martinelli to Kolaszewski, Washington, D.C., 29 October 1896, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, St. Stanislaus, 1893-1907; Horstmann to Martinelli, 30 October 1896, ADC, Letters Q, October 15, 1896 to June 17, 1897, pp. 42-43; (hereafter this letterbook will be cited as Q); Martinelli to Horstmann, Washington, D.C., 2 November 1896, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, St. Stanislaus, 1893-1907; Horstmann to Martinelli, 5 December 1896, ADC, Q, p. 127; Martinelli to Horstmann, Washington, D.C., 7 December 1896, ADC, Folder: Apostolic Delegate, St. Stanislaus, 1893-1907; Horstmann to Kolaszewski, 23 December 1897, ADC, R, p. 733; Horstmann to Kolaszewski, 31 December 1897, ADC, R, pp. 766-767; Horstmann to Kolaszewski, 13 January 1898, ADC, S, p. 42; Horstmann to Kolaszewski, 8 March 1898, ADC, S, p. 292; Horstmann to Kolaszewski, 12 March 1898, ADC, S, p. 319, in Lackner, *loc. cit.*

<sup>8</sup>Horstmann to Kolaszewski, 4 June 1898, ADC, S, p. 644, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-101.

<sup>9</sup>Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

<sup>10</sup>"School on Fire; Pupils Are Saved," The Cleveland Leader, 13 May 1908, last page.

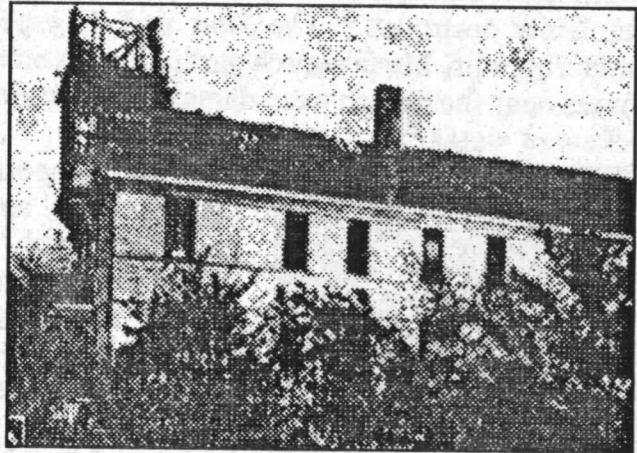
<sup>11</sup>Ibid.



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The teacher of the school, Mr. Anthony Matuszewski, rushed to the door and restrained the older children who were trying to push ahead of the smaller ones.<sup>12</sup> With the help of the church sexton, John Gosuoronski, the children stayed calm<sup>13</sup>, order was maintained, and all of the children evacuated the school safely. Mr. Matuszewski was the last to leave the building with his arms full of books. He went back and tried to climb the stairs to the church but was forced back by the smoke and flames.<sup>14</sup>

A telephone lineman testing wires on a pole across the street, saw the smoke pouring from the church and sent in the alarm with his test set. Engine companies 11, 13, and 25, and trucks four and ten responded to the fire with six lines of hose. Fire Chief Wallace arrived at the scene in the new fire department car and Battalion Chiefs Daugherty and Delany also arrived at the fire. Sergeant Anderson of the Seventh Precinct and a detail of policemen took charge of the school children and the crowds.<sup>15</sup>



The Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary after the disastrous fire.

The fire burned for 45 minutes before it was brought under control.<sup>16</sup> The fire spread rapidly through the church and a second alarm was turned in.<sup>17</sup> Former parishioner, Ben Grams, was living on Lansing Avenue at the time, in the vicinity of the church, and remembered the horse-drawn fire engine racing to the church.<sup>18</sup> Smoke and flames spread rapidly to the parish school on the first floor. The 60-foot steeple collapsed and fell near the firefighters of Engine Company 2 who narrowly escaped injury. Part of the roof collapsed. The fire completely gutted the interior of the building.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>"Priest Close to Death in Flames," The Plain Dealer, 13 May 1908, pp. 1 and 8.

<sup>14</sup>"School on Fire; Pupils Are Saved," The Cleveland Leader, 13 May 1908, last page.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>"Priest Close to Death in Flames," The Plain Dealer, 13 May 1908, pp. 1 and 8.

<sup>18</sup>His personal recollections.

<sup>19</sup>"Priest Close to Death in Flames," The Plain Dealer, 13 May 1908, pp. 1 and 8.

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Father Kolaszewski tried to rescue some vestments he had purchased from the Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Paris, but was overcome by the smoke. When Kolaszewski did not return in a few minutes, the sexton ran upstairs through the smoke and found Kolaszewski unconscious on the floor. The sexton carried him to the street where he quickly revived.<sup>20</sup>

Firemen saved much of the school furniture by throwing desks and chairs out on the lawn. Father Kolaszewski's valuable library which he amassed in his European travels was completely destroyed.<sup>21</sup> The altar and its expensive paintings, statues, and relics was a smoldering ruin. Much church paraphernalia stored in the basement suffered water damage. Houses near the church were damaged by burning embers and their owners were ready with buckets of water.<sup>22</sup>



Msgr. Felix Boff.

A temporary school was to be established in the neighborhood and plans were made to rebuild the fire-damaged church.<sup>23</sup> The building was repaired and continued to be used. When the new brick and stone church was built in 1914, this frame building was converted into a hall for parish entertainment and for school use. It was dismantled sometime around 1925 when the new modern brick school was erected.<sup>24</sup>

During the entire ordeal, Father Kolaszewski could be seen watching his beloved church consumed by flames with tears rolling down his cheeks. The building practically a complete loss, suffered damage estimates as high as \$20,000.<sup>25</sup>

This ruinous event, which nearly signalled the end of Kolaszewski's church, may have influenced him and his congregation to seek the forgiveness of the Good Lord and the favor of the diocese.

On May 13, 1908, Bishop Horstmann died. Within three months, with Msgr. Boff as Administrator of the Diocese, negotiations were begun for the return of Kolaszewski and his church to the Roman Catholic Church. On August 30, 1908, three-fourths of the parishioners of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church met and decided to transfer their

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December 1945, items #5 and #13, ADC.

<sup>25</sup>"School on Fire; Pupils Are Saved," The Cleveland Leader, 13 May 1908, last page.



*the return of the prodigal church*

property to Msgr. Felix Boff, Administrator of the Diocese, through Common Pleas Court.<sup>26</sup> In September, Kolaszewski and a committee from the schismatic church wrote a letter to Msgr. Boff applying for admittance to the Church.<sup>27</sup>

Msgr. Boff replied to the parishioners of Immaculate Heart of Mary:

As administrator of the Diocese of Cleveland I hereby promise that upon the fulfilling and completion of the transfer of the Church and cemetery property of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to the Diocese of Cleveland the said Church and Congregation shall be considered in all ways as a Congregation of the Diocese of Cleveland and its members as faithful children of the Catholic Church, and shall be provided for as to its government and administration just as the other congregation [sic] of the Diocese. Further, I promise and assure the said Congregation that they may continue to use the cemetery of the congregation for the burial of their dead, and that said cemetery shall remain intact for such purpose.

Moreover, in order to make clear a point that might seem to cause some anxiety among members of the said Congregation, I desire them to be well assured that no burden of debt of any kind will be imposed upon the Congregation without the consent of the Bishop and the usual regular knowledge and advice of the Congregation and its Councilmen.<sup>28</sup>

The schismatic movement which for a time seriously threatened the Catholic Poles of the United States was coming to an end. Following the published return of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church on September 15, 1908 and of a dissident Polish parish in St. Louis, there came news of the repentance of the pastor of a Polish independent church in Bayonne, New Jersey. One Fr. Sterputowski of Duluth, Minnesota sought forgiveness from his bishop and vowed obedience to the Bishop of Cleveland.<sup>29</sup>

The Catholic Universe of October 30, 1908 carried front page news of the moving ceremony marking the formal acceptance of Immaculate heart of Mary Church into the Diocese of Cleveland:

The end of the schism which for several years separated the Polish parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary from the Catholic Church was formally ratified

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<sup>26</sup>"Minutes of Meeting of August 30, 1908," ADC, Box HP 2, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>27</sup>Rev. Kolaszewski and Committee to Boff, September 1908, ADC, Box PH 2, in Lackner, *loc. cit.*

<sup>28</sup>Boff to the Members of Immaculate Heart of Mary, 15 September 1908, ADC, Box: Boff Special, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103.

<sup>29</sup>"Schism Practically at End," The Catholic Universe, 25 September 1908, p. 1.



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last Sunday (October 24, 1908), when with impressive and touching ceremonies Rt. Rev. Msgr. Boff, administrator of the diocese, solemnly absolved the congregation from the ban of excommunication and received the keys of the church from John Kniola, representing the laymen of the parish.

The ceremonies took place with the first authorized Mass ever celebrated in the church. It is estimated that fully 10,000 persons were crowded in and around the edifice when Msgr. Boff entered the church and passed up the middle aisle to the main altar. The congregation, so long without ecclesiastical status, was visibly affected as the head of the diocese entered the long-unvisited church on his errand of mercy and of peace. . . .<sup>30</sup>



Rev. Theobald Kalamaja, O.F.M.

Father Kalamaja, O.F.M., pastor of St. Stanislaus from which the dissenters broke away some fourteen years ago, preached the sermon. At the end of his sermon Father Kalamaja introduced as the new pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary, Father Methodius Kielar, O.F.M., who was formally installed and given the books of the parish by the church treasurer, William Swibulski.<sup>31</sup>

The solemn and unusual services ended with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The remainder of the day was spent in rejoicing by the parishioners. The whole neighborhood wore a festive air with its gay decorations and groups of happy people.<sup>32</sup>

Form many years there was a desire for reconciliation with the Church among many in the parish.<sup>33</sup> Perhaps when the righteous excitement of the hectic events surrounding our schismatic founding settled down to a calmer, more staid reality, our dissident founders reflected upon the future consequences of their actions. Kolaszewski had confidently hoped that diocesan authorities would "settle with him" once he culminated his plan to build an independent church. Bishop Horstmann remained as steadfast in his authoritative resolve; Rome remained intractable. Perhaps, over time, Kolaszewski's loyal followers began to

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<sup>30</sup>"Ban Lifted from 'Independent' Church," The Catholic Universe, 30 October 1908, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

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realize the precariousness of their independent existence from Rome; Kolaszewski would not always be with them, but the Church would be. As the young immigrant families of our parish matured, perhaps they began to consider the consequences for their children of the separateness of their ecclesiastical existence. Could marriages be considered valid, indeed, could any reception of the sacraments be considered valid? Should the children suffer for the sins of their parents? In an aging parish, the surer certainty of illness and death supplanted the transitory passions of a youthful victory. The risk of promised damnation through excommunication loomed too near for some.

In November of 1908, Cardinal Gotti, new Prefect of the Propaganda in Rome, wrote to Msgr. Boff informing him that Pope Pius X had granted him the power to absolve Rev. Kolaszewski of all censures.<sup>34</sup> Father Kolaszewski did penance for his misdeeds and requested that The Catholic Universe publish, in his name, his pleas of ". . . pardon of all the clergy, the religious, the laity and the people in general for the scandal he gave here in the rebellious position he occupied for the past fifteen years."<sup>35</sup>

For two years Father Anton Kolaszewski had hoped to be reinstated to his former position as an active priest, but it appears that nothing was done for him in that regard.<sup>36</sup> He died at 2:00 PM on Friday, December 2, 1910 at the home of his sister, 4117 Denison Avenue, where he had lived since his retirement from the active priesthood.<sup>37</sup> The official cause of death was endocarditis and interstitial nephritis. He had suffered from these heart and kidney ailments for nearly two years. Burial was at Calvary Cemetery on the 6th of December.<sup>38</sup> The Catholic Universe published a brief notice of his death in which the clergy were reminded of their obligation to offer three masses for the repose of his soul.<sup>39</sup> A lengthier and more vivid obituary was published in The Plain Dealer:



Rev. Methodius Kielar, O.F.M.

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<sup>34</sup>Gotti to Boff, Rome, 21 November 1908, ADC, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

<sup>35</sup>"Father Anton Kolaszewski Returns," The Catholic Universe, 22 January 1909, p. 4.

<sup>36</sup>Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

<sup>37</sup>"Grief Hurries Death of Priest Who Led Schism," The Cleveland Press, 3 December 1910, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup>Certificate of Death, Department of Health, City of Cleveland, Ohio, 2 December 1910.

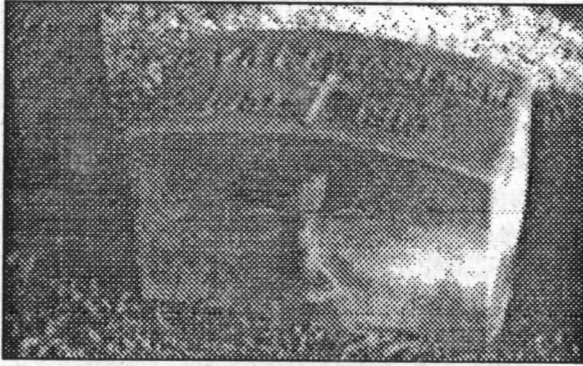
<sup>39</sup>"Notice to the Clergy," The Catholic Universe, 16 December 1910, p. 4, in Lackner, *op. cit.*, p. 104.



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Father Anton F. Kolaszewski is dead.

This statement carries with it the story of a man and a priest, who rebelled, who suffered for nearly ten years before he could not find his God and who, when he felt his strength failing him, cast himself upon the mercies of the religion which he had put aside.



The gravesite of our founding pastor.

Father Kolaszewski breathed his last believing that he had been pardoned for the revolution which he had led against the holy see. He died following confession and holy communion and after receiving the healing sacrament of extreme unction. . . .

For about nine years the priest continued in his way. He tried to persuade himself that he was right. But he was a firm believer in Catholicism, and the battle year by year told on him. He finally went to the Catholic authorities asking forgiveness. . . .

Father Kolaszewski, although young in years, was aged when the ban [excommunication] was lifted a year ago last January. He was taken back into the fold and his congregation reinstated.

. . . But the long fight had told on him and on Friday he died.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>"Dies in Faith He Once Cast Aside," The Plain Dealer, 4 December 1910, p. 9.



# Chapter 13

## the struggle for stability

**D**uring the years immediately following the instatement into the Diocese of Cleveland, three different administrators were appointed to serve as pastors of the parish. Rev. Kielar was succeeded by Rev. Albert Migdalski from January 21, 1909 to October 4, 1909; he was succeeded by Rev. John Darowski from October 1909 to July 1910; Rev. Bronislaus Walter served from July 1910 to February 11, 1912.<sup>1</sup>

During these three difficult years of transition from independent status, the newly reconciled parish yearned for internal peace and courage.

The old parishioners were, of course, as faithful to their parish as before. But new ones also were joining the church in ever increasing numbers. It was only natural that occasionally in such a situation the old antipathies and the old suspicions arose.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps because of these extraordinarily trying circumstances, the first four immediate successors of Fr. Kolaszewski became so easily discouraged and resigned after only a short time.<sup>3</sup>

Social stability in the parish faltered and financial security was forever elusive. Sometime in 1908, probably just prior to the instatement in the diocese, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Houck, Chancellor of the Diocese of Cleveland, had a hand in persuading the Diocese of Salford, England to recall its loan of \$25,000 to Kolaszewski's schismatic church, perhaps in an effort to financially pressure the struggling parish. When the loan was made it was not known to the Diocese of Salford that we were a schismatic church and that fact may have convinced the authorities in England to comply with Houck's request.<sup>4</sup> On September 17, 1911, the Rev. Pastor Bronislaus Walter and the church councilmen requested permission of Bishop Farrelly to take out a mortgage loan from the *Broadway Savings and Trust Company* in the amount of \$27,000, the proceeds from which, together with about \$2,300 cash and pledges, would be used for the following:

- (1) paying off the balance of \$20,400 owed on the loan from the late Bishop of Salford, England;

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<sup>1</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #10, ADC.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Very Rev. Canon Peter Lonsdale to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, 14 December 1911, ADC, Folder: IHM.

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- (2) for the building of a Sisters' home estimated to cost about \$5,000; and
- (3) toward payment of financial debts to parishioners and parish societies amounting to about \$8,000.

It was hoped this loan would settle the chaotic financial condition of the parish and bring good will and peace to the parishioners.<sup>5</sup>

John G. White, head of the law firm of White, Johnson, and Cannon, was an authority in church history and church law. Though a layman and a Protestant, he was retained as attorney for the bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Northern Ohio from 1870 to 1928.<sup>6</sup> He was also instrumental in the founding of the Cleveland Public Library which maintains a place in its main building devoted to his personal collections of books and chess sets.

Mr. White had negotiated the mortgage recall with the Diocese of Salford for a fee equivalent to \$1,500. The Salford Diocese had complained to Bishop Farrelly that this seemed excessive since the English lawyers had charged only \$134 for their corresponding services. Rev. Lonsdale of Salford thought it only fair that the Diocese of Cleveland should bear the expense of the transaction since the outcome of the recall was entirely to its benefit.<sup>7</sup>

In a letter dated January 8, 1912, John G. White, head of the law firm of White, Johnson, and Cannon, wrote to Rev. Scullen, Chancellor of the Diocese of Cleveland, explaining Rev. Houck's involvement in the Salford loan recall and the fee charged for that service. Mr. White explained that he thought Rev. Houck's 'interference' in the matter was limited to his suggestion to the English mortgage holders to retain Mr. White's law firm to handle the recall transaction and nothing else. The Salford loan holders had not been paid the interest on their loan by Kolaszewski's church, the security of their investment had been diminished by the disastrous fire at the church, and they were desirous of obtaining the insurance settlement to help secure the outstanding principal on the loan. Furthermore, Rev. Lonsdale, principal holder of the Salford mortgage, already knew that Kolaszewski's church had been officially admitted into the Diocese of Cleveland in October, 1908, and that the reason of lack of knowledge of the schismatic existence of our church could no longer be a valid claim for recall of the mortgage; instead, Rev. Lonsdale, when questioned through his lawyers by Mr. White as to whether he still wanted the principal, Rev. Lonsdale replied

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<sup>5</sup>Rev. Bruno Walter, Pastor, and Councilmen to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, 17 September 1911, ADC, Folder: IHM.

<sup>6</sup>Motoko B. Yatake Reece, John Griswold White trustee, and the White Collection in the Cleveland Public Library, p. 30.

<sup>7</sup>Very Rev. Canon Peter Lonsdale to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, 14 December 1911, ADC, Folder: IHM.

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that he did because he wished to take advantage of the provision in the mortgage which rendered the principal payable upon default in interest payments.<sup>8</sup>

Rev. Bruno Walter at this time made a commitment to the education of the parish children. Stability and permanence of the teaching staff were sorely needed. Rev. Walter approached the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Third Order of St. Francis in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, for some teachers for the parish school. Their Mother General gladly consented and sent him five Sisters to take care of approximately 200 children who were enrolled in 1911.<sup>9</sup> Prior to the reconciliation, the pastor had provided the religious education of the school children. For the other subjects he usually employed lay teachers, the most dependable of whom were the organists. But even they, for various reasons, had to be frequently changed.<sup>10</sup>

Though the parish seemed in constant need of financial resources, they was no lack of religious zeal. The Parish Annual Report for 1910 listed the following active organizations in the parish:

St. Francis Society  
St. Kazimer Society  
King John III Knights  
St. Joseph Society  
Sacred Heart of Jesus  
White Eagle Society<sup>11</sup>

St. Ceslaw Young Men's Society  
Sacred Heart Society  
Holy Rosary Society  
Young Ladies Sodality  
St. Agnes Children's Society

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<sup>8</sup>John G. White to Rev. W.A. Scullen, 8 January 1912, ADC, document #18, Folder: IHM.

<sup>9</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #14, ADC.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., item #13.

<sup>11</sup>Parish Annual Report, 1910, ADC.





# Chapter 14

## Orzechowski, the master builder

**O**n February 12, 1912, Rev. Marion J. Orzechowski, formerly of the Diocese of Pittsburgh<sup>1</sup>, was appointed pastor. He had a difficult task, the most difficult of which was to bring peace to the newly reconciled congregation. To accomplish this it was necessary that the pastor have greater than the average patience and understanding of human nature, and a sincere love of his fellow man. These qualities Rev. Orzechowski possessed in a very high degree, more so than his predecessors. In spite of the social and financial difficulties that faced the parish, Orzechowski remained as pastor for over twenty years, albeit not without some turbulent times.<sup>2</sup>

By the summer of 1912 The Catholic Universe spoke proudly of Orzechowski's accomplishments in the short time he had been pastor. The parish at the time was a congregation composed almost entirely of Polish-speaking Catholics.<sup>3</sup>

The property of the parish was one of the largest in the city,

. . . and for its neighborhood is finely situated, fronting as it does an entire block on Lansing Avenue with a large, frame combination church and school, with a handsome parochial residence and with large, well-kept lawns over the whole site.<sup>4</sup>

The parish had between 300 and 400 families enrolled and in the school, which was run by five Sisters of St. Joseph, there were the previous year (1911) a little more than 250 children enrolled. The work of the teaching Sisters was that of Americanizing the children which they were doing as quickly as circumstances would permit.<sup>5</sup>

Rev. Orzechowski was sent from Pittsburgh for the express purpose of taking charge of the complex problems of the parish.

Father Orzechowski came to the problem with a full understanding of the difficulties but with an earnest appreciation of the great good to be done. In the short time he has been in charge, he has succeeded in winning the

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<sup>1</sup>Parishes of the Catholic Church, Diocese of Cleveland, p. 57, WRHS, File: IHM.

<sup>2</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #10, ADC.

<sup>3</sup>"Immaculate Heart of Mary Is a Polish Congregation," The Catholic Universe, 30 August 1912, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

## *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

confidence and cooperation of the people to such a degree that there can be no doubt that the dawn of a brighter day for the Immaculate Heart of Mary can already be discerned.<sup>6</sup>



Msgr. Marion Orzechowski.

Such optimism was necessary for Orzechowski to proceed in his pastorship of this discordant congregation which was also in need of a new church, a new school, and a new convent. To ensure the future of the growing parish and perhaps to galvanize the latent spirit of cooperation and good which Orzechowski sensed in his people, the parish made ambitious plans for the construction of a brick and stone church. This substantial structure would come to symbolize the parishioners' steadfast spirit of attachment for their church which persists today.

A hand-drawn map of the parish grounds delineates the aspiring plans of the congregation for a 'new church we intent [*sic*] to build from stone and brick.'<sup>7</sup> The map, though not to scale, outlines a cruciform church with twin towers, occupying nearly the full depth of the lots from Fremont to Oakwood Streets.

A meeting of the Diocesan Building Commission was held on March 13, 1913 to consider plans and specifications for a new school and a new church for the Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. A report dated March 18, 1913 was prepared for Bishop Farrelly. Some of the following recommendations were made at this meeting:

- (1) there should be a full basement in both the school and the church as this would be more healthful and useful, and expensive. In the case of the church, probably for the sake of economy, this was not done. In the case of the school, a full basement was not dug until after the construction of the building;
- (2) it was recommended that a steam plant be installed in both of the buildings rather than install multiple furnaces to heat such large buildings;
- (3) both sacristies were to be connected with a continuous passage behind the altar. This was not done until both sacristies were expanded in 1945. Prior to this there was a passage behind the main altar, but it was not accessible from the sacristies;

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<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup>Map of parish property, c. 1906, ADC, Folder: IHM.



*Orzechowski, the master builder*

(4) confessionals were to be placed in the tower corners;

(5) the towers were not considered appropriate. What that meant is not clear. Our church was modeled after a church in Tulsa, Oklahoma whose twin spires rose 150 feet into the air. Perhaps they were considered too ostentatious and expensive; more probably they were probably considered hazardous especially in light of the tornado in 1909 which had destroyed both spires of St. Stanislaus Church and resulted in the death of one child;

(6) the center chancel window would be eliminated because of obstruction by the main altar and because of the light. As a compromise, two smaller windows were installed high in the sanctuary. To simulate the effect of windows in the chancel, a subsequent decorating of the church included the depiction of window-like murals of saints on the walls of the sanctuary;

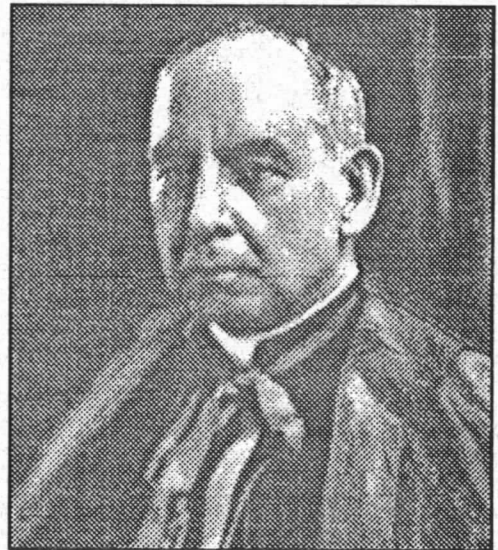
(7) each classroom in the school would have a cloakroom;

(8) wherever possible, windows were to be provided on two sides of each classroom;

(9) the outside doors of the church and school were to be painted and not grained;

(10) the school was to have a tar and gravel roof;

(11) copper was to be used on the school and church wherever galvanized iron and tin were specified.<sup>8</sup>



**Bishop John P. Farrelly.**

While plans were being finalized for a new church, the spiritual needs of the growing parish were not ignored. On June 24, 1913, Bishop Farrelly confirmed 179 people.<sup>9</sup>

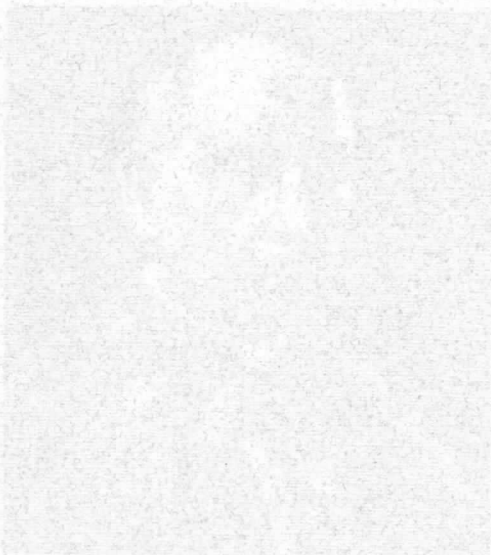
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<sup>8</sup>Secretary of the Building Commission to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, Report, 18 March 1913, ADC, document #22, Folder: IHM.

<sup>9</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #7, ADC.

## *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

The history of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish is a story of faith, hope, and charity. It begins with the vision of the Virgin Mary, who appeared to the faithful in the year 1854. This vision was a powerful reminder of the Immaculate Conception, a doctrine that had been recently defined by the Vatican. The parish was founded in 1855, and its first church was built on the site of the vision. Over the years, the parish has grown and flourished, thanks to the dedication of its priests and the devotion of its people. Today, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish is a vibrant community of faith, serving the needs of its members and the wider neighborhood.

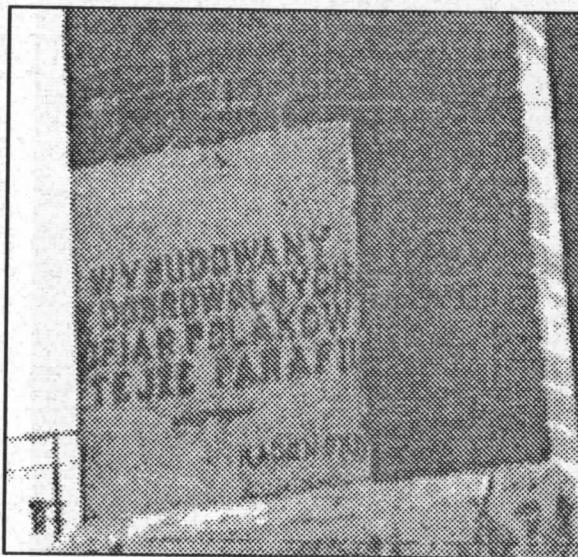


The parish has a long and rich history, with many notable events and figures. One of the most significant events was the founding of the parish in 1855, which was a testament to the faith and devotion of the people. The parish has also been blessed with many great priests, who have served the community with love and dedication. Over the years, the parish has grown and flourished, thanks to the dedication of its priests and the devotion of its people. Today, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish is a vibrant community of faith, serving the needs of its members and the wider neighborhood.

## Chapter 15

### the new brick and stone church is erected

The cornerstone of the new church, bearing an inscription in Polish authored by a parishioner, was laid in 1914.<sup>1</sup> By this time the population of the parish had grown from its original 300 families to about 900 families and then to near 1,200.<sup>2</sup> Construction was under-way by the summer of 1914. This enormous undertaking became financially taxing for the parish and probably delayed completion of the building. Construction proceeded as money was available and usually even when the money was not. Unpaid bills mounted and creditors threatened collections and lawsuits. The enthusiasm of this venture often appeared to obscure the practicalities of the undertaking. Accounts could go unpaid for years; they did not disappear as Rev. Orzechowski sometimes hoped they would.



"Built through the generous offerings of the Polish people of this parish."

In a conciliatory gesture of goodwill, the pastor and congregation of St. Stanislaus Church offered the Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary financial help in the amount of \$5,000 in February of 1914. Perhaps this assistance was extended as an effort to mend the schismatic rift still recent in the memories of both parishes. Though made in good faith, the offer was never acted upon by the parish and the funds were eventually used for improvements at St. Stanislaus. However, the standing offer of financial help in the future remained open.<sup>3</sup>

In September of 1914, the pastor and congregation of St. Stanislaus advanced the \$5,000 to Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish through the *Broadway Savings and Trust*

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<sup>1</sup>The inscription was authored by John Radomski who lived at 6910 Lansing Avenue; Church Committee to 'Honorable Father,' undated, ADC, document #110, Folder: IHM.

<sup>2</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #12, ADC.

<sup>3</sup>Rev. Wenceslaus Krzycki, O.F.M. to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, 17 July 1914, ADC, Folder: IHM.



### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

*Company*. The money was to be used to pay parish bills which had been forwarded to the bishop for payment.<sup>4</sup>



Edward J. Wasielewski (left) and Anthony F. Wasielewski (right).

To undertake the challenge of erecting a large church with limited and sometimes uncertain funds, Rev. Orzechowski employed the services of Anthony F. Wasielewski, an itinerant church builder from Minneapolis who had a reputation for competence and keeping costs down.<sup>5</sup> He was a general contractor and builder of churches and schools<sup>6</sup> in Kansas, Wisconsin, and Iowa.<sup>7</sup> Though probably not an accredited architect, he did refer to himself as one, but appeared to work from plans drawn up by someone else.

Anthony F. Wasielewski was born in Russian Poland about 1861. In 1882 he emigrated to the United States and settled in Minnesota where he became a naturalized citizen on December 8, 1892.<sup>8</sup> In 1887 his brother, John, left Poland for the United States and joined him in Minnesota. By 1890 John and his wife, Mary, were living in Minneapolis and Anthony boarded with them. It seems that the two brothers lived together all of their time in the United States. At this time Anthony was

doing masonry work and John was a laborer.<sup>9</sup>

By 1897 the brothers were still living together in Minneapolis. Anthony was a builder and contractor and was erecting large structures such as schools and churches. At this time

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<sup>4</sup>Fr. Wenceslaus Krzycki, O.F.M. to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 1 September 1914, ADC, document #45, Folder: IHM.

<sup>5</sup>Interview with Rev. James White, Archives of the Diocese of Tulsa, 10 March 1992.

<sup>6</sup>Business card of Anthony F. Wasielewski, ADC, Folder: IHM.

<sup>7</sup>Interview with Rev. James White, Tulsa Diocesan Archives, 10 March 1992.

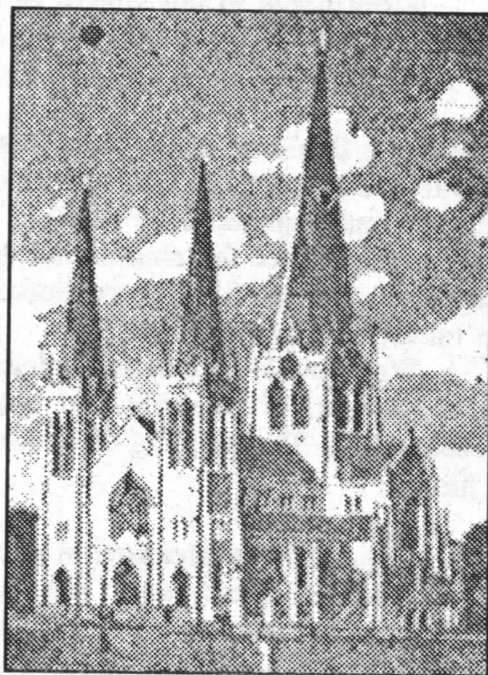
<sup>8</sup>Naturalization Certificate, Anthony F. Wasielewski, Hennepin County, State of Minnesota, District Court, Fourth Judicial District, 8 December 1892.

<sup>9</sup>This information was provided by Mrs. Laura Rust, an independent Minneapolis researcher, 27 July 1992.

*the new brick and stone church is erected*

his brother, John, was working as a tanner. In 1898 Anthony married Annie, a Polish woman born in England who had emigrated here in 1880.<sup>10</sup>

In the spring of 1900, both Anthony and John moved their families to Anoka County, Minnesota where they continued to live in the same household. John and Mary had six children, two of whom died. Anthony and his wife, Annie, had two children, Victor F., born in 1900, and Stanley R., born in 1904. While in Anoka County, Anthony continued his contract work. In 1911 he moved his family back to Minneapolis and continued his building company with the help of his nephew, Edward J., who was a bricklayer.<sup>11</sup> Together the two men worked on the building of our new church.



Holy Family Church (Cathedral).

To keep construction costs down, Wasielewski used the system of day labor. Under his management the church got what it wanted and paid for what it actually received without the red tape and graft "... so widely practiced on 95 per cent of buildings constructed by contract."<sup>12</sup> Mr. Wasielewski's most recent commission had been the construction of Holy Family Church (now Cathedral) in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

He had built 24 churches prior to this. He wrote in testimony to his system of building:

... For the sake of economy and better workmanship the church should be built by a church builder, and by one who is strong enough in his organisation [sic] to play fair to all workers, and pay each man according to his ability in preference to any union cards, by-laws, walking delegates and lazy and worthless agitators who never earn honest dollar [sic] by working, but who are devoting their time to fermenting trouble among the laboring craft, and sustaining their worthless existence thereby. ...<sup>13</sup>

The rector of Holy Family Church, Rev. John G. Heiring, wrote in testimony to the quality of Wasielewski's work to Bishop Farrelly:

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Brochure: Holy Family Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma, ADC, Folder: IHM.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

. . . honesty and integrity have been distinguishing qualities in him in the construction of our church as well as in all purchasing deals. The church as it stands speaks more forcibly than words could, his capability and efficiency as a builder.<sup>14</sup>

Though the final cost of the church came to \$110,226, this was much lower than the lowest contractor's bid of \$128,728.<sup>15</sup> Work on the church started on September 28, 1912 and the building was completed by April 1, 1914. Wasielewski himself donated the cost of the interior painting of the church and decorating as part of an agreement with the pastor to keep funds flowing for construction. In 1914 the church was the largest in Oklahoma and the tallest building in Tulsa.<sup>16</sup>

Wasielewski kept detailed financial accounts of the construction jobs he managed and his reputation for integrity and quality workmanship on the Tulsa church and others preceded him. The building committee of St. Leo's Church in Minot, North Dakota, wrote of him:

We . . . take pleasure in recommending him to you as a man thoroughly reliable in every way. His system of building, insures [sic] economy and thorough construction. . . . Owing to his thorough knowledge of values and qualities, has procured for us the best quality of material at reasonable cost, with the net result that he has saved us more money than we paid him for his services. . . . We assure you that you can depend upon his ability, honesty, and integrity from start to finish.<sup>17</sup>

The pastor of St. John the Baptist Church in Dayton, Minnesota wrote a similarly glowing testimonial of Wasielewski:

. . . His thorough knowledge of church architecture and construction, his diligence and ability in handling all classes of work and construction, has given us the best kind of work and saved us thousands of dollars as compared with figures submitted by other contractors. He is reliable in every way and honest

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<sup>14</sup>Rev. John G. Heiring, Rector, Holy Family Church, to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, undated, ADC, Folder: IHM.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Rev. James White, Tulsa Catholics, pp. 52-56.

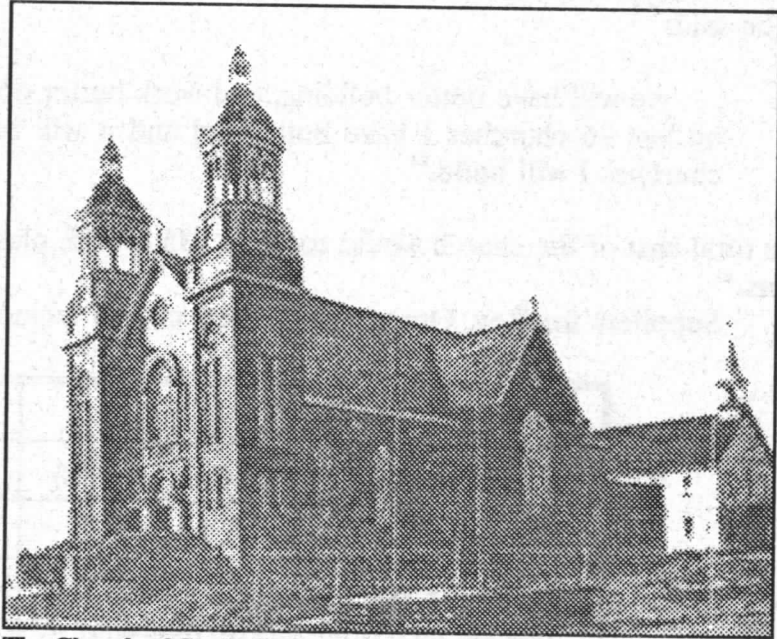
<sup>17</sup>Building Committee of St. Leo Church, Minot, North Dakota, to Rt. Rev. J.J. Hennessy, ADC, Folder: IHM.



*the new brick and stone church is erected*

in his dealings and as such we take pleasure in recommending him to all those who wish to build economically and to have first class work done.<sup>18</sup>

The Church of St. Anthony was completed by Mr. Wasielewski in 1911 and bears a most striking resemblance in appearance to our church, more so than does Holy Family Church whose blueprints served as the model for our church.<sup>19</sup> It measures 53 feet in width and 67 feet wide at the transept, with a length of 124 feet. Its twin towers reach 87 feet in height. Even more remarkably, its stained glass art windows were executed, as were ours, by *The Munich Studio* of Chicago at a cost of \$2,200. Mr. Wasielewski donated the cost of interior decoration of this church.<sup>20</sup>



The Church of St. Anthony.

Wasielewski, 52 years old at the time, was in Cleveland in May of 1914 starting work on Rev. Orzechowski's new church. He had heard Bishop Farrelly was planning to build a new hospital and he was desirous of the job.<sup>21</sup> While in Cleveland he lived at 1433 East 33rd Street in rental property owned by the Golubski family of our parish.<sup>22</sup> He maintained a residence at 3259 East 55th Street, near the commercial intersection of Broadway Avenue.<sup>23</sup> The lowest bid submitted for our church was \$42,500, not including heating,

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<sup>18</sup>C.A. Pettigrew, Rector, St. John the Baptist Church, Dayton, Minnesota to Rt. Rev. J.J. Hennessy, ADC, Folder: IHM.

<sup>19</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #4, ADC.

<sup>20</sup>Brochure, Church of St. Anthony, Lismore, Minnesota, 29 November 1911, ADC, Folder: IHM.

<sup>21</sup>A.F. Wasielewski to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, 14 May 1914, ADC, Folder: IHM.

<sup>22</sup>Personal recollections of Linda Golubski.

<sup>23</sup>A.F. Wasielewski to Rev. Dr. Wm. A. Scullen, Chancellor, 22 May 1917, ADC, document #78, Folder: IHM.

### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

pews, or other furnishings. A transept was added to the original plans along with plastic ornamentation, better brick, and reinforced concrete heating rooms, totalling \$4,800, yet upon its completion, Mr. Wasielewski said the total cost would not exceed the lowest bid. As he said:

. . . we will have better building, and work better done. It has been that way on last 26 churches I have build [sic] and it will be on this one and other churches I will build.<sup>24</sup>

The total cost of the church would come to \$35,853.35, plus \$1,026 for other materials and debts.<sup>25</sup>

Suppliers for Rev. Orzechowski's new church included the following companies:

Peters Mill Work (frames)	\$1,025.00
Euclid Builders Supply Co. (cement)	1,993.33
Broadway Lumber Co.	1,834.22
Hydraulic Press Brick Co. 130,000 face brick @\$18/thousand	2,340.00
J.S. Gynn for old brick	375.00
National Iron & Wire Co.	225.00
Scoggins Lumber Co. Arkansas	1,590.00
Cleveland Stone Co.	413.38
Farr Brick Co. (sand)	590.50 <sup>26</sup>

Payroll for the workingmen up until August 1, 1914 was \$6,451.07. Wasielewski himself signed the report to the bishop as architect and builder. There were additional costs indicated to complete the church building. These expenses were listed in Wasielewski's report as follows:

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<sup>24</sup>A.F. Wasielewski to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, 5 August 1914, document #43, CDA, Folder: IHM.

<sup>25</sup>Building Committee and Trustees of Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, 5 August 1914, ADC, document #38, Folder: IHM.

<sup>26</sup>Building Committee and Trustees of Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, 5 August 1914, ADC, document #38, Folder: IHM.

*the new brick and stone church is erected*

plastering	\$3,000.00
flooring	500.00
lumber	280.00
painting	400.00
hardware	275.00
interior oak finish	1,200.00
interior carpentry	1,200.00
common brick and laying	980.00
structural iron	50.00
common carpenter's work	550.00
general labor	5,700.00
to complete roof	2,800.00
incidentals	1,000.00 <sup>27</sup>

Had the accounts for the construction of the new church been kept current, perhaps Rev. Orzechowski's congregation could have occupied the new building sooner than it did. Wasielewski usually took a little over a year to finish construction of a basic church building. Diocesan records indicate that Bishop Farrelly did not dedicate our church until 1916, nearly two years after construction had begun.<sup>28</sup>

Companies who supplied building materials and goods for the church, and Wasielewski himself, an ever patient man, clamored for payment. *The Peters Mill Work & Lumber Company*, located on Carter Road in Cleveland's flats, had supplied window and door frames for our new church. Rev. Orzechowski had made several promises of payment for material valued at \$1,023.10. As of August 11, 1914, no payment had been received, Orzechowski advising the company that he was waiting for a loan to clear.<sup>29</sup> In the more socially civil times of the early twentieth century, businesses were reluctant to approach the authority of the bishop for redress of their financial delinquencies with priests under his

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Parish Annual Report, 1915, ADC; this report was not officially received by the Diocese until 22 November 1916.

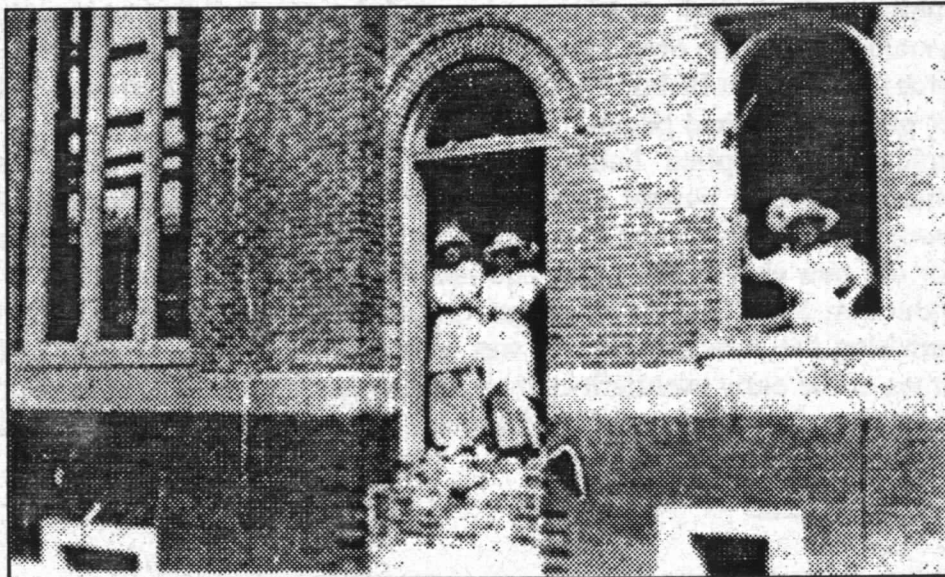
<sup>29</sup>The Peters Mill Work & Lumber Co. to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, 11 August 1914, ADC, Folder: IHM.



*History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*



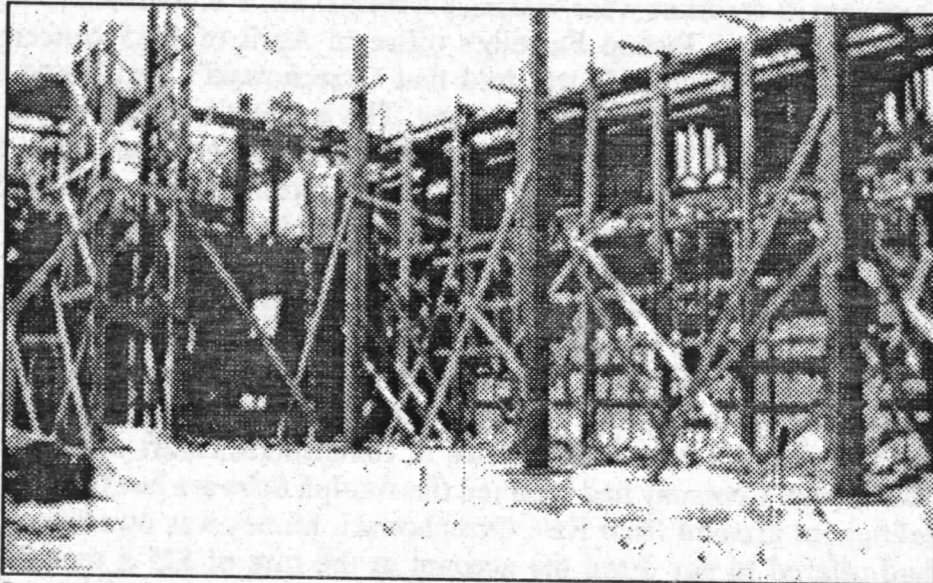
Construction of the new church, west side of building (rectory side).



Construction of the new church, priest's sacristy entrance, now enclosed by the breezeway connecting the rectory to the church.

*the new brick and stone church is erected*

charge. They usually directed such inquiries to the local priest in arrears on the payment. Badgering the bishop of the diocese was not considered in good taste or proper form. Bishop Farrelly had his hands full with overdue accounts involving Orzechowski and the Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



Interior of the new church under construction, looking towards the street entrance from the sanctuary near the priest's sacristy.

By May of 1915 the interior of the church was probably complete but the building lacked pews. Rev. Orzechowski had written to Bishop Farrelly concerning two petitions signed by the church committee. The first petition was a demand from the parishioners for Orzechowski to purchase pews for the new church. Orzechowski told the parishioners that whoever wanted to have a pew in the new church could rent one for \$5.00. Four hundred seats were needed but only \$5.00 had been deposited. The lowest bid for pews was \$2,300. Rev. Orzechowski thought he could put in half of the needed pews and the other half later when the rentals had been paid in advance.<sup>30</sup>

The other petition concerned the installation of new sanitary facilities which Orzechowski was compelled to do by the city health department. The current sanitary system was anything but and it was not connected to the city sewer system. Enough material was on hand from the construction of the church to erect them; only labor and plumbing

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<sup>30</sup>Rev. M.J. Orzechowski to Rt. Rev Bishop Farrelly, 17 May 1915, ADC, document #49, Folder: IHM.



### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

amounting to \$1,000 was needed. Orzechowski had begun house collections to raise money for that purpose and had already collected \$600.<sup>31</sup>

Bills for other interior furnishings also had not been paid. Rev. Orzechowski had purchased Stations of the Cross from the *Daprato Company* of Boston in 1914. The purchase was made through *The Ecclesiastical Imp'tg and Mfg. Company* of Pittsburgh which by 1916 had gone bankrupt and its creditors were seeking payments. Mr. P.S. Krumenacker, receiver of the company, had gone to Bishop Farrelly's office in April of 1915 concerning Rev. Orzechowski's delinquent account. He was told that Orzechowski's parish was heavily in debt and to give the pastor a bit more time to pay. The account was allowed to continue unpaid and the original set of Stations, costing \$300 was exchanged for a new and more expensive set costing \$800. The old set had never been returned. Also outstanding were some personal bills of Rev. Orzechowski for goods delivered in 1914. As of June 1916 these accounts still had not been settled.<sup>32</sup>

Rev. Orzechowski was defendant in a lawsuit brought by the *C. Wilderman Company* of New York City for payment of \$377.18 owed for candles, books, and church goods purchased since 1912. Orzechowski said he was absolutely unable to pay it and the diocesan law firm of White, Johnson, Cannon, and Neff was seeking confirmation from Bishop Farrelly whether Orzechowski was indeed pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church.<sup>33</sup>

The *C. Wilderman Company* had retained the Adolph Schwarz law firm of Cleveland to collect its delinquent account from Rev. Orzechowski. Money was owed from 1912 and Orzechowski had offered to pay down the account at the rate of \$25 a month which the company had refused. The company wanted immediate court action unless a settlement was forthcoming.<sup>34</sup>

Rev. Orzechowski owed *The Billings-Chapin Company* \$51.26 for paint and varnish. As this bill was over a year old, the company inquired of the bishop's office why they were unable to get it paid.<sup>35</sup> The company had been tactfully trying in earnest since July of 1915 to get this bill paid. In a more serious tone, the company explained that it was hesitant to employ a collection agency because of the reputation of the Diocese of Cleveland for prompt payment of its obligations. Unless a prompt settlement could be made, the company now threatened legal action against the diocese.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>P.S. Krumenacker to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, 5 June 1916, ADC, document #69, Folder: IHM.

<sup>33</sup>White, Johnson, Cannon, and Neff to Chancellor, Diocese of Cleveland, 28 October 1914, ADC, document #47, Folder: IHM.

<sup>34</sup>A.M. Schwarz to Rt. Rev. Palmer C. O'Reilly, 2 September 1915, ADC, document #61, Folder: IHM.

<sup>35</sup>The Billings-Chapin Company to Rt. Rev. W.A. Scullen, 4 August 1915, ADC, document #57, Folder: IHM.

<sup>36</sup>The Billings-Chapin Company to Rev. W.A. Scullen, 18 August 1915, ADC, document #60, Folder: IHM.



*the new brick and stone church is erected*

Orzechowski also owed \$224.68 in delinquent taxes on the church property for the year 1913. If the taxes were not paid, the property would be sold. In a curt note from the bishop's office, Orzechowski was commanded to pay the tax immediately and show proof of a receipt at the chancery: "His Lordship does not care to have church property sold for unpaid taxes nor his name to appear in public print under such circumstances."<sup>37</sup>

The orphan assessment had gone unpaid to Bishop Farrelly for three years.<sup>38</sup> A lawsuit was pending in court with Euclid Builders Supply for money owed for plastering to Mr. W.J. Doberstyn.<sup>39</sup>

Mr. Wasielewski, the builder of the new church, trusting and always respectful of Rev. Orzechowski and Bishop Farrelly, was owed \$2,700 for his fee, including \$514 to balance his expenses. He had not asked Orzechowski for his money during the past year because Orzechowski and the congregation were trying to attend to all the other financial obligations resulting from the church construction. Since the parish finances seemed in order by this time in January, 1916, Mr. Wasielewski thought it to be the proper time to put his account in bankable shape so he could use the money and help other churches. Dr. Scullen, Chancellor of the diocese, had told Wasielewski that it would be best for Orzechowski to make an additional loan to clear the account and Orzechowski seemed disposed to this solution.<sup>40</sup>

Wasielewski went as far as approaching the *Broadway Savings and Trust Company* for advice in this delicate matter. He was told by Mr. Slage of the bank that a loan could be made to Orzechowski and Wasielewski begged the bishop to sanction an additional "little loan."<sup>41</sup>

Within a week, Bishop Farrelly's secretary advised Orzechowski to take the loan to pay Wasielewski his \$2,700 and enclosed an application form for the authorization. He also asked Orzechowski if there were any other outstanding debts for which a loan could be negotiated against the church property.<sup>42</sup>

Wasielewski's plea to the bishop for payment of his outstanding fee of \$2,700 went unheard as did probably the bishop's request in his behalf since the builder remained unpaid by late May of 1917. Orzechowski had been in the hospital and Wasielewski could accept that as reason for the delay. However, Wasielewski felt taken advantage of since

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<sup>37</sup>Secretary to Rev. M.J. Orzechowski, 7 December 1914, ADC, document #48, Folder: IHM.

<sup>38</sup>Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly to Rev. M.J. Orzechowski, 28 June 1916, ADC, document #73, Folder: IHM.

<sup>39</sup>Municipal Court Judge Frank Phillips to Bailiff of Said Court, 8 February 1916, ADC, document #67, Folder: IHM.

<sup>40</sup>A.F. Wasielewski to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 10 January 1916, ADC, document #63, Folder: IHM.

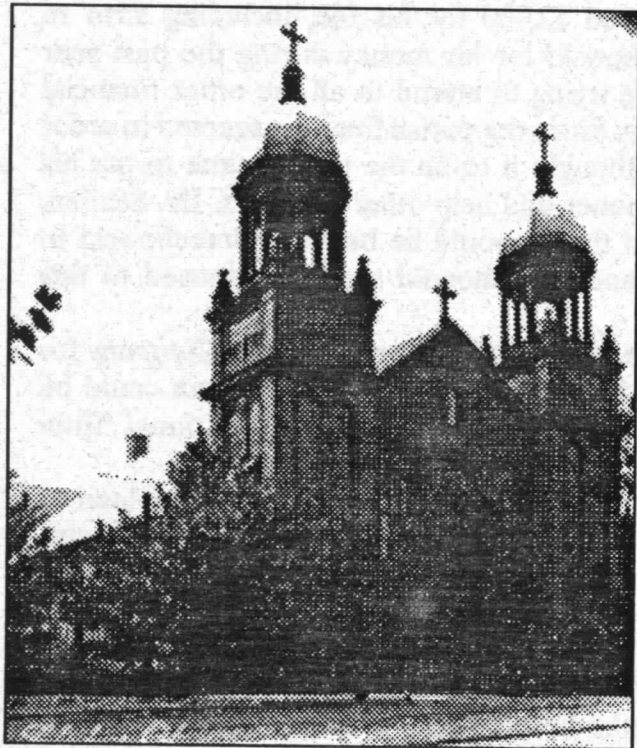
<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Secretary to Rev. M.J. Orzechowski, 17 January 1916, ADC, document #64, Folder: IHM.

## *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

Orzechowski was now home attending to every parish duty except the payment of this fee to Wasielewski. Again, Wasielewski begged the Chancellor to settle the claim at once.<sup>43</sup>

By November 1, 1917, Wasielewski's bill to Orzechowski stood at \$5,033.97. He was willing to settle for \$3,400 if he could be paid by December 8. If not, he would take the matter to court, dragging the bishop into it, and blaming Orzechowski entirely for this unfortunate development.<sup>44</sup> Rev. Scullen, Chancellor of the Diocese, acknowledged writing this letter to Orzechowski at Wasielewski's request. Dr. Scullen explained to Orzechowski that he felt a compromise would perhaps be better than a lengthy lawsuit and expensive legal fees.<sup>45</sup>



**The Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.**

Mr. Wasielewski retained the services of L.A. Kujawski, Attorney, to settle his claim with Orzechowski. In an introductory letter to Bishop Farrelly, the attorney explained that Wasielewski had a contract with Orzechowski to build a new church. He was to be paid a fee of \$5,000 as contractor and builder. Another contract was made with Orzechowski prior to the construction of the church to make a set of plans for the new church. Wasielewski had fulfilled all of the conditions of both contracts and had been paid \$3,130.16 by the congregation who refused the balance due him. Nothing was paid on the contract for plans and specifications and no money was reimbursed to Wasielewski for materials purchased for and on behalf of the church. He was due \$4,245.74 with interest at 6% from December 1, 1914.<sup>46</sup>

Mr. Kujawski filed suit on behalf of Wasielewski in Common Pleas Court without making the bishop a party to the defendant. Orzechowski did not file an answer to the suit and refused to settle the case. On March 8, 1918, Mr. Kujawski informed the bishop of the legal action being taken in order to give him the opportunity to persuade Orzechowski

<sup>43</sup>A.F. Wasielewski to Rev. W.A. Scullen, Chancellor, 22 May 1917, ADC, document #78, Folder: IHM.

<sup>44</sup>A.F. Wasielewski to Rev. M.J. Orzechowski (dictated to and written by Rev. W.A. Scullen, Chancellor), 5 December 1917, ADC, document #83, Folder: IHM.

<sup>45</sup>Rev. W.A. Scullen to Rev. M.J. Orzechowski, 10 December 1917, ADC, document #86, Folder: IHM.

<sup>46</sup>L.A. Kujawski to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 8 March 1918, ADC, document #92, Folder: IHM.



*the new brick and stone church is erected*

to settle the matter by March 15 or the bishop would be made a party to the suit. Mr. Wasielewski did not desire to do that unless forced to do so by Orzechowski's inaction.<sup>47</sup>

Oppressed with a crushing debt resulting from the construction of the new church, the parish strained to complete the building project. Many parishioners themselves toiled in the construction of their church. Bishop Farrelly officially dedicated the church building on Thursday, July 27, 1916. The yellow brick and stone church follows the Romanesque style of architecture, with changes necessitated by the lack of funds<sup>48</sup>, with twin square truncated towers, capped with bell cotes, anchored at either side of the triple main entrance.<sup>49</sup>

When completed, the seating capacity of the church was 1,250. Its length is 151' 11" and its width is 84' 10." The building has irregular arches in the main and side naves. It was economically built, is unpretentious, and highly serviceable, with several well-distributed exits enabling the largest crowd to exit the building in three minutes. When built it contained five altars, well-placed, painted white and gold, in the style common at the time, high, fully filling the arches above them.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, Item #4, ADC.

<sup>49</sup>Parishes of the Catholic Church, Diocese of Cleveland, pp. 57-58, WRHS, File: IHM.

<sup>50</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, Item #4, ADC, Folder: IHM.



## *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

The history of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish is a story of faith, community, and growth. The parish was founded in 1885 by the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who were dedicated to the education and spiritual formation of the young women of the area. The first church building was constructed in 1890, and the parish has since grown to become one of the largest and most vibrant in the diocese. Over the years, the parish has been blessed with many outstanding pastors and religious educators, who have helped to shape the spiritual life of the community. The parish is also known for its strong commitment to social justice and service to the poor, which has led to the establishment of many outreach programs and ministries. Today, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish continues to be a place of hope, love, and faith for all who call it home.

# Chapter 16

## the stained glass windows

**T**he window frames of the Rev. Orzechowski's new church were glazed with beautiful and noteworthy stained glass windows executed from a series of religious paintings<sup>1</sup> by *The Munich Studio* of Chicago during the years from 1914 to 1918. The first of the windows to be installed were the two large transept windows of "Christ Preaching" and "St. Dominic". Installation was completed in 1918 with the window depicting St. Adalbert and the "Coming of Christianity to Poland". Several of our priceless windows bear the scripted logo of *The Munich Studio* with the dates of their execution.

Several churches in Cleveland commissioned *The Munich Studio* to design their exquisite Baroque-style stained glass windows, among them, the nearest being St. John Nepomucene Church on Fleet Avenue. The triple window in the west transept reveals the studio logo and depicts the Ascension in the center flanked by Saints Cyril and Methodius, the Slavic saints. Interestingly, the parish silver jubilee book from 1927 carries a full page congratulatory advertisement from *The Munich Studio*<sup>2</sup> which operated from 1903 to 1932 and then fell victim to The Great Depression.

Several other Cleveland and Ohio churches share with us the beautifully artistic stained glass creations rendered by *The Munich Studio*. Holy Rosary Church in Cleveland's Little Italy dates to 1908. Its two transept triple windows were depicted as testimonials in a catalog of the company and portray the Assumption and St. Dominic flanked by the Evangelists.<sup>3</sup>

St. Adalbert Church on Cleveland's East 83rd Street was built in 1912. *The Munich Studio* was commissioned to design its windows by the pastor, Rev. John W. Becka, who is referred to in a testimonial page in the company's catalog. Several of the windows, some of which depict the Mysteries of the Rosary, incorporate the name of the studio at the foot of the window.<sup>4</sup>

The windows in St. Mary's Church in Tiffin, Ohio were installed around 1906. The extraordinary renderings of the Mysteries of the Rosary in its stained glass windows stand as elegant testimony to the religious sensitivity of their designers. The parish is the oldest

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<sup>1</sup>Parishes of the Catholic Church, Diocese of Cleveland, p. 58, WRHS, File: IHM.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Rev. Jerome Lucachinsky, assistant, and Mr. Frank Houdek, parish historian, St. John Nepomucene Church; visit to church 7 August 1991.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Pastor Rev. Phillip Racco, 12 December 1990; visit to church 29 December 1990.

<sup>4</sup>Interview with Pastor Rev. Jerome Steinbrenner, 26 December 1990; visit to church 28 December 1990.

## *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

continuous parish in the Toledo Diocese and was once administered as part of the Diocese of Cleveland.<sup>5</sup>



D.S. Shanahan.

St. Joseph Church, also in Tiffin, Ohio, possesses two windows done by *The Munich Studio*, the Adoration of the Magi and the Annunciation. The church has maintained its records well over the years of its history and has its original contract for these windows with *The Munich Studio*. This gives some indication of the cost of a typical window of the kind found in our church. Their windows were design #205 and specifications called for the use of imported antique glass for the stained glass and ¼" rough plate glass for protection. The contract, worth \$750, was signed on February 24, 1906 and work was to be completed by June 1st. As testimony to the quality of their work, the contract specified that the two windows must be better than those installed by the *Von Gerichten Company* in every respect. The *Von Gerichten Company* of Columbus, Ohio had installed other stained glass windows in the church. The contract was signed by the pastor and Mr. D.S. Shanahan, business manager for *The Munich Studio*.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>History of St. Mary Parish.

<sup>6</sup>"Articles of Agreement," *The Munich Studio* and St. Joseph Church, Tiffin, Ohio, 24 February 1906.



# Chapter 17

## a new school is built

Even with the new church built for the growing congregation, Rev. Orzechowski could find respite neither from the continued growth of the parish nor its ever pressing demands. This was an active and vibrant parish. By 1915 there were 640 men enrolled in the Societies of St. Francis, St. Ladislaus, St. Stanislaus, Ss. Cyril and Methodius, and St. Joseph. There were 610 women enrolled in the Societies of the Holy Rosary, Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Agnes, St. Veronica, St. Klara, St. Francis, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> Rev. Orzechowski was convinced that the church should not only administer to the spiritual needs of its people, but also to their intellectual needs as well. Once the new church was built he concentrated his efforts on the construction of a new school.

Space to accommodate the growing population of school children was at a premium. The commitment to education was made by the parish early in its history and it did then and still does now present a financial challenge to the parishioners. More classroom space was needed to alleviate overcrowding. Enough material was left over from the construction of the church to build two or three portable classrooms. For this purpose each child enrolled in the school had to pay \$1.80. In first grade there were 140 children and in third grade there were 115 children. If the two or three additional classrooms could be built, then the parish could get by for another few years without a new school.<sup>2</sup>

In 1917 an architect named Johnsen made plans for an 80' by 64' frame school building to face on Worley Avenue. It became known as the 'Bobhouse'. At the time of greatest influx of school children it had eight classrooms.<sup>3</sup> It was later given a brick facade to match the other parish buildings.



The temporary school known as the "Bobhouse."

Rev. Orzechowski made a formal application to Bishop Farrelly on August 5, 1918 for permission to expend \$12,200 for the erection of three or four portable classrooms costing \$7,500, and for the remodeling of the Sisters' convent to cost \$4,700. The money was

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<sup>1</sup>Parish Annual Report, 1915, ADC.

<sup>2</sup>Rev. M.J. Orzechowski to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, 17 May 1915, ADC, Folder: IHM.

<sup>3</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #13, ADC.

### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

in hand and the parish debt at the time totalled \$35,500.<sup>4</sup> Additional land for a convent was purchased in 1918 and the house on this property served as the convent.<sup>5</sup> Up until this time, the teaching Sisters of the parish had resided in private homes in the neighborhood until the house on this property was purchased for their use.<sup>6</sup>



The old convent.

In the building application, Rev. Orzechowski told the bishop that he had purchased two homes for the Sisters' convent, as he was given permission to do, and that he was asking further permission to have the two houses joined together and remodeled.<sup>7</sup> By 1926 the convent consisted of three regular houses attached together, and this arrangement provided accommodations for 25 sisters and included a chapel.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, Orzechowski explained that the parish could not presently afford to

build a larger school, but the church committee decided to build four portable rooms and Orzechowski needed to have the bishop's permission to proceed with these two necessary projects.<sup>9</sup>

Predictably, debts again mounted for the parish with the completion of the temporary school. The Geo. Worthington Company was owed \$186 for hardware supplied for the construction of the school. Orzechowski had been contacted several times by phone and replied that he would send a check. Two letters had been written to him, but they went unanswered and the bills unpaid for nearly eight months. The company was now troubling the bishop for help in settling the account since payment was always so prompt in the past in dealing with the bills of Catholic schools and churches.<sup>10</sup> Rev. Scullen the next day wrote

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<sup>4</sup>"Application for Permission to Erect New Building," Pastor, Immaculate Heart of Mary to Rt. Rev. Bishop Farrelly, 5 August 1915, ADC, document #128, Folder: IHM.

<sup>5</sup>Parishes of the Catholic Church, Diocese of Cleveland, p. 57, WRHS, File: IHM.

<sup>6</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #18, ADC.

<sup>7</sup>Rev. M.J. Orzechowski to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 5 August 1918, ADC, document #127, Folder: IHM.

<sup>8</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #18, ADC.

<sup>9</sup>Rev. M.J. Orzechowski to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 5 August 1918, ADC, document #127, Folder: IHM.

<sup>10</sup>A.J. Goehr, Treasurer, *The Geo. Worthington Company*, to Rt. Rev. Dr. W.A. Scullen, Chancellor, 19 June 1919, ADC, document #115, Folder: IHM.



*a new school is built*

to The Geo. Worthington Company advising the treasurer that he had directed Orzechowski too pay the bill at once.<sup>11</sup>

The law firm of M.B. and H.H. Johnson informed Bishop Farrelly that *The Theodor Kundtz Company* had supplied furniture to Rev. Orzechowski and he had not paid the bill yet though the purchase was made some time ago. This was to be regarded as a warning that unless the bishop took action, legal redress would be sought.<sup>12</sup>

Though providing adequate classroom space was now Rev. Orzechowski's priority, the spiritual growth of the parish also continued. Two new bells were purchased for the church in 1920.<sup>13</sup> On November 7, 1921, 375 people were confirmed by Rt. Rev. Bishop Joseph Schrembs who addressed the congregation in Polish.<sup>14</sup>

The frame school Rev. Orzechowski constructed in 1918 was but a temporary solution to a seemingly permanent dearth of adequate classroom space to serve the growing needs of the school children. It was clear that a larger, more substantial building would be necessary to provide for the future educational needs of the parish. To design a school building to serve the present and future needs of a growing parish, Franz C. Warner, a Cleveland architect of international renown<sup>15</sup>, was retained for the commission. The building was completed in 1925 and had sixteen classrooms, several smaller rooms, and an auditorium. It cost approximately \$200,000 and was built by the W. Dunbar Company.<sup>16</sup> Rt. Rev. Bishop Joseph Schrembs blessed the cornerstone of the new school building on May 10, 1924.<sup>17</sup>

Mr. Warner was a prominent architect and designer of educational and institutional buildings. He had designed 30 schools in Northern Ohio and was commissioned to design the *Andrews Institute for Girls*, a group of 55 buildings in Willoughby, Ohio. Several schools

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<sup>11</sup>Dr. W.A. Scullen to A.J. Goehr, 20 June 1919, ADC, document #116, Folder: IHM.

<sup>12</sup>M.B. & H.H. Johnson to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 7 April 1920, ADC, document #145, Folder: IHM.

<sup>13</sup>Parish Annual Report, 1920, ADC.

<sup>14</sup>Parish Annual Report, 1921, ADC.

<sup>15</sup>Avery, Elroy McKendree, A History of Cleveland and Its Environs, the Heart of New Connecticut, vol. III, p. 345.

<sup>16</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #13, ADC.

<sup>17</sup>Parish Annual Report, 1924, ADC.



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in Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights exemplify his skill as an architect,<sup>18</sup> including Roxboro Elementary School and the now-razed Coventry Elementary School.<sup>19</sup>

Religious structures designed by Franz Warner included *St. Mary Seminary* (1924), 1227 Ansell Road,<sup>20</sup> and the first brick combination church and school for *St. Rocco Church* (1926), 3205 Fulton Road.<sup>21</sup> Mr. Warner also designed the old *Criminal Courts Building* on Payne Avenue<sup>22</sup>, and the *Euclid Arcade* (1911).<sup>23</sup>



Franz C. Warner.

Franz Warner was born in Painesville, Ohio on September 6, 1876 and was a member of a pioneer family in the original Western Reserve of Ohio. His Warner ancestors were from England and were colonial settlers in Connecticut.<sup>24</sup> He graduated from Painesville High School in 1896 and studied at The Case School of Applied Science in Cleveland from which he graduated in 1900. He joined the architectural firm of *Owsley & Boucherle* in Youngstown and later the firm of *Frank L. Packard* in Columbus until 1908 when he began his own architectural practice in Cleveland. He was well-known in professional circles and was a member of several professional, civic, and social organizations.<sup>25</sup> He married Hazel Ward of Youngstown on July 12, 1912.<sup>26</sup> They lived in Cleveland Heights at 2237 Demington Drive.<sup>27</sup> By 1930 he was senior member of the architectural partnership of *Warner & Mitchell* with an office in the *Bulkley*

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<sup>18</sup>Avery, *loc. cit.*

<sup>19</sup>*The Architectural Forum*, August, 1922, plates 22 and 23.

<sup>20</sup>Foster Armstrong, Richard Klein, and Cara Armstrong, *A Guide to Cleveland's Sacred Landmarks*, p. 87.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 265.

<sup>22</sup>Eric Johannesen, *Cleveland Architecture, 1876-1976*, p. 154.

<sup>23</sup>Robert C. Gaede, editor, *Guide to Cleveland Architecture*, p. 5.1.

<sup>24</sup>Avery, *loc. cit.*

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup>*Who's Who in Ohio*, 1930, p. 139.

<sup>27</sup>Avery, *loc. cit.*

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*Building* downtown. His residence then was in Hunting Valley Village where he was a member of Council.<sup>28</sup>

In 1919 Mr. Warner was elected to the Cleveland Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). In 1944 he retired to his home in the city after a long career during which he attained a wide reputation.<sup>29</sup> He died at the age of 70 on March 19, 1947 at his home in Cincinnati.<sup>30</sup>

School enrollment grew to its peak of 1,350 in 1929. It then steadily decreased until between 1935 and 1945 attendance varied between 700 and 750.<sup>31</sup> A parallel increase in parish growth was reflected in 1932 with a membership of approximately 1,900, occasionally reaching 2,000. This was due in part to new methods of interpreting the financial obligations of parishioners, to house visitations twice a year, and to the willingness of the priests to serve the people in all of their spiritual needs, even if they had been indifferent, neglectful, or even antagonistic toward the church and the priests.<sup>32</sup>

Rev. Marion J. Orzechowski was elevated to the status of Monsignor by Pope Pius XI at the request of Archbishop Joseph Schrembs in the summer of 1926. In his more than two decades as pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Msgr. Orzechowski accomplished his tasks of providing for the temporal and spiritual needs of his parish by building a large and comfortable church and a modern sixteen-classroom school.

He also built in the hearts of the people an unusually strong attachment to their church and cemented it with their ever present concern for the parish and a mutual respect for each other, and for their priests. An appeal to that spirit never fails. It invariably brings results even now.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Who's Who in Ohio, 1930, p. 139.

<sup>29</sup>Withey, Henry, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, pp. 633-634.

<sup>30</sup>National Architect, May, 1947, p. 9.

<sup>31</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, items #13 and #14, ADC.

<sup>32</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #12, ADC.

<sup>33</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #10, ADC.

## *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*



## Chapter 18

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### patience put to the test

With the erection of the new brick church now complete, the parish faced enormous debt and, once again, disaffection stemming from factions which existed in the church from the time of its admission into the diocese. The nearly one fourth of the parish which did not vote for instatement into the diocese in 1908 would now try to force its will on Orzechowski.

By 1919, some 700 in the parish, led by members of the Church Committee, found themselves again eventually divided against their pastor of seven years, Rev. Marion J. Orzechowski. The congregation's initial dissatisfaction began with Orzechowski's dismissal of a Rev. Wojciechowski from the parish after fourteen months of service, during which time, the malcontents claimed, the popular priest's eloquent sermons could open holiday purses wider and quicker than Orzechowski ever could. They accused Orzechowski of driving away the younger parishioners, of breaking up the best choir the parish ever had after condemning it from the pulpit, and of discharging the good organist. The well-liked Wojciechowski, on the other hand, organized a new choir in two weeks and was trying to hold the parish together rather than destroying it. In a petition to Bishop Farrelly, they demanded either the reinstatement of Rev. Wojciechowski, or the removal of Orzechowski as pastor. Until their demand was met, they would withhold donations to the church.<sup>1</sup>

By May of 1919, the precarious financial condition of the parish threatened collapse. The Church Committee had written to Bishop Farrelly condemning the moral and financial welfare of the parish and were impatient for Orzechowski's removal as pastor and the cause of the near-bankruptcy of the parish. The Wojciechowski affair seemed to be just the trigger for the faction opposing Orzechowski to seek his removal. When that demand failed, they now hoped that perhaps the more serious charge of financial mismanagement would assure them the bishop's more favorable decision to dismiss Orzechowski from the pastorate of the parish.

The Church Committee presented an ultimatum to the bishop to answer their plea by the seventh of May, 1919, or they would proceed to higher church authorities.<sup>2</sup> Bishop Farrelly was not to be cajoled into action by threats and ultimatums which indeed had just the opposite effect. With inaction from the bishop, the Church Committee again petitioned him through Chancellor Sculley, to remove Orzechowski as pastor. In a more conciliatory tone that lacked the intimidation of the previous communication, the committee claimed the support of almost 1,000 parishioners who met and unanimously decided that Orzechowski must be removed in the best interests and welfare of the parish. Again the committee closed

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<sup>1</sup>Church Committee to "Honorable Father," ADC, document #110, undated, Folder: IHM.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Gminski to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 3 May 1919, ADC, document #112, Folder: IHM.

### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

its petition with the threat of appeal to higher authority if inaction was again the bishop's reply to their demand.<sup>3</sup>

As Bishop Farrelly continued to be unmoved by the committee's threats, they again wrote to the bishop on June 19, 1919, asking that he send a representative who understood Polish to attend services on Sunday, June 22nd, to hear for himself how Orzechowski verbally abused the parishioners from the pulpit. In their words, Orzechowski "... maliciously abused the parishioners and accused them of being heretics, Bolsheviks, and wrong-doers." Then perhaps the bishop would take them seriously or at least order Orzechowski "... to refrain from abusing and accusing the parishioners from the pulpit on Sundays, or any other days."<sup>4</sup>

The bishop's continued lack of a satisfactory response led the Church Committee to appeal to the Apostolic Delegate to the United States regarding the matter of Orzechowski's removal. Monsignor Cossio asked Bishop Farrelly for more information in order to answer the complaints of the committee.<sup>5</sup>

On July 6, 1919, a meeting of the parishioners was called by Rev. Orzechowski for the purpose of settling the differences between him and the parishioners. Resolutions were adopted and were to be presented to the bishop to amend the differences that had arisen between Orzechowski and the congregation since April.<sup>6</sup>

At this meeting, one of the four trustees resigned and the other three, who refused to present their reports, were voted out unanimously by the congregation. The following names were to be submitted to the bishop as duly elected trustees of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church: Andrej Szarwark, Josef Giminski, Jan Berg, and Mieczylaw Dlugokencki.<sup>7</sup>

According to these newly elected trustees, at the July 6th meeting, Rev. Orzechowski had agreed to stand by the agreements reached at the meeting. Orzechowski, they said, refused to sign the resolutions saying he was leaving the parish on July 15th. The committee wished Bishop Farrelly to tell them whether or not Orzechowski was leaving as pastor, and

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<sup>3</sup>Jacob Siedlecki, Josef Gminski, J.M. Berg, John Clyviszcynski to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 19 May 1919, ADC, document #113, Folder: IHM.

<sup>4</sup>Andrew Szarwark, President, Joseph Gminski to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 19 June 1919, ADC, document #114, Folder: IHM.

<sup>5</sup>Rev. Aluigi Cossio, Auditor Apostolic Delegation, to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 4 July 1919, ADC, document #119, Folder: IHM.

<sup>6</sup>Andrej Szarwark and Wacław Matecki to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 6 July 1919, ADC, document #123, Folder: IHM.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

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if not, that he be requested to abide by the resolutions, as the parish now faced moral and financial ruin.<sup>8</sup>

As the Church Committee of the parish had overstepped local ecclesiastical authority by complaining to the office of the Apostolic Delegate, Bishop Farrelly responded to Msgr. Cossio's request for further information regarding the division of the parish against Rev. Orzechowski.

The bishop wrote that the problem had begun with the dismissal of a Rev. Wojciechowski, an assistant from the Diocese of Ogdensburg, New York. He was dismissed because of the division he created in the parish. Even after his dismissal he continued to visit the parish and even lived in the homes of some parishioners and attended parish meetings. A self-appointed committee presented a petition to the bishop asking that he remain as an assistant but they later denied doing so. They also submitted a list of charges against Orzechowski which were different from the charges against him submitted to the office of the Apostolic Delegate. Whether the committee was attempting to cause deliberate confusion cannot be certain, but their dealings with Bishop Farrelly and the Apostolic Delegate seemed less than forthright.

Bishop Farrelly had investigated the charges and found them unsubstantiated. The charges were instigated by the discharged priest, Wojciechowski, and by Mr. Wasielewski, the church builder, who had been a source of trouble in several parishes.

The committee visited the bishop's office several times and held mass meetings. They became friendly with troublemakers in other parishes. The bishop could not yield to their demands because the same kind of agitation was beginning at St. Hyacinth Parish. Bishop Farrelly did not dare risk a spreading rebellion were he to yield to the demands of these Polish parishes.

Bishop Farrelly insisted upon the parish obeying Diocesan Law, namely, the election by the parishioners, of four councilmen as duly accredited spokesmen of the parish who could speak to the bishop for the parish. The bishop refused to recognize any self-appointed committee. Claiming victory, the bishop said that the committee's charges against Orzechowski had been dropped and as of Sunday, July 6, 1919, the same committee was now asking for Orzechowski to remain as pastor.

The bishop concluded his letter to Msgr. Cossio of the Apostolic Delegate's office with an outline of the charges presented to him, charges which he said were completely new to him and mostly without foundation:

- (1) Rev. Wojciechowski was not affiliated with the Diocese of Cleveland and had been here only a short time.
- (2) Rev. Orzechowski's housekeeper did not manage the financial affairs of the parish. The basis of this charge was that while both parish priests were ill with the flu and were bedridden, she would take the parishioners' dues books

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<sup>8</sup>Andrej Szarwark, Wacław Motecki, Jan M. Berg, Mieczysław Długokencki, Joseph Gminski to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 10 July 1919, ADC, document #123, Folder: IHM.



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as they were presented for payment and she would bring them to Fr. Orzechowski.

(3) With reference to the financial state of the parish, Fr. Orzechowski published a monthly report and made out a monthly budget which the church council approved.

(4) Fr. Orzechowski denied all charges regarding his housekeeper, especially that he rode in his car with her. These accusations, he claimed, were due to Rev. Wojciechowski's maneuvering.

(5) Rev. Orzechowski did not intend to leave the parish. When he did go away two or three times for a short period, it was with official permission.

(6) Orzechowski denied Baptism to no one unless he belonged to another parish.

(7) Regarding the Easter collection of \$973.47, which was published was only the amount given by those whose envelopes were signed; this amounted to \$650 and the rest was entered as anonymous cash.

Bishop Farrelly supported Rev. Orzechowski for the most part and sought to correct those faults that needed his attention. The bishop concluded his remarks to the Apostolic Delegate with this honorable defense of Orzechowski:

. . . it must be said for the Rev. M.J. Orzechowski that he has succeeded in the church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. When he came there, the parish had nothing. It had been rent and torn by factions, but he has succeeded up until the time of the coming of Rev. Wojciechowski, in uniting the various elements, many of whom once belonged to an independent church. He has succeeded in building a new church which is ample for the needs of the parish. He has also paid off considerable upon the debt and has likewise built an excellent school with sisters teaching. His financial report has been in perfect order and the permission were always asked and obtained for the expenditure of money. . . .<sup>9</sup>

In the bishop's absence, Chancellor of the Diocese, Rev. Dr. W.A. Scullen, had received a visit from the Church Committee. They presented a set of resolutions which were read to the bishop upon his return to the city. The committee was respectful and had begged that Rev. Orzechowski be allowed to remain as pastor.

However, in his letter of explanation to Rev. Orzechowski, Dr. Scullen reiterated the bishop's suggestion that a regular election of councilmen be held to eliminate any further organizational problems in the parish. On the following Sunday, July 20, 1919, the names of sixteen men were to be proposed with the four having the most votes to be elected as the

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<sup>9</sup>Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly to the Very Rev. Monsignor Aluigi Cossio, 12 July 1919, ADC, document #120, Folder: IHM.

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councilmen of the parish. Rev. Orzechowski was to inform Mr. Szarwark of the self-appointed Church Committee of this decision.<sup>10</sup>

It is doubtful that peace reigned in the parish following this decision, but rather the fires of discontent were just banked for a time. Division was evident again by the spring of 1920. The four self-appointed church committeemen had remained in office and now complained again to the bishop that on Palm Sunday, March 28, 1920, Rev. Orzechowski had read from the pulpit a letter he claimed came from the bishop. The letter called for the appointment of an additional eight members of the congregation, to be known as collectors, to assist the four elected councilmen in managing the finances of the parish. The four elected councilmen claimed that Orzechowski had misinterpreted and wrongly translated the bishop's letter for the congregation. In so doing, Orzechowski, they claimed, said that Bishop Farrelly wanted the four councilmen, who were elected to office in January, 1920, to be removed from office. The councilmen said that during his Palm Sunday sermon, Orzechowski used indecent words towards them in the presence of the entire congregation, words unfit to be repeated to the bishop. Orzechowski was to have said that if the councilmen were unhappy with expulsion from office, they could then also be expelled from the church and the parish.

Again the councilmen claimed Orzechowski's conduct was causing discord in the parish and factions were developing. They wanted Bishop Farrelly to warn Orzechowski against using foul language from the pulpit towards them and the congregation. They also reiterated that they would conduct the financial affairs of the parish in the best interests of the church and the congregation.<sup>11</sup>

The eight collectors appointed in January, 1920 by Rev. Orzechowski were no more satisfied with their pastor than the four elected councilmen. They also wrote to Bishop Farrelly on the same day complaining of identical treatment by Rev. Orzechowski.

They also claimed that Orzechowski had falsified a letter from Bishop Farrelly calling for their removal and the naming of eight others in their place. Orzechowski's slanderous words towards them from the pulpit led the parish to believe that they were dishonest with parish funds. When they demanded that Orzechowski explain the reason for their removal, he claimed he did not know as the order had come from the bishop. Not believing this, the eight collectors wanted Bishop Farrelly to tell them the reason for their removal.<sup>12</sup>

A critical point had been reached between Orzechowski and the councilmen and collectors. Orzechowski himself wrote to Bishop Farrelly on April 7, 1920, to explain the deteriorating condition existing in the relationship between him and the councilmen. He

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<sup>10</sup>Rev. Dr. W.A. Scullen to Rev. M.J. Orzechowski, 12 July 1919, ADC, document # 121, Folder: IHM.

<sup>11</sup>Joseph Giminski, Mieczyslaw Dlugokencki, J.M. Berg, and Andrew Szarwark to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 5 April 1920, ADC, document #141, Folder: IHM.

<sup>12</sup>Wojciech Bneinaki, St. Krajewski, Jan Boderowski, Jan Obojski, Jan Kruystesik, Jan Obeksiak, Michal Mondzielewski, Frank Jendrzyczak to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 5 April 1920, ADC, document #142, Folder: IHM.



### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

asked the bishop to use his authority to appoint a new council of good, honest, and peaceful men. Orzechowski contended that the present council of four was not elected by a parish majority because the entire election process had been a farce.

Orzechowski wrote that the election took place on January 18, 1920, which made the election invalid because it was not held on the proper day. He claimed that the election was delayed until that day because the councilmen-to-be were not yet ready with their election maneuverings. These malcontents agitated every evening in pool rooms and bars trying to get people to vote for their side. Orzechowski, ever trying to keep the peace, had the ballots printed and put two of their names on the ballot so as to show he was not against them.

Orzechowski had opened the election meeting in the parish hall but one of the councilmen's cohorts presided over the meeting of about 200 people. The parish secretary read the financial report of the parish and then began reading the rules and suggestions of the councilmen. Orzechowski ordered him to stop reading the nonsense or he would close the meeting. Orzechowski was ignored and tried to leave the hall but a near-riot had begun. After some order was restored, one of the good parishioners made a motion to accept the financial report. It was seconded and accepted by the majority.

When the balloting started, Orzechowski left exhausted and discouraged. Most of the good parishioners left also, only the "bolsheviks" remaining with no good to be expected.

When the results of the balloting were brought to Orzechowski, he remarked that each of the men had received over 300 votes from the less than 200 people at the meeting. Only those parishioners could vote who had paid their parish dues and had their books with them. As one man presented his book and received his ballot, he gave his book to somebody else so that several men were able to vote from one book. Also, several ballots were given to some men so that some cast more than one vote.

Orzechowski preferred not to fight with the councilmen and did not veto their election, hoping he could work with them, but such would not happen. The councilmen began implementing their regulations and suggestions which were read at the meeting, telling Orzechowski that they were voted on and passed together with the financial report because they were read together with the report at the meeting.

The councilmen had stopped bringing collection money to Orzechowski and instead took it home and kept the money for two or more weeks before depositing it in the bank. No receipts were ever shown to Orzechowski. They ignored a letter from Orzechowski that demanded the money be brought to him after counting. If they did not do so, Orzechowski said he would expose them to the parishioners and the bishop. Orzechowski had no choice but to let the parishioners know about the situation. Most of the parish was bitterly against these councilmen, asking Orzechowski to put them out of office and the parish. Orzechowski asked the bishop to have the councilmen removed because they would be a constant source of trouble to anyone who replaced Orzechowski who himself was ready to clean house.<sup>13</sup>

On April 9, 1920, Bishop Farrelly answered Orzechowski's plea for help by ordering him to elect new councilmen. Election procedures had been disregarded and the so-called

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<sup>13</sup>Rev. M.J. Orzechowski to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 7 April 1920, ADC, document #143, Folder: IHM.



*patience put to the test*

councilmen had no title to their office from the beginning. These men were also civilly and ecclesiastically responsible for any parish money of which they may have taken unauthorized charge. The bishop forbade all future parish meetings and directed Orzechowski to announce these directions at all Masses by Sunday, April 11, 1920.<sup>14</sup>

Joseph Giminski, one of the four councilmen, wrote to the bishop's secretary on April 14, 1920, requesting to know the outcome of the previous written complaint against Orzechowski. In his request he stated that Orzechowski had refused to hold the regular monthly financial meeting for March. Since the councilmen did not know the income and disbursements of the parish, they felt they would be forced to call a meeting of the parishioners and explain the situation to them.<sup>15</sup>

Mr. Giminski probably did not know of Orzechowski's recent correspondence with Bishop Farrelly and the resulting ban on parish meetings. Had he known he may have written a more vociferous letter to the bishop's secretary or perhaps gone ahead and held the unauthorized meeting.

In defense of the charges against them of keeping the church funds instead of entrusting them to Orzechowski, Wladislaw Nogielski and Antoni Mutrin certified that they heard one of the church councilmen say that the expenses of going to Washington had to be paid.<sup>16</sup> They may have been referring to a visit made to the Apostolic Delegate's office in Washington during which formal complaint was brought against Orzechowski.

In a note dated April 30, 1920, during this steadily deteriorating unfortunate situation in the parish, the children of the four councilmen in question were ordered out of the parish school and given transfer cards to other schools. Rev. Orzechowski said that many more would also have to go. None of these children had been allowed to make their First Communion. The children claimed that Orzechowski told them they were put out because their fathers stole \$700 from the church.<sup>17</sup>

New councilmen were elected in an effort to purge the parish of the strife and discontent which were long tearing the parish apart and stifling Orzechowski's efforts to unify the wayward church under legitimate ecclesiastical rule. On May 14, 1920, Bishop Farrelly ordered Mr. Giminski and the former councilmen of the parish to turn over to Orzechowski all the books and papers of the parish at once.<sup>18</sup>

In the matter of the expelled school children, the wives of three dismissed councilmen wrote Bishop Farrelly on September 2, 1920, explaining the dilemma facing them and their

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<sup>14</sup>Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly to Rev. M.J. Orzechowski, 9 April 1920, ADC, document #144, Folder: IHM.

<sup>15</sup>Joseph Giminski to Rev. W.A. Scullen, 14 April 1920, ADC, document #148, Folder: IHM.

<sup>16</sup>Wladislaw Nogielski and Antoni Mutrin (his mark witnessed by A.A. Krajewski) to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 16 April 1920, ADC, document #150, Folder: IHM.

<sup>17</sup>Note dated 30 April 1920, ADC, document #152, Folder: IHM.

<sup>18</sup>Rev. W.A. Sculley to Mr. Joseph Giminski, 14 May 1920, ADC, document #156, Folder: IHM.

### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

children. They told the bishop that no reason was given them for their children's expulsion. The children were refused their First Communion and the boys were not allowed to serve as altar boys. The councilmen had themselves complained to the bishop who promised to investigate the matter. The children and their parents were in limbo since the church would not allow the children to attend public schools nor would the parish allow the children to attend its school. The parents of these children had paid their parish dues and the undersigned wives of the councilmen were not about to allow Rev. Orzechowski to deprive their children of their Faith and wanted the bishop to satisfy their demands.<sup>19</sup>

Although the outcome of this unfortunate incident is unknown, Bishop Farrelly did communicate about the matter to Rev. Orzechowski and asked, through his secretary, whether the councilmen could publicly beg pardon of the congregation for the trouble they caused and for the children to again be received into the parish school.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Mrs. A. Szarwark, Mrs. J. Berg, Mrs. J. Giminski to Rt. Rev. John P. Farrelly, 2 September 1920, ADC, document #157, Folder: IHM.

<sup>20</sup>Rev. W.A. Scullen to Rev. M.J. Orzechowski, 13 September 1920, ADC, document #158, Folder: IHM.

## **Chapter 19**

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### **Rev. John Mlotkowski, administrator, educator, spiritual healer**

**R**ev. John Mlotkowski pursued the educational goals of his predecessor. He provided all possible facilities for giving the children of the parish an opportunity to prepare themselves as good citizens and good Catholics. The school of the parish was recognized as a model school and was used as an observation school by many of the teaching orders of the diocese.<sup>1</sup> School enrollment in 1935 was 900 students taught by 20 teaching sisters.<sup>2</sup>

Rev. John Mlotkowski was transferred from Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish to the pastorate of Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1932. Financial difficulties were enormous because of the Great Depression.

But even in such a state it was not difficult to rebuild the shaken spirit. The cooperation of the parishioners was strong and steady, and so effective, that in twelve subsequent years the Congregation was able not only to free itself of its heavy debt, but able to assist financially along its initial steps the newly established parish of the Transfiguration.<sup>3</sup>

Rev. John Mlotkowski was born in the town of Szrensk in the Province of Warsaw, Poland, on October 20, 1887. Growing up in Poland, his family always stressed his educational and social development. His high school years in Poland had a significant influence on the formation of his Polish nationalism which deepened during his studies of Polish history and literature in the seminary. He lived by two mottoes forever etched into his personality. One was scriptural -- 'A good shepherd gives his life for his sheep;' and the other was from the Polish writer, Miskiewicz -- 'To the good, everywhere will be good.'<sup>4</sup>

He was ordained on May 8, 1910, the feast day of the great Polish patron, Saint Stanislaus, bishop and martyr. His first Mass was said on May 16, 1910 at the family parish of the Church of the Immaculate Conception. Fr. Mlotkowski served at two parishes in Poland where, in addition to religious responsibilities, he had social responsibilities to organize the community social groups which were allowed by the rulers of the annexed territories of Poland. Many Poles chose to escape this repressive rule by emigrating to the

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<sup>1</sup>"Polish Parish Will Mark Anniversary," The Catholic Universe Bulletin, 12 May 1943, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>"Reminiscencje, Srebrny Jubileusz Kaplanstwa Sk. Jana Kantego Mlotkowskiego," 1935, IHM Parish Archives, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #10, ADC.

<sup>4</sup>"Reminiscencje, Srebrny Jubileusz Kaplanstwa Sk. Jana Kantego Mlotkowskiego," 1935, IHM Parish Archives, p. 4.



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United States where freedom and democratic life flourished. Polish priests were welcomed in America to serve these immigrant Poles.<sup>5</sup>

The United States and its history were not foreign to the erudite Fr. Mlotkowski. A branch of his family had lived in Chicago. His brother lived in New York and other relatives were scattered around Yonkers, Philadelphia, and Cleveland. Letters were frequent and the study of American literature in the seminary acquainted him with life in this country.<sup>6</sup>

Fr. Mlotkowski received permission to emigrate to the United States and came to Bishop Rhodes in Chicago. In response to Bishop Farrelly's numerous requests for Polish priests to serve his diocese, Bishop Rhodes sent Fr. Mlotkowski to Cleveland. He arrived in Cleveland in October 1912 to serve the diocese, first as an assistant at St. John Cantius, where he remained almost three years. Here he developed a guiding principle which served him for the rest of his life, that the best priest strives not for personal recognition and glory, but for the good of the people he serves with quiet and often unrecognized work.<sup>7</sup>

While also retaining his duties at St. John Cantius, in 1914 he was given the additional assignment of ministering to the spiritual needs of the parishioners of the new parish of Our Lady of Czestochowa in the Corlett area. A few months later he was transferred to and named pastor of St. Stanislaus Parish in Lorain, Ohio where he worked for five years. Here he found an unfinished church building, no rectory, and a debt almost beyond comprehension. Accepting advice from his peers, Fr. Mlotkowski applied strict but effective methods of collecting parish fees and proceeds and soon income began to cover expenses with enough funds available to pay off the debts and complete the church building. A house was purchased for use as a rectory.<sup>8</sup>

Our parish helped in this regard by offering the pews from our old church and the Stations of the Cross to the parish of St. Stanislaus.<sup>9</sup>

In September of 1920, Fr. Mlotkowski was transferred back to Cleveland to the foundering parish of Our Lady of Czestochowa. This parish too was hampered by a large debt and the church building was too small for the large congregation and its school. On the first Sunday after his arrival, Fr. Mlotkowski began a fund to enlarge the church. Its success was so great that in five months, even before Easter, the church was enlarged, a foundation was built for an auditorium, and other improvements were made on the grounds, all with available funds.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

*Rev. John Mlotkowski, administrator, educator, spiritual healer*

After just nineteen months, Fr. Mlotkowski was transferred to Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish where he spent his longest term, almost ten years. Here he succeeded in reducing the \$88,000 debt to \$26,000 and in making numerous improvements to the parish, all due to the trust and understanding which the parishioners had for their pastor.<sup>11</sup>

In 1932 he came to Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish with a reputation for strict financial management, religious sanctity, and a personality respectful of the parishioners. Here, in the face of an enormous debt and other grievous problems, he feared the onus of responsibility placed upon him. He knew few people here and did not know of the deep attachment to their church. However, he became quickly convinced in his belief that he was pastor of a community anxious to work and open to good advice.<sup>12</sup>

Soon after his arrival, he began personal visitations to the parishioners and Polish families living within the parish boundaries. From these visits he began to develop an understanding of the situation of the parish and the moods of the parishioners and was able to consider solutions to solve the financial and social difficulties of the parish. He communicated his observations to the parishioners and established regulations under which the parish would operate.<sup>13</sup>

Fr. Mlotkowski would provide the services of the church to everyone as long as they in turn would support the church. However, he needed more priests to fulfill the needs of his parishioners. He asked for and received three more assistants within a year.<sup>14</sup>

The work of Fr. Mlotkowski and his assistants resulted in their hoped for increase in Sunday Mass attendance and collections. Though not astronomical, proceeds were impressive witness to the good will and love of the church of all those who received its spiritual benefits.<sup>15</sup>

This attachment to their church and the generosity of its parishioners manifested itself in 1935 when, despite the devastating effects of the Great Depression and continuing unemployment, the parish undertook the total renovation of the church interior and the



Msgr. John Mlotkowski.

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

installation of a costly new lighting system.<sup>16</sup> Due to the restraints of a limited budget, the church building, when completed in 1916, was probably decorated in the simplest fashion, with paint alone sufficient to cover the interior walls. The cost of the redecorating and some other repairs amounted too almost \$12,000 and the willing parishioners found the means to complete these projects. The Parish Committee and the societies of the parish all were committed to the task.<sup>17</sup>



The redecorated sanctuary as it appeared in 1944.

When completed, the church was pleasant, tastefully decorated, and sufficiently lighted. The lighting system was installed by *The Enterprise Electric Fixtures Company* of Cleveland, and the decorating was done by the *Italian Fresco and Decorating Company* managed by President Mr. F. Garbo.<sup>18</sup> Artist and painter, Victor Zuchi, of Tea Neck, New Jersey, was the designer and painter of all the murals done for the church.<sup>19</sup> The sanctuary ceiling depicted a beautiful painting of the Immaculate Heart of Mary surrounded by angels, and the lower sides of the sanctuary depicted pictures of seven Polish saints, both men and women. On the ceiling of the transept of the church, the Annunciation, the Visitation, and the Birth of Christ were portrayed. On the side walls of the transept were remarkable paintings of the Four Evangelists. The remainder of the church presented symbolic figures of the Litany of Loretto and other symbols. This artistic work was completed in January of 1935.

The Youth's Holy Name Society then undertook the task of excavating the school basement

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>"Parish Financial Statement," 1934, WRHS, File: Immaculate Heart of Mary.

<sup>19</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #4, ADC.



*Rev. John Mlotkowski, administrator, educator, spiritual healer*

to provide space for rest rooms, powder rooms, and social rooms, all done in time for the celebration of Fr. Mlotkowski's silver ordination anniversary.<sup>20</sup>

Besides the help from his assistants, Fr. Mlotkowski engaged the help of missionaries from time to time to hold missions, novenas, and retreats, all to help the parish grow in faith and grace.<sup>21</sup>

During his rare free moments, Fr. Mlotkowski would retreat to his precious books. "Prayer in Question," a catechism for adults and children, was written by Fr. Mlotkowski and published in 1928 in Niles, Illinois. Thousands of copies were used in many parish schools in the United States.<sup>22</sup>

On several occasions he delivered lectures on Polish-American history or current history. Two favorite presentations were about writer Adam Mickiewicz and his influence on the November Uprising in Poland, and the about Thaddeus Kosciuszko, as a hero of two worlds. These lectures he delivered in the hall of the Union of Poles on the days of the national observances of the Poles in Cleveland.<sup>23</sup>

Fr. Mlotkowski travelled the United States and Canada on vacations from New York to San Francisco, and from St. Anne de Beaupre to Havana. Only after he became familiar with America did he travel to Europe in 1927 when he visited England, France, Italy, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Holland, and Poland. In his 1930 visit to Poland he visited the graves of his parents and celebrated Mass in the parish church before returning to his home in Cleveland.<sup>24</sup> In 1940 Archbishop Joseph Schrembs honored Fr. Mlotkowski with a request to His Holiness Pope Pius XI that he be named Rt. Rev. Monsignor.<sup>25</sup>

On May 28, 1943, the parish of the Transfiguration was formed from our parish. Rev. Edward F. Hoban, Bishop of Cleveland, officiated at the dedication of the church on February 6, 1944.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>"Reminiscencje, Srebrny Jubileusz Kaplanstwa Sk. Jana Kantego Mlotkowskiego," 1935, IHM Parish Archives, p. 4.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #22, ADC.

<sup>26</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #5, ADC.

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## Chapter 20

### world war, peace, and prosperity

Our parish was honored with a visit of the Polish and American Ambassadors on March 23, 1930. As the world approached another cataclysmic war, the parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary seemed more at peace with itself than ever before in its history. With war upon the country, the parish proudly sent many of its sons and daughters into the conflict. Parish records show the following numbers enrolled in the armed forces during World War II:

Army	1,157	WAC	13
Navy	250	Nurses	3
Marines	35	Red Cross	1 <sup>1</sup>
Coast Guard	11		

Fr. Edward Gackowski, an assistant at the parish in 1943, started a weekly letter writing campaign to service men and women during the war. Women of the parish would gather weekly and write to the men and women keeping them informed of parish activities and news.

By 1945 devotional societies of the parish numbered 15 male societies, mostly fraternal organizations, and 11 female societies, most of them also affiliated with fraternal organizations. The societies which most contributed to the welfare of the parish in the past were the: St. Francis Society; Rosary Society; Young Ladies Sodality; Women's Circle; American Red Cross; Polish-American Council Parish Unit; Parent-Teacher Association; St. Cecilia's Choir; and Holy Name Society.<sup>2</sup>

Under Msgr. Mlotkowski's pastorate, the parish enjoyed financial stability and security and anticipated its fiftieth anniversary with confidence. Coadjutor Bishop Edward F. Hoban celebrated a Pontifical High Mass of thanksgiving on Sunday, May 14, 1944 commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of our parish. Assisting him were: Rt. Rev. Msgr. Andrew A. Radecki; Rev. Francis X. Szudarek; Rev. Edmund Mondzelewski; Rev. Joseph Stucki; and Rev. Stanislaus Rybacki. The parish at this time was free of debt.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #18, ADC.

<sup>2</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #19, ADC.

<sup>3</sup>"Polish Parish Will Mark Anniversary," The Catholic Universe Bulletin, 12 May 1944, p. 11.



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In 1945 new garages were built behind the rectory and additions were made to both church sacristies to relieve overcrowding and to provide a passage between the two behind the altar.<sup>4</sup>

The sisters' convent would need replacing soon since an original section of it dated back to 1918. The rectory, now the oldest parish building, would have to get by for several more years. Msgr. Mlotkowski thought first of the dedicated sisters who sacrificed so much for the education of the children of the parish. Funds for a new convent were being raised through church carnivals on the parish grounds for several years.

The planned construction of a new convent received a serious setback when tragedy struck in the early morning hours of July 24, 1950. Two armed bandits forced their way into the rectory and escaped with \$13,000 in cash after slugging Msgr. Mlotkowski and tying up the assistants. The parish carnival had just ended its four day run and the proceeds were not completely counted until 2:45 AM. Fr. Stanley Cymanski, in charge of the carnival, then went to bed and fell soundly asleep, sleeping through the entire robbery. About 3:15 AM two burglars used a crowbar to enter the rectory through a kitchen window. They disabled the telephone and made their way to the second floor bedrooms where they found Fr. Wacław Krauze, a refugee priest from Poland, and Fr. Casimer Sitko. They were forced to accompany the robbers to Msgr. Mlotkowski's room where the three were herded downstairs to the office safe. Msgr. Mlotkowski could not get the safe open and was struck in the head by one of the robbers. Dazed and bleeding, he led the robbers to his closet which contained \$7,000 in cash. Not yet satisfied, the robbers returned to the safe. The Monsignor was slugged again but finally managed to open the safe this time which contained another \$6,000. The robbers escaped with the money and \$35 taken from Fr. Krauze and the Monsignor's watch. The carnival proceeds were part of a three-year fund-raising drive for the new convent and the parish was not insured against the loss.<sup>5</sup>

Archbishop Edward F. Hoban dedicated the new convent at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish on Thursday, August 26, 1954. The two-story building of brick and stone trim was built in the modern colonial style. It could accommodate 24 sisters and included a recreation room, a parlor, a library, a music room, and a 28-seat chapel. Construction began in 1953 and the sisters moved in in July of 1954.<sup>6</sup> During construction the sisters temporarily set up living quarters in the school auditorium. The new convent completed a parish building program which included an addition and a new front entrance to the school gym. Mr. T.A. Badowski, 7109 Harvard Avenue, was the architect of the new convent, and the *W.H. Dick Company*, 17206 Miles Avenue was the general contractor.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Historical Report of the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Time of Its Erection to December, 1945, item #17, ADC.

<sup>5</sup>"Convent Plans Stymied As Thugs Flee With \$13,000," The Catholic Universe Bulletin, 28 July 1950, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup>"New Convent Dedicated at IHM Parish," The Catholic Universe Bulletin, 27 August 1954, p. 16.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

*world war, peace, and prosperity*

Mr. Badowski's work was not limited to commissions for Catholic churches. He also designed the *Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd* (1959), 18615 Harvard Avenue.<sup>8</sup> A later commission of Mr. Badowski's was the design of *Lakewood Center North* (1974), a 15-story office building on Detroit Avenue in downtown Lakewood.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Foster Armstrong, Richard Klein, and Cara Armstrong, *A Guide to Cleveland's Sacred Landmarks*, p. 176.

<sup>9</sup>Robert C. Gaede, editor, *Guide to Cleveland Architecture*, p. 20.9.

## *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*



## Chapter 21

### modernization and renewal

**R**ev. Aloysius Dombrowski, successor to Msgr. Mlotkowski, committed the parish to complete the work of renovation which he began. Msgr. Mlotkowski's interior redecoration of the church in 1935 was more the final phase of its completion than a remodeling. Fr. Dombrowski undertook a complete change in the interior appearance of the church. Under his direction the interior decor and the five original altars were replaced with a modern interpretation of church design more in keeping with the tastes of the generation of parishioners who now found Immaculate Heart of Mary as their church. Parishioners were asked to donate \$50 per family toward this project, in Polish called the 'malowania,' or painting.



Rev. Aloysius Dombrowski.

Mr. Thomas Powers was the Cleveland representative of the *Daprato Company* which directed the extensive interior church renovation begun in 1958. Mr. John Miller, AIA, was the architect in charge of the project.<sup>1</sup> The renovation included the removal of the five wooden altars and replacing them with three fashioned of Carrara marble. The interior of the church was painted and murals depicting God the Father, the Evangelists, and the Choirs of Angels were painted on the ceiling, all unified with a painted frieze of undulating color. Statues in the church were refinished and the Stations of the Cross rehung without their decorative enclosures. Mr. Angelo Gherardi, an artist working for the *Daprato Company* (now known as *Daprato-Rigali*) refinished the statuary in his Chicago studio.<sup>2</sup>

Emily Szymanski, a parishioner of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, fondly remembers the original appearance of our church. She related a fascinating story which led her to salvage a portion of the first main altar before its dismantling and eventual destruction. During the beginning of the remodeling, she had had dreams for a week about the destruction of the tabernacle section of the altar. The tabernacle was set on the altar with a lighted canopied section above it which contained a crucifix. This was lighted during Benediction services. Emily said that the workers in the church would eventually burn sections of the altar as they were disassembled. She asked Fr. Al, the pastor, if she could have this tabernacle section. He gave her permission to take it if the workers could remove it on their own time. She approached the workers who obligingly removed the section she

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mr. Thomas Powers, retired Cleveland representative of *The Daprato Company*, 29 June 1991.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

## *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

wanted and another section of the altar upon which she could set it. She had it hauled to her home where it has remained on display since 1958.<sup>3</sup>

Other sections of the altars still exist. The main altar insert depicting the Last Supper adorns the dining room of the rectory. The medallion insert of Christ from the Sacred Heart side altar hangs in the priest's sacristy. A section of one of the side altars is used for storage in the church basement.



The remodeled sanctuary.

Once the interior of the church building was brought up to modern standards with additional lighting and a new sound system, Fr. Dombrowski turned his attention to replacing the church organ. The installation of that ancient instrument probably dated to the construction of the building, though it is possible that it was purchased used. The design of the keyboard indicated an instrument that could have been built in the late nineteenth century<sup>4</sup>, so it entirely possible that this organ could have been salvaged from the original frame church when it was dismantled sometime in 1924. Judging by its size, it appeared more

appropriate for a smaller building.

The original organ in our church was a *Felgemaker*, two manual, moderately-sized<sup>5</sup>, tracker action instrument of between 20 to 22 ranks of pipes. The *Felgemaker Organ Company* of Erie, Pennsylvania was the premier builder of tracker action organs in its day. In a tracker action organ, each key is mechanically connected to the pipes it controls. The *Felgemaker Organ Company* was founded by Augustus Felgemaker in 1872. The company merged in 1918 with the *Tellers Organ Company*.<sup>6</sup> The air bellows were probably originally pumped by hand and the organ wind supply then later electrified. The tracker action on this organ had so deteriorated that it was nearly unplayable when the keyboard couplers were engaged. Mr. Walter Hoag worked on the dismantling of this organ prior to the installation

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<sup>3</sup>Interview with Mrs. Emily Szymanski, 30 August 1991.

<sup>4</sup>Randall E. Wagner, *Organ Supply Industries*, to Glenn Sobola, 27 January 1992.

<sup>5</sup>Interview with Mr. Walter Hoag, 5 January 1992.

<sup>6</sup>Interview with Mr. Randall E. Wagner, *Organ Supply Industries*, 3 January 1992.



*modernization and renewal*

of the new organ in 1962.<sup>7</sup> The wooden pipes and materials form the disassembly of the old organ were buried in the landfill at the parish cemetery.<sup>8</sup>

The new *Wicks* organ in our church was installed by organ builder, Donald Borden, in the summer of 1962. Mr. William Rozeboom, a salesman for the *Wicks Organ Company* in Highland, Illinois, handled details of the transaction with Fr. Dombrowski and flew Fr. Al in his plane to the factory in Illinois to hear *Wicks* organs played.<sup>9</sup> Our *Wicks* organ was custom built and designed by Mr. James Werner, retired and now living in Florida.<sup>10</sup>

Acquiring a new organ became a practical necessity for Fr. Dombrowski who was investigating the possibility of purchasing a *Tellers* organ in late 1961 when he met Donald Borden quite by chance. Mr. Borden, an organ builder working for the *Wicks Organ Company*, had been working with the congregation of a Unitarian church on Cleveland's west side and had done much of the preparatory work for the installation of a new *Wicks* organ there. The primary donor of funds for the organ reneged at the last moment and expressed her wish for a local company to provide the new instrument rather than the *Wicks Company*. Though no contract had yet been signed with the church, Mr. Borden was suddenly faced with the possibility of an organ with no buyer.<sup>11</sup>

On the day of this disappointing news, he was driving home and passed our church. He decided to call on the pastor, whom he had never met, and discuss with him the possibilities for purchasing this organ. Rev. Dombrowski answered the door and invited him in to talk. On Fr. Al's desk was a brochure from the *Tellers Organ Company* and this visit was to be most propitious for Mr. Borden and our church. Fr. Al told Don Borden that he had dreamt of just such an occasion when someone would come to the door trying to sell him an organ.<sup>12</sup>



The Felgemaker organ.

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<sup>7</sup>Interview with Mr. Donald Borden, 3 January 1992.

<sup>8</sup>Interview with Mr. Walter Hoag, 5 January 1992.

<sup>9</sup>Interview with Mr. William Rozeboom, *Wicks Organ Company*, 5 January 1992.

<sup>10</sup>Donald Borden to Glenn Sobola, 15 February 1992.

<sup>11</sup>Interview with Mr. Donald Borden, 3 January 1992.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.



### *History of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish*

Don Borden and the pastor became good friends through this chance meeting and several times had dinner together at *Pesano's Restaurant*. Fr. Al usually liked to sit near the organist and make requests of her to play certain musical selections. It was at one of these dinner meetings that the pastor nervously confessed to Mr. Borden that he had just committed the church to the purchase of a new organ, had not told anyone about it, and did not have the money to pay for it. Mr. Borden told him to have his assistants canvass the parish families for donations and have a fund-raising drive to pay for it.<sup>13</sup>

On the Sunday that the organ purchase was to be disclosed, the assistant priest made their announcements at the Masses and smoothed the path for Fr. Al to make his own at his Mass. Mr. John Donnelly, a parishioner, told Don Borden that when Fr. Al made the announcement, the congregation applauded. Parishioners were asked to donate \$25 per family towards the new organ. More than enough money was raised with the excess used to help pay for the church renovation just recently completed.<sup>14</sup>

The original contract with the *Wicks Organ Company* was for a two manual instrument, opus #4256, of 19 ranks of pipes at a cost of \$28,950 and this contract was signed on December 20, 1961. Rev. A.F. Dombrowski signed the contract. Convinced that a two manual organ was too small for our large church, on January 16, 1962, Rev. Dombrowski authorized a change to a three manual instrument of 24 ranks of pipes for an additional \$10,000, for a total cost of \$38,950. The organ was shipped to Cleveland by company truck on June 26, 1962.<sup>15</sup>

The organ is equipped with Wicks Direct Electric® Action which completely eliminates costly wind chest maintenance. The current cost of an instrument of this size would be \$185,000 to \$190,000. The III Mixture stops in the Great Division of the organ is the first set of pipes voiced in the *Wicks* factory in the 'open toe' style. This type of voicing was used in classical organs and results in a bright and crisp sound. In 1970 nineteen small pipes were stolen from the organ and replaced in February of that year.<sup>16</sup> The completion of the *Wicks* organ at our church was Mr. Borden's first large installation in Cleveland.<sup>17</sup>

Mr. Walter Lindert was organist at the time. Fr. Al had arranged for his emigration to the United States with the stipulation that he become organist at our church and teach some music. This was a verbal agreement and Mr. Lindert did work for a time as organist before he took a similar position at Holy Family Church in Parma.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>John E. Sperling, *Wicks Organ Company*, to William Radeker, 27 November 1991.

<sup>16</sup>John E. Sperling, *Wicks Organ Company*, to Glenn Sobola, 18 December 1991.

<sup>17</sup>Interview with Mr. Donald Borden, 3 January 1992.

<sup>18</sup>Interview with Mr. Walter Hoag, 5 January 1992.

## Chapter 22

### adapting to change

In 1964, the parish rectory, which had stood since 1895, was replaced by a new structure designed of brick which included ample living and office space and meeting rooms.

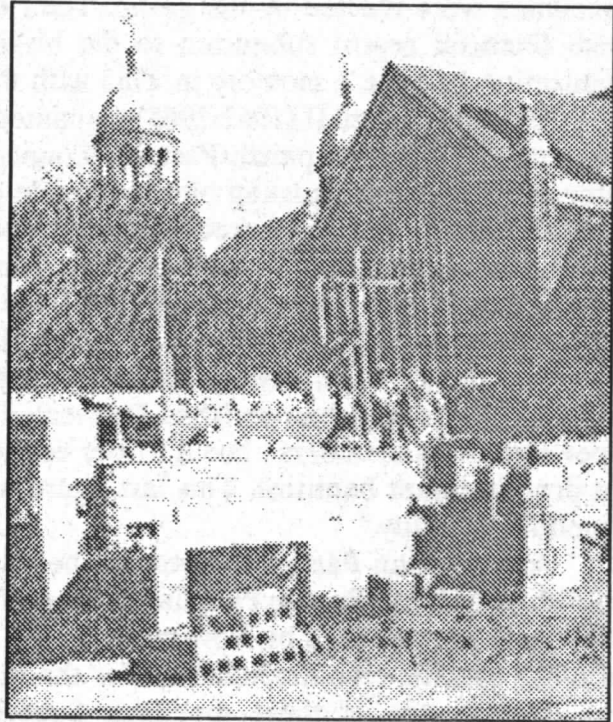
During excavation for the basement of the new building, people noticed a large round hole in the center of the diggings which gave rise to the rumor of an indoor swimming pool. When an open house was held on Sunday, June 13, 1965, eager parishioners expected to see this luxury. Their anticipation changed to chuckles when they learned the hole was dug as a foundation for the spiral staircase.<sup>1</sup>

Rev. John Deka acted as administrator of the parish from August 19, 1969 during Pastor Rev. Dombrowski's recuperation from a heart attack. By 1971, declining health made it necessary to designate Rev. Francis Bartnikowski as parish administrator. Rev. Bartnikowski was named Vicar Coadjutor in 1974 and made pastor on June 11, 1976.<sup>2</sup>

Rev. Dombrowski was made Pastor Emeritus with the privilege of lifelong residence at our parish. Due to declining health, he moved his residence to St. Augustine Manor where he lived until his death on April 9, 1990.<sup>3</sup>

The Parish Board of Trustees was instituted at the time of the establishment of our parish on May 3, 1894. It was originally composed of elected members who managed the business affairs of the parish.<sup>4</sup>

After our parish was admitted into the diocese in 1908, the Board of Trustees evolved into a Church Committee composed of ushers who were elected but later appointed by the



The new rectory and administration building under construction.

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<sup>1</sup>Personal recollections of William Radeker who conducted that portion of the 1965 tour.

<sup>2</sup>ADC.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Parish Archives.

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pastor. They conducted the annual fundraisers and advised the pastor on matters pertaining to church property.<sup>5</sup>

Except when the pastor appointed someone with special qualifications, four councilmen were elected by the group. Their chief duty was to audit and sign the annual parish financial report submitted to the bishop. This last remnant of our early church organization became a memory in 1983 with the organization of a Parish Council.<sup>6</sup>

Vatican Council II (1962-1965) mandated universal participation of the laity in church government. Today the parish Pastoral Council and the parish Finance Council serve the pastor as consultants, assisting him in his role of shepherd and steward of the parish.<sup>7</sup>

In 1984 the parish marked its ninetieth anniversary with a redecoration of the church interior, the installation of new carpeting in the nave, and the construction of new confessionals in the belfry areas. In 1987 the stained glass windows were repaired and furnished with an outside protective Lexan plastic covering.<sup>8</sup>

In June of 1972, Bishop Issenmann inaugurated a report to determine effects of population shifts on urban parishes. It revealed that between 1960 and 1969 our parish lost 49 per cent of its members, had a 51 per cent decrease in school enrollment, and a 56 per cent drop in infant baptisms. This last figure is an accurate predictor of future parish and community stability.<sup>9</sup>

At an Urban Pastors Convention held in March 1985, a core group was formed to establish an Urban Region Planning Process. This group, presided over by Auxiliary Bishop Lyke, made preparations by November for the April 1986 - April 1987 sessions to evaluate and make specific recommendations for the future use of parish resources.<sup>10</sup>

During one of these meetings, Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Rev. John Murphy, and Sister Christine Vladimiroff, Secretary of Education, proposed that our school be merged with that of Sacred Heart Parish. The proposal received the endorsement of the Urban Region Planning Process.<sup>11</sup>

Emotions ran high for those on both sides of the issue when the plan was announced. A realization that rising costs and declining enrollments were jeopardizing the future survival of both schools prompted separate letters to Bishop Pilla on March 19, 1987 from

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Recollections of William Radeker.

<sup>7</sup>Pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Rev. Stanley Klasinski.

<sup>8</sup>Parish Archives.

<sup>9</sup>ADC.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.



*adapting to change*

the Parish staff and ten of the 16 members of the Parish Council. Both letters recommended combining the two schools into one facility with two campuses. In a letter dated March 26, 1987, Bishop Pilla consented to their proposal, and directed the plan to be in operation for the 1987-1988 school year. The legally rechartered school was named Jesus and Mary School with two campuses.<sup>12</sup>

On September 17, 1988, the property holdings of the parish increased with the acquisition of the Walkowiak funeral home properties located across the street from the parish. Robert and Cecilia Walkowiak donated the facility which was refurbished and renamed the Marian Center for use as a convenient chapel for weekday Masses and to provide needed space for other parish activities.<sup>13</sup>

Due to health problems, Pastor Rev. Bartnikowski petitioned Bishop Pilla for a less strenuous diocesan assignment. His request was granted with his being named pastor of Assumption Parish, Grafton, Ohio, on June 12, 1991. Rev. John Seabold, assistant Pastor, acted as Administrator ProTem from that date until the appointment of Rev. Stanley Klasinski on September 3, 1991. Rev. Seabold then took a leave of absence to undergo heart surgery and was later appointed to St. Clement parish on February 1, 1992.<sup>14</sup>

In 1908, when the parish was admitted into the Diocese of Cleveland, title to St. Mary's Cemetery was put in the name of the diocese. However, the responsibility for its maintenance and administration, as well as the privilege of limiting burials to registered parishioners, was retained by the parish. Landfill operations on the property made a significant tract of previously unusable land available. The additional number of plots made it impractical to continue St. Mary's as a private cemetery. On April 1, 1992, Bishop Pilla authorized the transfer of the management and maintenance of the cemetery to the *Catholic Cemeteries Association*.<sup>15</sup>

Operation of the Marian Center was hoped would contribute to parish efficiency and provide some relief from high utility costs. However, insurance and maintenance costs made its continued operation a liability. In May of 1992, the property was donated to the *Broadway Area Housing Coalition*. The contract provided that after the building was converted into a single family dwelling, 80% of the profits from its sale would be given to the parish. A stipulation was made that the home be offered for sale initially to a qualified parishioner.<sup>16</sup>

As our parish anticipates its centennial with a year-long series of religious and commemorative events, these memories too will be chronicled by future historians. In

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Parish Archives.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

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preparation for the centennial, the church building has been cleaned and repaired and restored to its glorious appearance on the day of its dedication on July 27, 1916. It shines again as it did then, in another time, as a reminder of our inheritance as stewards of more than just property, but also of a spirit of unity that has persevered from our very beginnings as a parish. Our legacy of strength amidst hardship will give us the confidence to face our second century of ministry to God's immigrant people with the faith and courage only He can and will provide.