

Visitation of the Blessed Mary Virgin Parish
196 N. Trooper Road
Trooper, PA 19403

Established 1954



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Founding to Dedication (1954 to 1957)

The Visitation of the Blessed Mother first written about in the New Testament was an event that exemplified the generous heart of the Mother of God. After being told by the Angel Gabriel that her cousin was with child, the Blessed Mother's journey from Nazareth was fulfilled when she was greeted by her cousin Elizabeth in Judah. To honor this visit and to symbolize the joyful end of her journey, our parish was named "The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish". The love and generosity of heart that was present at the meeting of the Blessed Mother and Elizabeth was also instilled in those who helped to establish this parish with faith that it would continue into the future.

The founding of any parish is never an easy undertaking. It requires deep devotion and the understanding of the ultimate goal – that the faithful of the future have the opportunity to receive the sacraments, attend Holy Mass and practice their faith. Reverend John C. Larkin was appointed founding pastor by the Most Reverend John F. O'Hara, Archbishop of Philadelphia, and was assigned to the area bordering both East Norriton and Lower Providence Townships. Fr. Larkin's mission was to develop a new parish from a pack of census cards, a map and a deed for a section of land purchased by the Diocese.

In October 1953, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia had been negotiating for several months with a New York developing firm to acquire a 12 acre plot of land on the west side of Trooper Road, north of Ridge Pike. However, due to legal technicalities, the deal fell through. The Diocese had to seek out another location.

Remember when? "Fr. Larkin was driving around the Jeffersonville area looking for a site on which to build the Visitation parish when his car broke down. He walked into the Zawislack Grocery Store, which was then located on Ridge Pike. Walter drove Fr. Larkin all the way back to Philadelphia." **-Helen and Walter Zawislack**

A large plot of land, located on Ridge Pike between Wayne and Park Avenue in Lower Providence Township, was chosen as the site for the newly forming parish. The 6.9 acres of land was owned by the Mann Development Corporation of Philadelphia. It was purchased on November 24, 1954, for \$50,000 by Archbishop O'Hara. Several other small purchases of land gave the 11 acres needed to establish both the church and school.

Fr. Larkin's mission of leading and caring for the spiritual needs of the people began on Tuesday, December 7, 1954. A small, newly formed group of parishioners greeted him in a home that served as the first rectory on the purchased land. The home was located on Ridge Pike and Wayne Avenue at the present day site of Blockbuster Video. It was previously owned by Frank S. Brant and his wife, Helen Longacker Brant, who were also proprietors of the former Trooper Inn on Ridge Pike.

The Church Rectory on Wayne and Ridge Pike

The following day, Wednesday, December 8, 1954, our great parish was canonically founded on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, a date laden with significance. The first Mass was celebrated in the living room of this home, which became known as the Chapel in the Rectory. In this Chapel, the first baptisms of Visitation B.V.M. were administered to Michael K. Kerr, Deborah Schwenk, Margaret Myers and Virginia L. Gingras on January 2, 1955.

Did you know? Visitation was one of several parishes to be founded in the Marian Year of 1954 and dedicated to the Blessed Mother. Pope Pius XII, decreed that the time period between December 8, 1953, and December 8, 1954, would be known as the Marian Year to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the proclamation of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception by his predecessor Pope Pius IX. As part of this year long observance, Archbishop O'Hara, known for his great devotion to Mary, set the policy that all parishes established during this time period would have a title of the Blessed Mother.

Fr. Larkin was concerned that the Chapel in the Rectory was too small to accommodate all of the parishioners for Sunday Mass. He obtained permission from James Stimmler to use his business as a meeting place. The first Sunday Mass was said on December 12, 1954, in the showroom of Stimmler Oil Company, formerly located on Germantown Pike in Fairview Village. This showroom was used for Sunday Mass for several weeks, but a larger space was still needed for an ever-expanding parish. Daily Mass and other church functions were still held in the Chapel in the Rectory during this time.

While Stimmler's showroom was temporarily being used, negotiations were in progress to rent a larger location. On January 30, 1955, Sunday Mass was first celebrated at the Fairview Village Assembly Hall on Valley Forge Road, Fairview Village. The parish was formed with 250 families from St. Francis of Assisi in Norristown, St. Helena's in Center Square, St. Teresa of Avila in Betzwood and St. Eleanor's in Collegeville.

The Assembly Hall was used for the next two years and was a good temporary home for Visitation. The First Holy Communion class at Visitation was taught here by Sally McCallum and consisted of 16 children – eight girls and eight boys. They received their First Holy Communion on May 20, 1956.

Using the Assembly Hall had satisfied the immediate requirement for a larger building while plans for construction of a permanent church were being formed. Unfortunately, another site for the church and school had to be found when it was discovered that the newly purchased site on Ridge Pike and Wayne Avenue was not suited for building because sewers were not available. Fr. Larkin continued to look for an appropriate site to build a new parish that could handle the needs of a growing congregation. The search was not an easy one.

While the search continued, many events were unfolding – building plans were underway, contracts and bids were being discussed, and major fundraising efforts were organized to defray some of the costs of the new parish building. Such fundraising efforts included bake sales, a rummage sale in Norristown, card parties, and a hugely

successful Turkey Dinner held on April 17, 1955. The dinner was prepared and served by the parishioners of Visitation with approximately 1300 people in attendance.

Did you know? Through the kindness of Fr. Thomas P. Kelly, pastor of St. Helena's parish, and with the cooperation of Chef Joe Phillips from the Gateway Diner, the successful Turkey Dinner was held in the cafeteria of St. Helena's school building, Center Square.

A major benefactor was one of Msgr. Larkin's closest friends, Daniel C. Connor. His support and financial contributions over the years helped defray expenses in the early days of the parish. Funds were also obtained by weekly share contributions collected by the newly formed Underwriter's Association. In addition, a Women's Guild had started to take form. Their projects and events were hugely successful in raising money as well.

At this time it became necessary to obtain assistance for Fr. Larkin. The task was assigned to Reverend Philip McArdle in June 1955. He stayed until ill health compelled him to be transferred in August of that year. On September 6, 1955, Reverend James F. Cassidy was assigned to the parish to replace Fr. McArdle and became an assistant to the pastor. He resided with Fr. Larkin at the temporary rectory located at Ridge Pike and Wayne Avenue. Fr. Cassidy soon became active in the early life of the parish.

After a great deal of searching, Fr. Larkin and James Stimmler went to see George W. Heuer, Jr., who owned Oakland Farms Dairy. Negotiations lasted until November 16, 1955, when Heuer and his wife Mae sold an 11-acre plot on Trooper Road and Chestnut Avenue to Fr. Larkin for \$40,000. This land became known as the "Oakland Farm Tract." A permanent site for the Visitation B.V.M. parish was finally chosen.

Preparations were soon made for constructing a parish church, school, gym/auditorium, convent and a separate rectory building. On a very cold and snowy Thursday, January 26, 1956, Fr. Larkin finally turned the first shovel full of dirt at the Groundbreaking Ceremonies for the new parish buildings.

Msgr. Larkin at the grounding breaking for the present day school building 1956.

The purchased land was a hilly field used for grazing by Heuer's dairy farm. One hill sloped down to Chestnut Avenue where a house was located on Trooper Road. The top of the hill was selected as the site of the present day church; the hilly field was leveled to provide an area for the school and parking lot. The small white house remained, isolated by the new parking lot, giving the appearance that it was on an island. Thus, it became known to some as the "House on the Island"; to others it was known as the "House on the Hill". Joe Brennan, his wife Jean, and their family lived at this house when he became the first custodian at Visitation in 1956.

Did you know? Joe Brennan was a custodian at Visitation from 1956 to 1970. He became a familiar and welcome face to parishioners. Among other things, Joe was involved with athletics, including serving as assistant baseball coach. Others happily remember him as a school bus driver. He was respected for his total dedication to Visitation. After his death in 1970, parishioners donated a window in the church, the Sacrament of Holy Orders, in his memory. His son, Tom, is now an ordained priest at the St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Phoenixville, PA.

During the next several months, construction continued, and on September 1, 1956, our first three religious, Mother M. Januaria, Superior, Sister M. Anastasia, and Sister M. Bronislas, arrived from the Order of Holy Family of Nazareth to establish Visitation School.

Since the schoolrooms had not yet been completed, Fr. Larkin had to find a place for the first graders. For the first fall term, the parish was fortunate to have the cooperation of Father Frederick Moors of Bishop Kenrick High School (B.K.H.S.) to house the first grade pupils. The students from the other grades were taken in by the neighboring parishes: St. Eleanor's, St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Helena's. This arrangement with the neighboring parishes continued until early 1957 when the first classrooms in the new building became available.

Fr. Larkin had to buy school buses for the new school and initially purchased two. Marion Gordon drove one bus that covered the entire parish area and picked up all of the first graders and took them to B.K.H.S. The other bus was driven by Tom McGuigan and went to other neighboring parishes. The dedication of these people made this transition time an easier one for the parish.

Visitation Expands (1957 to 1971)

The long awaited day arrived when, on February 3, 1957, Fr. Larkin celebrated the first Mass in the new parish building, the present day Visitation School. The following day, February 4, 1957, the schoolrooms were available for use. Although still under construction, six of the eight classrooms on the second floor were completed; two classes had to double up until construction could be finished. The first floor contained a temporary church, gym, convent, rectory office and cafeteria. Additional religious, Sister M. Evangeline and Sister M. Celeste, and our first lay teacher, Miss Jane Kelly, were added to the school staff to teach the 260 Visitation students. It was a great time for our parish, and Fr. Larkin's mission was well underway.

Did you know? In 1957, St. Francis of Assisi in Norristown, after building a new church of their own, donated three altars, statues and Stations of the Cross to Visitation. These gifts were used in the temporary church section of our new building, today's present day school.

The new parish began to come together and offered additional opportunities for the congregation to practice their faith. Many events followed rapidly. One such event was the first wedding in the new parish building, performed on March 2, 1957, with the joining of Virginia Marie Adamson and Harry B. Weaver, III. The first baptism was administered to Richard Basile and Thomas Catania on March 3, 1957. During this busy time, a Holy Name Society, an Athletic Association, and Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary were among the first organizations formed. In addition, students received First Holy Communion at the new location on May 12, 1957, followed in the afternoon by the first May Procession. Jean Clairmont was the first May Queen in the new parish building.

The Blessing and Laying of the Cornerstone for this new building took place on May 19, 1957. The cost of the building when completed would be approximately \$425,000. The official Dedication Day was on June 2, 1957, with Archbishop O'Hara presiding. He blessed the various parts of the building and officiated at the Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. The event was concluded with another Turkey Dinner sponsored by the parishioners.

For several years, the parish experienced a steady increase in the number of new parishioners. The size of the parish had already doubled from 250 to 500 families, and its boundaries had been extended. The northern boundary was to Skippack Pike, running from Greenhill Road to Whitehall Road. The new east boundary was Whitehall Road, stretching from Skippack Pike to Ridge Pike, while the new west boundary was Ridge Pike to Egypt Road.

The present rectory building was completed the following year in 1958, allowing Fr. Larkin and Fr. Cassidy to move from the rectory on Ridge Pike into their permanent home. Jack McLaughlin, who had owned a furniture store on the corner of Trooper and Ridge Pike where a Ford dealership is presently located, donated furniture to be used in the rectory. Later, on April 14, 1958, the original site purchased by the Diocese on Ridge Pike between Wayne and Park Avenue was sold to The Lawrence Contracting Company for \$105,500, creating a nice profit for the parish. The money from this sale was later put toward the construction of the present day church.

In 1959, only two years after the opening of the new parish building, more classrooms were needed to accommodate the increase in the number of students. Plans were made to build eight more classrooms on the lower floor. To make room for the classrooms, the church and confessionals had to be moved from the first floor to the gym. Every Saturday, the gym had to be set up for Mass on Sunday, an arrangement that continued for the next several years. A dream of the priests, sisters and parishioners of Visitation for a larger place to congregate in prayer had become a necessity. Plans were made for the construction of a permanent and separate church, and ground was broken in 1959.

The cost to complete the construction of the new church was enormous. Even with the sale of the land on Ridge Pike, additional capital had to be obtained to cover the expenses. Fundraising projects such as parish dinners, dances and the annual Christmas Bazaar sponsored by the Women's Guild were conducted by growing numbers of loyal, hardworking parishioners who, along with Fr. Larkin, were dedicated to making the vision of a new church a reality.

An example of the extraordinary fundraising projects that took place was the collection of labels from cans of food. Dedicated parishioners ripped off labels from endless numbers of cans and even went as far as to visit garbage dumps to find more labels. The labels were then sent to a company in exchange for money. In three months, the initial collection brought in approximately \$3,200, all of which was put toward the construction of the new church. It proved to be such a successful venture that the label collection continued in the parish.

Remember when? “The Women’s Guild would save green stamps and soup labels. They were redeemed for Penny Auction prizes at the annual fundraiser.” -**Dottie**

Venezia

In the meantime, on January 27, 1960, Fr. Larkin bought two more acres of land next to the rectory from Heuer for \$14,000. A farmhouse and a well pump house stood on this land. The farmhouse was torn down and was replaced with a new red brick house built later that year. The well pump house was left standing and still exists today. The Brennans moved to the new house and stayed until Joe’s unexpected death.

In 1961, Fr. Henry Schuyler, a recently discharged Army Chaplain, came to dinner one evening to visit longtime friend, Fr. John T. Coates, who was in residence at Visitation. Fr. Schuyler enjoyed Visitation so much that he asked Fr. Larkin if he could stay. His request was approved by the Archdiocese. Fr. Larkin invited him to stay and become a part of the Visitation family.

The vision of a new separate church was ultimately realized in two stages. The first stage was the construction of the outer structure, or shell, of the entire church building, and the internal completion of what is known today as the lower church. The second stage of construction was the completion of the inside of the upper church. Many years separated the completion of the first and second stages.

After a great deal of fundraising and hard work, the steeple was placed on the new church building in December of 1961, and the lower church was completed in the spring of 1962. On May 20th of that same year, the first Mass was celebrated, and Fr. Raymond Himsforth presided. Two weeks later, on June 3, 1962, Fr. Larkin marked the 25th anniversary of his priesthood with a Mass attended by parishioners and friends.

In the fall of that year, Archbishop John Krol presided over the laying of the cornerstone as well as the dedication of this new church building. The ceremony took place on September 15, 1962. It marked the start of a weekend of new beginnings at Visitation. Later that same day, the first Wedding ceremony took place in the newly dedicated church with the marriage of Marie Marinari and James Beppel. The following day, September 16, the first Baptism was performed on John Martin Nuttal.

The following year, on April 3, 1963, the Most Rev. Gerald V. McDevitt, D.D., administered the first Confirmation to 254 children and nine adults. The first May Procession was held on Mother’s Day, May 12, 1963, with Bernadette Hynes as May Queen.

On a special note, Fr. Larkin’s passionate interest in music and his close personal relationship with many of his fellow priests were instrumental in obtaining an organ from several sources in the Archdiocese. In 1965 the Sacred Heart Church in Phoenixville purchased the Methodist Church building across the street. The building contained a complete pipe organ, which would no longer be needed. Msgr. John Senglar, pastor of Sacred Heart Church, offered Fr. Larkin the organ as a gift, which he gratefully accepted.

Volunteers from Visitation’s Choir, Holy Name Society and Athletic Association dismantled the organ one Saturday morning. The Crouthamel Trucking Company, whose owner was a parish member, contributed the moving van. Several hundred

organ components were transported to the lower church where they were stored for several years, pending final construction of the upper church.

This gift, however, lacked a quality console. Fr. Larkin, along with his choir director, Dr. Michael Giamo, located the needed console at the Visitation B.V.M. Parish in Philadelphia. They were in the process of converting their organ and wished to dispose of the console. Once again a crew of volunteers, with Fr. John McFadden, assistant pastor of Visitation, as the honorary foreman, removed the console and brought it back to the parish. It remained in storage until it could be installed in the choir loft of the upper church.

Meanwhile, the Visitation School continued to grow and expand. In January of 1969, there was an addition made to the original school building. The school grew to a total of 23 classrooms, complete with a well-equipped science lab and a library holding 3,900 books.

On December 15, 1970, two of our priests, Fr. Coates and Fr. Schuyler, observed their 25th anniversary as priests. Both celebrated Mass and were honored at a reception given by priests, parishioners and friends.

The second stage in the construction of the new church had begun soon after the completion of the lower church. Visitation continued to grow in numbers, as did the enthusiasm among parishioners to have construction of the upper church's interior completed.

Remember when? "Fr. Larkin engaged many men to help plaster the upper church. Anthony Tornetta plastered all the stairwells and was assisted by Stanley Wisniewski, Hugh Donlin, Bill McCarrick, Al Ostroski, Joe Adamo, Karl Fox, Pete Genuardi, Jim Madden, Carl DeGrazzio, Joe Brennan and Jack O'Neill. They all took on this huge venture and volunteered their services. Father Schuyler would make sure these men had plenty of food and drink for all their hard work. Around 10 o'clock in the evening, Nick Centralla would carry in beer and sandwiches." **–Anthony and Josie Tornetta** Did you know? As a gift to Fr. Larkin, Jim Madden made the three-dimensional forms and Anthony Tornetta did the plastering for the large plaster crosses in both side stairwells where they remain today.

Because the parish was dedicated to the Blessed Mother and was first established by Fr. Larkin during the Marian year of 1954, the architecture of the upper church was carefully planned to honor Mary. Fr. Larkin envisioned a dignified and stately structure in which parishioners could gather for Mass. John A. Betts and Associates of Norristown was the architectural firm chosen to bring this vision to life.

The interior of the upper church would be furnished in the simple, yet elegant Colonial Georgian tradition that evokes a quiet reverence and devotion. The church was designed with many distinguishable features, each special in its own way.

Among the features are the fourteen stained-glass windows that tell the story of the Redemption and Salvation and remind the faithful of Christ's presence. From the rear of the church to the altar rail, the seven stained-glass windows on the left side contain the seven Mysteries of the Rosary honoring the Blessed Mother – The Annunciation,

Visitation, Nativity, Presentation, Finding in the Temple, Assumption and Coronation. On the right side of the church, the parishioners would note the seven stained glass windows depicting the Seven Sacraments through which Christ continues to live in the faithful. The fourteen Stations of the Cross are represented in mosaics and are placed along the walls of both sides of the church between the stained-glass windows.

The Sanctuary, which consists of the main altar, two side shrines and the tabernacle are all furnished in Italian marble. There is also a marble statue of the Infant of Prague and two holy water fonts. The marble gives a sense of quiet beauty.

The intricate craftsmanship of the four mosaics is just as remarkable, with the main altar depicting both the Last Supper and Crucifixion while the side altars commemorate the Visitation and St. Joseph with the Child Jesus.

A special treasure of the upper church is the choir loft in the rear of the nave featuring the pipe organ. The organ that was stored for so many years had finally been put into place. Mr. Brantley A. Duddy, a recognized expert organ technician, assembled and installed the organ and then helped to maintain it for many years.

Did you know? Some of the components of the pipe organ are dated from the pre-Civil War era. The same organ is still in use today.

Finally, flanking the sanctuary at the rear of the church are two rooms; a vestment room for the priests and another for the altar servers. The addition of 22 gold-colored Williamsburg chandeliers, 84 pews and wall-to-wall carpeting completed the furnishings of the upper church.

Of historic interest in the design of the upper church is the inclusion of the 750-pound bell housed in the church tower. According to a newspaper report from the Norristown Times Herald, the bell dates back to 1858 and served as the Manayunk town bell until 1902. During the Civil War, it sounded reports of the Union Army's victories over the Confederate forces. In 1902, the bell was recast and moved to the Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Manayunk, where it remained for the next 68 years.

When the Mount Vernon Baptist Church was to be demolished, the pastor, Rev. Thomas Olson, wanted to see the bell moved to a place where it would continue calling people to worship. The pastor of St. Mary's Church in Manayunk, Rev. Emil Oestreich, knew that Visitation was constructing a new church and would be able to house the bell in its tower. Rev. Olson then offered the bell to Visitation. Fr. Larkin was quite delighted to receive such a gift.

Did you know? The bell in Visitation's tower has been calling people to worship for over 100 years.

The bell was hoisted into the tower of Visitation's upper church on July 21, 1971, and with the installation of the windows, Stations of the Cross, and the completion of the sanctuary, the upper church was at long last finished. Frank D'Lauro and Company of Philadelphia, was the General Contactor for the church, and the Belfi Brothers and Company, Incorporated, of Philadelphia finished the marble works and mosaics. For nearly ten years, the parishioners of Visitation had attended Masses and all other religious ceremonies in the lower church. The parish was still expanding and had grown

to 1600 families. Upon completion of the upper church, the parish at last had the capacity to accommodate all of its parishioners. The dedication and opening of the upper church occurred on December 8, 1971, with Cardinal Krol presiding. The vision of Fr. Larkin was finally realized.

“Through Mary, our Mother, under whose protection this parish has been placed, we offer this temple to Her Divine Son and our King of Kings.”

- Msgr. Larkin

Dedication of the upper church, 1971

Visitation Thrives (1972 to 1979)

Throughout the 1970's Visitation grew along with the surrounding communities. Parishioners settled into their new church, thankful that the years of hard work had brought them such a beautiful place to worship.

On September 24, 1973, Fr. Larkin was named honorary prelate. Being elevated to a Monsignor was a special honor indeed fitting for all the hard work he had done to establish a new church.

A major event during the seventies for Visitation and the rest of America was the 200th anniversary of our nation's independence in 1976. Visitation celebrated throughout the year, with teachers and students making historical presentations and events such as the Christmas Bazaar taking on colonial and revolutionary themes.

Two years later, the shrine honoring St. John Neumann was installed in the lower church and dedicated on August 3, 1978. In addition, it was during the seventies that George Heuer sold the rest of Oakland Farms and donated 4.5 acres of land to Visitation. Mr. Heuer's wish was that the land would always be used for Visitation's youth in athletics and that the land would never be sold or developed.

Visitation Moves On (1980 to 1989)

The eighties began on a sad note with parishioners mourning the loss of Msgr. Larkin who died suddenly on August 29, 1980, after serving tirelessly for 26 years as pastoral leader of Visitation. Msgr. Larkin dedicated himself to the growth and development of the spiritual welfare and education of his parishioners and provided great comfort to the many lives that he touched.

On September 22, 1980, Msgr. Francis J. Clemens, formerly the Vice Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, became the new pastor of Visitation. Msgr. Clemens would preside over the maintenance and improvements of the church property while continuing to guide the spiritual needs of the people.

Remember when? Msgr. Clemens, shortly after arriving for the first time at Visitation, was making his introductions to his fellow priests and rectory staff. He was there for only a few minutes when in comes Fr. Hughes from the kitchen and announces that his car had a flat tire and promptly asked Msgr. Clemens to change it for him. I remember

peeking out the window until the task was completed.

– Eleanor McDevitt, secretary for 18 years at Visitation rectory

One of the first improvements to the property undertaken by Msgr. Clemins was the construction in 1981 of the new front steps, which led from the church to the expanded parking lots. The new steps accommodated the rapidly growing community.

Later that year, parishioners past and present attended a special Mass held on August 29, 1981, in honor of Msgr. Larkin. It was the one-year anniversary of his passing. Parishioners gave thanks to Almighty God and to Msgr. Larkin for the founding of the Visitation Parish.

The following year saw another first in the history of Visitation. On Saturday, September 18, 1982, John Callan, a parishioner and a Piarist seminarian, was ordained a priest in Visitation Church by Bishop John Graham, Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia.

Another addition to the grounds of Visitation was the beautiful granite parish marker. After months of waiting for its completion, it was ready for placement on October 6, 1986. A truck arrived from Mt. Airy, N.C. with sections of the 3000-pound granite marker along with a hoist that was provided by the Gambone Steel Company. Louis D' Innocenzo designed the marker and landscaping. On December 8, 1986, our parish marker was blessed by Msgr. Clemins who was joined by members of the parish community at the ceremony.

A special year occurred in 1987 when Visitation was chosen to be the Marian Shrine for Montgomery County, beginning with the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady on September 8 and continuing through the Solemnity of the Assumption of Our Lady on August 15, 1988. A crowd of 2,500 led by Bishop Louis A. DiSimone gathered to honor Mary Our Mother at the opening day ceremonies. At the time, it was the largest crowd ever assembled at Visitation.

As the eighties came to a close, Visitation celebrated the 35th anniversary of its founding on December 8, 1989, with Archbishop Anthony Bevilacqua as principal celebrant at Mass. During this celebration, the Blessed Katherine Drexel Shrine in the upper church and the new stained glass windows in the lower church depicting the apostles and evangelists, Mark and Luke, were blessed. Newly installed for this anniversary were the Pieta in the lower church (above the rear/side door) and Jesus, the Good Shepherd, in the lower church (rear confessional room).

Visitation Flourishes (1990 to 1999)

A new decade brought with it new changes for Visitation. For more than 30 years, the 4.5-acre athletic field, previously donated by Heuer, was a swamp-like tract found behind the school. It was rocky and quite muddy a great deal of the time due to poor drainage. There were discussions for years about trying to raise the money to renovate the property. The Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) checked into zoning and costs and realized that they could not raise the necessary funds on their own. The Mascaro family approached Fr. Joseph Bongard and offered the necessary funds and work needed to renovate the property. Marty Crennan, president of the Adult Board of the CYO, and Fr. Bongard were equally surprised and delighted with the news.

The project, on behalf of the six Mascaro children, was headed by Joseph P. Mascaro, Jr. and started in the summer of 1990. The project included a plan to improve drainage on the field, outdoor lights, a scoreboard, goalposts, bleachers, player benches, a fully equipped concession stand, a pavilion, landscaping of the area and a playground. The field was transformed into a complex for football, soccer, baseball and softball.

The Mascaro children were working on the labor of love to give something back to the school they attended and as a memorial to their late father, Joseph P. Mascaro, Sr., who passed away in 1981. A dedication area was also built for the field. It contains a garden area that is trimmed in red brick. In the center is a rock with a bronze plaque that displays a portrait of their father.

After two years, the renovations were near completion. An entire weekend was planned to celebrate the dedication of the field. On Friday, September 13, 1991, there was a "Dynamite Dedication Dance" for all 6th, 7th and 8th graders in the school auditorium. The parish celebrated Family Night on Saturday, September 14, 1991, with "Movie Under the Stars." The free showing of "Field of Dreams" was a night to spend enjoying the field. The weekend was concluded with the dedication of the Mascaro field on Sunday.

"Visitation's athletic field is really a Cinderella story. We're calling it our 'Field of Dreams'."

- Sister Diane Marie

Dedication of the Mascaro Field, 1991

Remember when? Back in 1991, Visitation held weekend renewals at the gym. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet parishioners, make new friends, renew one's faith, share a Saturday evening dinner together and attend a special Mass which was held in the gym at 12:00 noon on Sunday to close out the weekend. **-Rosa and Bob Quaglia** Visitation School continued its expansion and improvements. In 1991, students were given the opportunity to learn an instrument through the newly established music program. There was also the addition of a 400 square foot Botanical Center and Computer Education Lab. Construction of the \$75,000 facility began in April of 1992. Upon completion, the buildings were dedicated on January 15, 1993. Half of the funds were donated by the parish Women's Guild. The remaining donations came from parishioners and other organizations.

An expanded computer-learning center was also completed in 1993. To equip the new center, the school sponsored a student walkathon which raised \$7600 towards the purchase of new computer hardware and software.

The following year, the 40th anniversary of the founding of Visitation was celebrated with a Mass on Thursday, December 8, 1994. Reverend Msgr. Robert P. Maginnis, Vicar for Montgomery County, along with priests of Visitation led the Mass, which was attended by more than 1000 people. Among them were at least 100 original parishioners. A reception followed the Mass in which 300 people stayed for dinner in the festively decorated cafeteria of the parish school.

At this time the parish consisted of 3,400 families with 775 students enrolled in the school. By this time, 14 parish sons had become ordained priests. Many people marveled at how, in just four decades, a small parish with 250 families splintered from

four nearby churches became one of the largest Catholic parishes in Montgomery County.

A special honor for the parish occurred on October 22, 1994, when four of Visitation's priests celebrated the anniversary of their priesthoods. Father Francis X. Herron celebrated his 40th anniversary, Father Henry C. Schuyler his 50th, Msgr. Francis J. Clemins his 45th, and Father Joseph F. Smith his 60th.

In 1996, additional improvements were made to the church. To make it possible for those who are disabled to more easily attend the upper church, an access ramp was built and then dedicated on May 31, 1996.

A new stained glass window was also installed this year, located above the church entrance and depicting the Magnificat of the Virgin Mary. This window was designed by local artist Catherine M. Toth of Catherine Studio of Design in Colledgeville. As a unique celebration of Visitation's 42nd anniversary on December 8, 1996, the Norriton Fire Company ladder truck lifted Msgr. Clemins and Fr. Zachary Navit to bless this newly installed window after Mass. When lit from the interior at night, the window is especially beautiful.

Remember when? "One of my fondest memories of the Visitation parish community was the dedication ceremony for the stained glass window of our Blessed Mother. I will never forget seeing Msgr. Clemins being lifted by a fire truck extension ladder into the air. Fr. Navit was proudly by his side as they blessed the beautiful window. Cameras were flashing everywhere. The look on Monsignor's face was one of exhilaration and devotion. **—Roe Hopkins**

Ground was broken in 1997 for a special grotto to honor Our Lady of Life. The grotto, also designed by Catherine M. Toth, features an original statue of Mary. On May 30, 1998, the shrine was completed and dedicated. The statue of Mary reminds all people to respect life in all of its stages. In her arms, Mary holds different flowers, each with a special meaning. Daisies represent those who die young or unexpectedly. Roses symbolize the pre-born, and lilies represent those who live to an old age.

Msgr. Clemins had envisioned a Perpetual Adoration Chapel on the grounds of Visitation for many years. With the approach of the new millennium, many of the parishioners had been praying for the gift and grace of such a chapel.

On the evening of October 15, 1998, this gift became a reality with the opening of the Chapel of Perpetual Adoration in the sisters' convent chapel. A solemn Mass, celebrated by Msgr. Clemins and concelebrated by the parochial vicars of Visitation was followed by a candlelight procession from the lower church to the new chapel where Sisters Chrisanne and Diane Marie welcomed the faithful of the parish. The chapel is furnished with a new ramp and surrounded by a flower garden in the center of which stands a statue of the Holy Family. A testimonial book of petitions and favors granted remains in the chapel at all times.

As the nineties came to an end, Msgr. Clemins retired in 1999 after leading Visitation for 19 years. The parish then welcomed Msgr. Thomas A. Murray who came from St. Martin of Tours in Philadelphia. He was named the third pastor of Visitation, officially arriving on June 27, 1999.

A New Century (2000 to 2004)

Msgr. Murray brought Visitation into the new century with his own vision. He stressed the importance of stewardship in the life of our parish, and that the gifts of each person's time, talent and treasure are needed for the good of others.

Msgr. Murray was instrumental in establishing the Stewardship Committee. He also saw the importance of holding a Ministry Fair, originally held in the school gym after Sunday Mass, to give an overview of the groups, organizations and special needs of the parish. It was an opportunity for parishioners to meet and talk with members of different groups. Many parishioners were able to utilize their talents by volunteering their time and becoming more involved in parish life.

To help Visitation continue on as a vibrant community in the new century, Msgr. Murray realized that improvements were needed for the parish buildings. Such upgrades could assist in the spiritual growth and academic excellence for future generations at Visitation. The school facilities provide a Christ-centered education, the foundation of our parish's future, and were an initial focus of Msgr. Murray's attention. A parish Capital Campaign was launched in 2004 to raise the funds necessary for the property improvements.

The Junior High wing of the school is being expanded to include technological facilities and equipment, a library and administrative offices. The school expansion began with groundbreaking on June 8, 2004. The project will add approximately 14,700 square feet to the school with 9,700 square feet of renovated area.

Coinciding with this initiative, a state-of-the-art message board, designed to be architecturally consistent with the church roof line, was donated by an active parish family. Such generous contributions and continued support of our parish members make us proud to be a part of the Visitation family.

“The new construction will be a visible sign of the deep life-giving faith we strive to hand on to future generations on this, “Our Journey of Faith!”

– Msgr. Murray

Groundbreaking for school expansion, 2004

During the same time as the school expansion, Visitation approached the milestone 50-year anniversary of its founding, and Msgr. Murray led the parish community into a yearlong Golden Jubilee Celebration. It began on December 8, 2003, with the Opening Mass and blessing of the Jubilee banners. The Jubilee theme chosen for the celebration was “Our Journey of Faith.”

Each month of the Jubilee year featured a different guest celebrant at Mass. The guests were both parish sons and former priests of Visitation who returned to share in the celebration and recall memories of their time at the parish. The Jubilee year featured many other memorable events as well.

Visitation welcomed back Martin Doman, a former parishioner and now a performance artist, for a special evening of music and celebration. This Jubilee Family Concert was held on Saturday, March 13, 2004, in the school gym. The event was sponsored by the

CYO and Community of Disciples. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate 50 years of our parish by sharing our faith with one of our own.

A day full of events took place on Saturday, July 24, 2004. Parishioners participated in the annual Msgr. Clemens Golf Outing at the Jeffersonville Golf Club as well as an old-fashioned Country Fair held on the grounds of Visitation. Families enjoyed games, food, a dunk tank, watermelon eating contests, a Polka band, arts and crafts, and vintage cars. Everyone had the opportunity to sign cinder blocks and boards which were used to form the altar for a special outdoor Mass later in the evening. The signed items were ultimately used in the foundation of the Visitation School expansion. This outdoor Mass was the highlight of the day, attended by hundreds of parishioners under a tent on the athletic field. A catered picnic dinner and hot air balloon rides concluded the day's festivities.

A special feature throughout the Jubilee year was the Ministry Masses which were held on the third Sunday of each month. These Masses individually honored the more than 50 different parish organizations. This special honor was in addition to the annual appreciation dinner hosted by Msgr. Murray to mark their contributions to parish life. In the homily of the Ministry Masses, the priest celebrant honored these groups and spoke of their contributions to raise awareness of the many ways to participate in parish life. As a special part of each Ministry Mass, a member from one of the parish organizations added a styrofoam block onto our three-dimensional representation of "Our Journey of Faith" logo. The blocks, built by parish Sexton Ray Frascino, were colored in the liturgical colors of the year. The last block piece was added to the formation at the December 2004 Ministry Sunday Mass, marking the parish's 50th Anniversary.

Did you know? As part of the Jubilee year celebrations, a family night was held at a Phillies game on June 30, 2004. Everyone enjoyed the game at the brand new Citizens Bank Park.

Visitation was chosen to host the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve service during our Jubilee Year. People from different faiths in the community were invited to take part in this service on Wednesday, November 24, 2004. The evening's offerings were donated to the Norristown Soup Kitchen and Norristown Interfaith, two local agencies that assist those in need.

The Final Event Mass was held on a bitter cold day, December 12, 2004, with Cardinal Justin Rigali presiding. Thirty-six guest priests con-celebrated the Mass. A highlight of the Mass was when founding parishioner Marion Gordon presented a spiritual bouquet from our school children to Cardinal Rigali. The service was filled with the talents of the many musical ministries of our parish. These included the adult choir, the youth group, the children's choir, the guitar group and cantors.

Following the Mass, more than 650 parishioners attended the Final Event Dinner at the Westover Country Club. People enjoyed the dinner and live music. It was a time for celebration as the 50th Golden Jubilee at Visitation B.V.M. came to its formal conclusion.

Visitation from 2004 to Today

Parish activities and ministries grew in need and numbers, and meeting space was scarce. A proposed parish center with conference rooms, a large multi-purpose area, a kitchen, and possible day care services would enhance the needs of our Visitation family. A suggested location for a parish center was between the existing rectory and church buildings. Although money was raised through the Archdiocesan Capital Campaign to go toward a Parish Center for Visitation BVM, building the center was put on hold until it is financially feasible for the parish to build.

What began as a journey with the dreams and faith of Msgr. Larkin and the founding parishioners grew into a parish community that included nearly 4,000 families and approximately 12,500 individual members. Msgr. Clemins along with so many people and events helped to shape the parish into what it was in the early 21st century and our subsequent pastors continued the Journey of Faith.

Since the retirement of Msgr. Murray in 2016, Visitation has had two pastors preside over our parish – Fr. Terry Weik and Fr. Bob Gross. Facing a time of change in society, including a decrease in practicing Catholics and living through a world-wide pandemic, Visitation BVM has made a number of changes for our parishioners. These changes include: implementing livestreaming for our masses; holding a drive-through live nativity during the Christmas season; naming a parish Youth Minister; and scheduling our “Yogi Fest” celebration to honor St. Francis of Assisi. New ministries like Revive, Renew, Rejoice have formed to reach out to our community to encourage greater participation in the church through Fellowship Sundays and Evangelization Days. In 2021, our parish created the “No Greater Love Garden” adjacent to the Rectory. This is a community garden that provides fresh produce to our neighbors at the Patrician Society in Norristown, PA throughout the growing season. Parishioners work together to maintain the garden and harvest and deliver the food to the Patrician Society. In addition, the parish collects canned goods for the Patrician Society at every mass.

Visitation has thrived on the spiritual devotion of so many individuals – our founder, pastors and priests, caring nuns and teachers, church school staff and devoted, faithful members. For the last 65 years, all have made our parish what it is today.

Our journey continues into our new life!

“Indeed, the root meaning of parish fits in well with the Christian concept of life here on earth for us all. We have not a permanent home here. We are on a journey. We are a pilgrim people – a Pilgrim Church.”

– Msgr. Clemins

40th Anniversary Mass, 1994

Pastors Who Served Visitation BVM Parish – Present to Past

Luke 1:74 “...to grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear”

Rev. Robert Gross - 2020 to Present - Installation 9/19/21

Fr. Bob Gross grew up on Long Island in New York with his loving parents and younger brother, who now is a police officer in NYC, and his older sister who is a teacher. He went to Catholic schools all his life. Sports was a big part of his life as well - all sports. After Fr. Bob graduated from Loyola College in Maryland, he went to school on Long Island to earn his Master's degree in Social Work. He decided to move to Philadelphia with his college roommates and started working as a youth minister at Saint Agnes Parish in West Chester. While working at St. Agnes, God called him to be a priest and Fr. Bob entered Saint Charles Seminary. He was ordained in 2014 and was sent to Our Lady of Grace Parish in Penndel, PA for four years. Fr. Bob was then assigned to be parochial vicar of Saint Helena in Blue Bell for the next two years before being transferred to Visitation BVM in Trooper in 2020 as the Parochial Administrator. Fr. Bob was installed as Pastor of Visitation BVM Parish in 2021. Fr. Bob is often seen walking around the grounds and school with his sidekick Yogi.

Rev. Terry Weik – 2016 to 2020

Fr. Terence P. Weik grew up in Bristol Borough in Lower Bucks County, and was ordained a priest in 1980 after spending 8 years at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary. After his ordination, he spent 3 years at St. Robert Parish in Chester—now renamed St. Katherine Drexel Parish. While serving at St. Robert Parish, he became part-time chaplain at St. James High School for Boys in Chester, PA. He spent 5 years at St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Drexel Hill. In 1988, Fr. Terry formally joined the Society of Mary (known as the Marianists).

As a Marianist religious, Fr. Terry served in South Florida as a high school teacher and campus minister; in Ohio as a novice in Dayton and later as a high school chaplain in Cincinnati; in Maryland as a parish youth minister, young and young adult retreat house director and later as pastor at the same parish; and in Texas as a director of university campus ministry and as a doctoral student. In 2013, Fr. Terry returned to the Philadelphia area and served as the Parochial Vicar at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in Doylestown before being installed as Pastor at Visitation B.V.M. Parish in 2016.

Rev. Msgr. Thomas A. Murray – 1999 to 2016

Fr. Thomas A. Murray was born in Philadelphia on June 13, 1941. He attended La Salle College High School in Philadelphia and then entered St. Charles Borromeo Seminary

in Wynnewood, PA. He was ordained by the late John Cardinal Krol on May 18, 1968. Fr. Murray's first assignment was to St. Stanislaus in Lansdale, PA, where he served as Assistant Pastor from 1968 to 1973.

For the next 26 years, Fr. Murray was assigned to various parishes throughout Philadelphia, spiritually guiding the people of the city. He served as Assistant Pastor of St. Anselm from 1973 to 1977, St. William Parish from 1977 to 1980, and St. Katherine of Siena from 1980 to 1985. He was then appointed Pastor of St. Ignatius Church in 1985 and later was named Pastor of St. Martin of Tours in 1991. Fr. Murray was bestowed the Papal Honor of Honorary Prelate on March 14, 1998.

Msgr. Murray's service to the Archdiocese took a new direction when he left Philadelphia in June 1999 to become Pastor of Visitation B.V.M. Parish in Trooper, PA. He stressed the importance of stewardship in the life of our parish, and the need for each person to use their gifts of time, talent and treasure for the good of others. Msgr. Murray continues to guide us today, through prayer and service, as we travel our "Journey of Faith."

Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Clemins – 1980 to 1999

Fr. Francis J. Clemins was born in Philadelphia on March 23, 1924. He attended Resurrection of Our Lord School and Northeast Catholic High School in Philadelphia before entering St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Wynnewood, PA. He was ordained on May 27, 1950.

The first priestly assignment for Fr. Clemins was as Associate Pastor at St. Ursula Parish in Fountain Hill, PA, from 1950 to 1957. Over the next 14 years, he was assigned to three other parishes in the Archdiocese. After St. Ursula, Fr. Clemins served at St. Joseph in Collingdale, PA, from 1957 to 1962, St. Francis de Sales in Philadelphia from 1962 to 1967, and then at Holy Child in Philadelphia from 1967 to 1971.

Fr. Clemins was then appointed Vice Chancellor for the Archdiocese and served in this position from 1971 to 1980. During this time, on September 24, 1973, he was named Honorary Prelate. Msgr. Clemins then became Pastor at Visitation B.V.M. in Trooper, PA, and served from 1980 to 1999. He was named Pastor Emeritus in 1999. Msgr. Clemins died at Villa St. Joseph in Darby, PA, on January 5, 2002.

Other assignments during Msgr. Clemins' years of ministry included: Chaplain at West Catholic Boys High School in Philadelphia from 1962 to 1967, Associate Director for the Regional CYO from 1963 to 1966, Deputy for Temporary Administration at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Wynnewood, from 1981 to 1983 and Vicar Forane for Montgomery County from 1987 to 1989.

Msgr. Clemins held numerous positions throughout his priestly vocation, but his greatest love was being a Pastor. His gentleness, kindness and compassion will never be forgotten and remain a part of the Visitation family today.

Rev. Msgr. John C. Larkin – 1954 to 1980

Founding Pastor of Visitation B.V.M. Church, Fr. John C. Larkin was born in Branchdale, PA, on December 24, 1907. He attended Reilly Township High School in Branchdale, and after working two years, prepared for the priesthood at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Wynnewood, PA. After being ordained on May 22, 1937, Fr. Larkin's first assignment as Assistant Pastor was at Holy Rosary Church in Reading, PA, and then at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church in Philadelphia, PA. He served there from 1938 until he entered the U.S. Navy as chaplain in September, 1941. As chaplain, Fr. Larkin served with the Second Marine Division in the Pacific Theater of Operations for three years and later was assigned to Manhattan Beach, NY. He returned to the Pacific Theater with duty aboard the USS St. Paul until the end of World War II. He returned briefly to our Lady of Mt. Carmel and later was assigned to the Church of the Visitation B.V.M. in Philadelphia.

With the founding of the new Visitation B.V.M. Church in Trooper, PA, he was named Pastor in 1954 by the late Most Rev. John F. O'Hara, Archbishop of Philadelphia. On September 24, 1973, Fr. Larkin was named Honorary Prelate. He remained with us at Visitation until his death on August 29, 1980.

Msgr. Larkin served as chaplain of The Triangle Club of Central Montgomery County, an organization dedicated to Sports Scholarship service, since its inception in 1963. He also served on the board of governors of admissions for the Annapolis Naval Academy from 1958 to 1972.

Msgr. Larkin is remembered through the Larkin Center by his total dedication to the growth and development of the spiritual and material welfare of his parishioners.

Priests Who Serve - Past and Present

Luke 1:74 "...to grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear"

Our Priests

Parish Priests who have served Visitation B.V.M. Parish over the past 53 years:

(* Deceased)

Msgr. John C. Larkin* (1954 – 1980)

Rev. Philip A. McArdel* (1955 – 1955)

Rev. James F. Cassidy* (1955 – 1960)

Rev. John T. Coates (1958 – 1973)

Rev. Joseph W. McCloskey (1961 – 1962)

Rev. John R. McFadden (1962 – 1969)

Rev. Henry C. Schuyler* (1961 – 2001)

Rev. Joseph P. Lupinacci (1967 – 1969)

Rev. Arthur I. Taraborelli (1969 – 1973)

Rev. Thomas P. Gillin (1973 – 1976)

Rev. Ferdinand Buccafurni (1976 – 1981)

Rev. Thomas P. McKelvey (1976 – 1981)

Rev. James F. Muscarella (1979 – 1983)

Msgr. Francis J. Clemins* (1980 – 1999)

Rev. Stephen R. Bloh (1981 – 1985)

Rev. Leo G. Zavatsky (1983 – 1984)

Rev. George P. Ettoree* (1984 – 1987)

Rev. Richard J. Maisano (1984 – 1988)

Rev. Joseph W. Bongard (1986 – 1992)

Rev. Frederico C. Britto (1988 – 1990)

Rev. Joseph F. Smith* (1989 – 1997)

Rev. Joseph W. Dragon (1990 – 1995)

Rev. Peter J. Dunne (1990 – 1994)**

Rev. Francis J. Mulranen (1992 – 2000, 2021-Present)

Rev. Zachary W. Navit (1994 – 2001)

Rev. Francis X. Herron (1995 – 2000)

Rev. Khoa M. Nguygen (2001 – 2004)

Rev. Eugene C. Wilson (2000 – 2005)

Rev. Patrick S. McManus (2004 – 2006)

Rev. Edward J. Kelly (2005 – 2016)

Rev. Michael J. Saban (2006 – 2017)

Rev. Brian Connolly (2017 – 2019)

Msgr. Ignatius L. Murray (In Residence to 2016)

Msgr. Thomas A. Murray (1999 – 2016)

Rev. Terence Weik (2016 – 2020)

Rev. Sean English (2019 - 2019)

Rev. William Lange (2020-2020)

Rev. Robert Gross (2020- Present)

**For additional information regarding Father Dunne, please click [here](#).

Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth Who Serve Past and Present

Luke 1:74 "...to grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear"

We are thankful for all of our sisters who share their care and devotion with us.

Our Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth

Mission Statement

We, the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, an international apostolic congregation, believe that the Holy family of Nazareth:

- Three persons in communion with God and one another,
- Obedient and faithful to the will of God,

reveals to us the profound reality that God is present in the most simple and ordinary experiences of human life.

This vision, which so captivated our Foundress, Frances Siedliska (Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd), is the source and inspiration for our life and service. Sharing Jesus' mission of spreading the kingdom of God's love, we engage in a variety of ministries with and in the Church.

Mindful that it is in an environment of love that persons come to the fullness of life, we witness a family spirit among ourselves, and are dedicated to the moral and religious renewal of family life. We are committed to creating communities of love and hope which celebrate the oneness of the human family.

Parish Sisters who have served Visitation B.V.M. Parish over the past 53 years:

(* Deceased)

(+ Former principal)

Sister Diane Marie (Current Director of Religious Education)

Sister M. Aloysine*

Sister M. Amarilla*

Sister M. Anastasia*

Sister M. Aurea

Sister M. Auxilia*

Sister M. Bernadette

Sister M. Bernard

Sister M. Boniface*

Sister M. Bonita*
Sister M. Bronislas*
Sister M. Chrisanne+
Sister M. Clarissa+
Sister M. Winifred Cook
Sister M. Cyprian*
Sister M. David
Sister M. Margaret DeSales
Sister M. Bernadette Donahue
Sister M. Martin Duffy
Sister Edmundline*
Sister M. Georgia*
Sister M. Germaine*
Sister Mary Jane Hahner
Sister M. Jane Harriet
Sister M. Honoria*
Sister M. Irmina*+
Sister Mary Joan Jacobs
Sister M. Januaria*+
Sister M. Jeanette
Sister M. Joan
Sister M. John
Sister M. Jolancia*
Sister M. Julia*
Sister M. Frances Kowalski
Sister M. Lawrence*
Sister M. Louise
Sister M. Marcella Louise
Sister M. Marceline+
Sister M. Marcella

Sister Caroline Marie*
Sister Claire Marie
Sister Peter Marie
Sister Rosemary Griffin
Sister Sophie Marie*
Sister M. Katherine Marnien
Sister M. Maureen*
Sister Maria Annette Mellon
Sister M. Mercedes
Sister M. Michaelann*
Sister M. Patrice
Sister M. Philomena*+
Sister M. Evangeline Piorek*
Sister M. Pulcheria*
Sister M. Raphael*
Sister M. Rose*
Sister Mary Rose*+
Sister M. Ruth
Sister M. Celeste Slowik
Sister M. Sophia+
Sister M. Stephanie
Sister M. Evangeline Sullivan
Sister M. Sylvia*+
Sister M. Susan Therese
Sister M. Winifred

Parish Sons and Daughters Who Served Past and Present

Luke 1:74 "...to grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear"

"Our Parish Sons and Daughters"

(*Deceased)

Mr. Luke Baran, Seminarian

Rev. Paul Brandt

Rev. Joseph Brandt

Rev. Thomas Brennan

Rev. John Callan, Sch.P.

Rev. Joseph Doman

Rev. Lawrence Gleason

Rev. Raymond Himsworth (our first parishioner to become a priest)

Rev. Sean O'Neill

Rev. Joseph Perna*

Rev.. Matthew Tralies

Rev. Charles Vance

Rev. Ronald Vierling

Rev. Patrick Welsh

Rev. Vincent Welsh

Sister M. Dolorosa Hessler (our first parishioner to become a sister)

Sister Evangeline

Sister Joanne

Sister M. Evangeline Sullivan

Sister Mary Guardian of Hope

Sister Mary Magdalen Greco

Sister Peter Marie