"In the month of December, 1915, His Excellency Bishop Charles Edward McDonnell named me the pastor of a Polish parish in Uniondale, Post Office, Hempstead, Nassau County, New York ... "The Christmas season was drawing near, so I made my way to see my future abode, Uniondale. The Church of St. Martha was a mission of Our Lady of Loretto Parish. The pastor of this parish was Father Robert Boyle. With him I set out by horse and buggy to Uniondale to see my future home ... "

It is in these words that the founding pastor of St. Ladislaus, the Rev. Wladyslaw Manka, described the beginnings of St. Ladislaus in an historical booklet published in Polish in 1928.

Father Manka described the church as being a modest building, an old public school rebuilt to serve as a church. It stood alone on a tract of land with only an occasional home in the vicinity. This building is serving today as a temporary library.

While acting as pastor of the new parish, Father Manka lived in the rectory of St. Joseph's Church in Jamaica. On Sundays and holydays he would make the trip to St. Martha's. His first residence as pastor was a rented home on Holly Avenue in East Hempstead, a distance of one mile from the church. The home was rented from a Mr. Verinann, an undertaker, for $25 per month.

The Drive for a New Church

Not only was it inconvenient for the pastor to live at such a distance from the church, but many of the Polish people in the vicinity also felt inconvenienced. Many still traveled to St. Hedwig's in Floral Park to fulfill their spiritual obligations. The people constantly called for a church in Hempstead itself, with an organization called the St. John the Baptist Society taking an active lead in campaigning for the church.
To convince himself of the feasibility of such an undertaking, Father Manka began to take a census of the area. At the same time he began to seek contributions towards the building of a new church. After a great deal of consultation between the Most Reverend Bishop and the pastor and people, a plot of land was finally purchased on the corner of Front Street and Richardson Place. The plot was bought, along with a spacious home, from Floyd Weeks, at a cost of $12,500. Father Manka moved from his temporary residence into the new parish home in Hempstead proper on Thanksgiving Day, 1916. With the help of his people the home was quickly converted into a rectory.

Our first pastor then began to think about what to do for a church. Since the home was so spacious he converted two large rooms into a sacristy and a Sanctuary. After two other rooms were dismantled an addition was made for a church. The new chapel had a seating capacity of 130. Despite the pleasure of our parishioners at their new house of worship, the chapel did prove uncomfortable in the winter months since it was raised from the ground and supported only by posts.

A "National Parish"

Early parish records show us that St. Ladislaus' parishioners came not only from Hempstead, and Uniondale, but also from such far-lying areas as East Meadow, Roosevelt, Freeport, Merrick, Lynbrook, Mineola, Bellmore and Farmingdale. The reason for coming such great distances is that St. Ladislaus was originally founded as a "national parish," defined in Church law as one based on a common language background and embracing speakers of that language, even though they might reside within the territorial limits of another parish.
These same records reveal the names of many people who are still parishioners today. Among those still attending St. Ladislaus are some of the very pioneers of the parish. These are the first names appearing in the Marriage and Baptismal Registers:

Marriage Register-January 30, 1916-Boleslaus Stackiewicz and Julia Ostrowski; February 6-Clement Kozlowski and Alexandra Basara; and February 20-Ladislaus Owczarek and Pauline Azelonis.

Baptismal Register-Boleslaus L. Monkiewicz (January 16, 1916); Czeslawa Krodovil (January 16); Apolonia A. Mroz (January 31); and Lucy O. Grabowski, now Mrs. Edward Travers (January 31).

St. Martha's in Uniondale was a mission of the new church during the early days of the parish. Father Manka would offer one Mass in the chapel in Hempstead and another at St. Martha's. Until January, 1918, however, all parish records appeared under the name of St. Martha. At this time the name St. Ladislaus first made its appearance.

**St. Ladislaus Named Our Parish Patron**

The St. John the Baptist Society, which played such an instrumental role in organizing the Hempstead parish, strongly favored the name of their patron saint as the designation of the new parish. However, Bishop McDonnell assigned St. Ladislaus as the patron of the new church. This decision was unfavorable to many of our initial parishioners, but they quickly sublimated their wishes to the Bishop's decision and soon plans were being made for the development of the parish.

Before long the chapel became too small for the needs of the parish. It was necessary to separate the chapel and rectory, and when the building was relocated a two-story wing was added. This move and addition made it possible for the church to accommodate 300 people.

This new church was used for nearly seven years. In the meantime another addition to the rectory was utilized as a meeting place. It also served as a school for the parish children. The school was in session only during the summer, however, and enrollment was limited to 30 pupils. The church organist, Frank Sadowski, and his wife assisted the pastor with the teaching chores. Unfortunately, the school was soon abandoned because of the expense involved and the scarcity of students.

Many of our older parishioners thought they would never see a new church. In 1926, however, plans were drawn by Gustave Steinbach of New York for the building of a new church. After the bids were opened the contract was awarded to Earl Kaufmann of Floral Park for $92,600.

**The Bishop of Czestochowa Blesses the Cornerstone**

Excavation work for the new building began in April, 1926. During this same year an international Eucharistic Congress was held in Chicago, and Father Manka requested that one of the delegates, Bishop Theodore Kubina of Czestochowa, Poland, bless the cornerstone of the new church. With the consent of Bishop Molloy, Bishop Kubina obliged our pastor, and the cornerstone blessing ceremony was held on Labor Day, September 6, 1926.

The colorful affair began with the reading of the parish history, prepared and read by Father Manka in Polish. The English text was read by Fathers Alexander Cizmowski and Edward F. Glamkowski, our current pastor. The powerful sermon was preached by Father Stanislaus Rysiakiewicz, then pastor of St. Joseph's in Jamaica. The outdoor ceremonies concluded with a talk by the pastor. The clergy, parishioners, and interested visitors then returned to the chapel for Benediction
of the Most Blessed Sacrament, celebrated by Bishop Kubina.

St. Ladislaus Church, which has served our parish since its dedication in 1926, is romanesque in style, with an admixture of Slavonic Gothic. The church measures 126 feet in length, 56 feet in width, in the nave, and 74 feet in the transept. The steeple is 136 feet high.

Red brick and hewn stone (for the facade) were the primary building materials used in constructing the church. A New York artist named Hartman executed the carvings on the doorposts of the beautiful church, which had a total seating capacity of 535. A unique feature of the church is the massive 1,000-pound bell (see photo), a gift of the St. Ladislaus Society.

The First Mass in St. Ladislaus Church

Perhaps the greatest spiritual highlight in the history of any parish is the First Mass in a new church. This memorable day in the history of St. Ladislaus' Parish occurred on June 3, 1927, then celebrated as the feast day of our patron. An added feature of the day was the reception of First Holy Communion by a class of parish children. Vespers and a procession concluded the day's festivities. Father Stanislaus Rysiakiewicz of Jamaica conducted Vespers, and the sermon was preached by Father Anthony Wolosz of Brooklyn.

St. Ladislaus Church was solemnly blessed on January 8, 1928. The Most Rev. Thomas E. Molloy, Bishop of the Brooklyn Diocese, dedicated the church, while Father Paczoski of New York offered a Solemn High Mass. He was assisted by Fathers J. Daszkiewicz as deacon and V. Caso, a. Redemptorist priest, as subdeacon. Father Meceslaus Mrozinski served as master of ceremonies.

Msgr. Boleslaus Puchalski and Father Boyle, pastor of Our Lady of Loretto, served as deacons to the Bishop at the Mass. Father Stanislaus Rysiakiewicz was the preacher. Also present at the ceremonies were: Fathers Alexis Jarka, Conrad Lutz, Joseph Goeller (St. Clare's in Rosedale), and John Brennan (Our Lady of Loretto).

In the years following the dedication of our church there were few changes in the physical appearance of the parish plant. The economic trials brought on by the Great Depression of the early 1930's, and the nation's slow recovery in the latter 30's, put a halt to church building and expansion throughout the country. But Father Manka, our founding pastor, had done the spade work—the heart of the parish, the church, had been built, and our parishioners had a focal point on which to direct their spiritual lives.

Father Regulski Named Our Second Pastor

When Father Manka was transferred to Holy Cross Church in Maspeth in 1940, he was succeeded by another capable administrator - Father John Regulski. During the eight years of Father Regulski's pastorate he too faced trying times. The men of our parish - husbands, fathers, sons and brothers - marched off to defend their country during World War II. Not only were our parishioners called on to make great sacrifices during the war years, but the parish also felt this depletion of its manhood. Parish societies lost vital members, church support lagged, and the entire vitality of our community - as was the case throughout the entire country - suffered while our men were away.

When Father Regulski was transferred to St. Joseph's Church in Jamaica in 1948, he was succeeded by our current pastor, the Rev. Edward F. Glamkowski. The parish was already 33 years old, and there was great need for repairs and replacement of parochial property.
Shortly after Father Glamkowski assumed the pastorate of St. Ladislaus a long time parish connection was severed. St. Martha’s in Uniondale was erected as a distinct and separate parish in 1949. Today our neighboring parish, the former mission, is a vital, flourishing spiritual institution.

Father Glamkowski Begins Building Program

The original rectory, an old building when it was purchased by Father Manka, had already seen its day. There was a need for larger and more suitable quarters for the priests, and shortly after his appointment Father Glamkowski saw that the time was ripe for meeting this need. The original chapel, which had been used as a parish hall since the church was built in 1926, was torn down and in its place the present rectory was built. Father Glamkowski and his assistants occupied the new rectory as of August, 1950.

With the old parish hall dismantled to make way for the rectory, there was need for facilities for various parish functions. Father Glamkowski decided to expand the church basement, and thus provide facilities for society meetings and other functions. With the destruction of the old rectory in December, 1950, the parish's initial building was but a memory. A beautifully landscaped lawn, with a statue of Our Blessed Mother, now occupied the site of the former rectory. Adjoining property was purchased to provide much-needed parking space.

The Felician Sisters

The work of the Felician Sisters in the parish of St. Ladislaus in Hempstead dates back to 1938. In that year the Sisters from the neighboring parish of St. Hedwig in Floral Park, at the request of the pastor, Rev. John A. Regulski, undertook catechetical teaching in conjunction with the teaching of the Polish language.

Through the endeavors of the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Edward F. Glamkowski, the current pastor of St. Ladislaus, a new school and convent have been erected. On August 25, 1963, the first four Felician Sisters arrived to undertake the intellectual and spiritual development of the parish youth.

Here are a few questions and answers that will tell our parishioners something of the background of the outstanding Sisters to whom they have entrusted the spiritual and educational growth of their children.
The Parish School

In Father Manka's historical sketch, prepared in 1928, we find the following statement: "The parish has, besides the church, which is the pride of the parishioners, a large hall and a spacious piece of land on which, before long, a school will rise."

The words of our founding pastor indicate that a school was in the concept of our parish planning for many years, although the school did not become an eventuality until 1963. The parish did have, however, a "Saturday School," staffed in its earliest days by the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, "who came to Hempstead each week from St. Joseph's in Jamaica. These dedicated Sisters taught the children such subjects as Polish reading, writing, and Bible History. The classes lasted from 9 to 3, with the pastor himself teaching religion from 9 to 10. Approximately 200 children attended these weekly classes.

As time went on the secular subjects were discontinued, but the school of religion was kept open. When the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth were no longer able to continue this work the Felician Sisters from St. Hedwig's in Floral Park replaced them. The Felician Sisters from St. Hedwig's never relinquished this task until the construction of St. Ladislaus School.

During the early years of our parish the building of a school was frequently in the prayers and aspirations of the priests and parishioners. It was felt by all concerned that our plant would not be truly complete until a parish school was added. But it was not until 1960 that this desire began to be realized.

Permission Received to Purchase Property

Our present pastor petitioned the Ordinary of the Rockville Centre Diocese, Bishop Walter P. Kellenberg for the necessary permission to build a school. In due time permission was given to the parish to acquire property adjacent to the existing parish plant.

By September, 1962, seven parcels of land had been purchased, the existing buildings were dismantled, and the ground cleared, so that all would be ready for construction. (Three additional parcels of land, to complete the block, were purchased in the Summer of 1963.)

When final approval was given for the construction of a school and convent, no time was lost in selecting an architect for this important project. M. Michael A. Pascucci was chosen and approved as the architect. The plans drawn up by him were approved on March 22, 1962.

When final plans were completed bids for the work were accepted. Young-Rich Associates of New York City entered the lowest bid for the construction work. Msgr. Glamkowski, Mr. Young of the contracting firm, and a representative of the Diocesan Building Office met to sign the contracts in September.

The Groundbreaking Ceremony

It was with great joy that Monsignor, then Father Glamkowski, announced the ground breaking ceremony. This memorable event took place on September 30, 1962, with the pastor and his assistants (Father John F. Cwalina and Father Henry J. Gauer) participating. Also present were Fathers John H. Askin, a resident at St. Ladislaus, and Anton Justs, a recently ordained priest whose parents reside in the parish.
Sisters Mary Salvatore, Mary Virginelle and Mary Josephata from nearby St. Hedwig's were also participants in the ceremony; they represented the Community that would eventually staff the school. Colleen Jones, a great-niece of the Pastor, and a future student of St. Ladislaus School, assisted in the groundbreaking.

Actual construction of the modern, two-story school began within weeks of the groundbreaking. Work was begun simultaneously on the convent which was to house the Sisters.

The Winter of 1962-63 saw the gradual rise of the steel structure of the buildings. In early Spring, 1963, progress was increasingly evident, and it was promised that the building would definitely be ready for occupancy for the 1963-64 school year. With this announcement, registration of the children was planned for March 23, 1963.

**The Parish Welcomes the Felician Sisters**

Sunday, August 25, 1963 was another memorable day in the life of our parish when a warm and joyous welcome was accorded the four Felician Sisters and two lay teachers who were to comprise the first faculty of St. Ladislaus School. They were: Sister Mary Alma, (principal and Superior), Sister Mary Vincent, Sister Mary Benita, and Sister Mary Ferdinand; and Mrs. Agnes Cummings and Mrs. Elvira Guarriello.

All was set for the formal opening of the school on September 10, 1963. This was a moment long-and prayerfully-awaited; a moment when our parish would become truly complete.

The first official act of the school year was a Solemn High Mass attended by faculty, parents, and pupils. The Mass was offered by Msgr. Glamkowski, with Father John J. Mirecki, a parish assistant, as deacon. Father Arceniusz Kosnik of the Pauline Fathers of Doylestown, Pa., was subdeacon, and Father Henry J. Gauer, also a parish assistant, acted as master-of-ceremonies.

After the Gospel of the Mass, Msgr. Glamkowski spoke of his great joy at the opening of the school. He encouraged the parents and told them that their children would receive the very best that could be offered in the way of Catholic education. At the conclusion of Mass each of the Sisters and teachers approached the Communion Rail to receive an individual blessing from Monsignor.

A solemn procession comprising the pastor, the priests, the Sisters, the lay teachers, and all 258 children of the six grades made its way to the school. The procession moved up Richardson Place past the rectory and convent to Prospect Place, halting at the easternmost portal of the school, where all watched Msgr. Glamkowski bless the school. The doors then swung open and the first day of school was begun.

**The Cornerstone Blessing**

The blessing of the cornerstone took place towards the end of the following month, on the Feast of Christ the King, October 27. Msgr. Glamkowski, his assistants, and the Sister-principal each took part in cementing the cornerstone.

The cornerstone itself contained the usual mementos of the occasion, including: a brief history of St. Ladislaus School and Parish; U.S. coins from the years 1962-63; medals depicting Pope John XXIII (in whose reign as Supreme Pontiff the School building was begun) and Pope Paul VI (in whose pontificate it was completed); a photograph of Msgr. Glamkowski; a list of donors and contributors.
to the project; newspaper articles from the Long Island Catholic and the Hempstead Beacon; and the Parish Bulletin for Sunday, October 20, 1963.

Another most important day in the history of our new school was the solemn blessing and dedication of the school by the Most Rev. Walter P. Kellenberg, Bishop of the Diocese. This fitting climax to the years of dreaming, planning, praying and working occurred on Sunday, June 21, 1964. Assisting the Bishop were the Rev. Theodore A. Wegrowski, pastor of St. Isidore's in Riverhead, as deacon; the Rev. Alfred J. Markiewicz of St. Pius X Preparatory Seminary as subdeacon; the Very Rev. Msgr. John R. McGann, secretary to Bishop Kellenberg, as master-of-ceremonies.

Following the dedication of the school was the solemn blessing and dedication of the convent, at which time Bishop Kellenberg also erected the Stations of the Cross in the convent chapel. The day's ceremonies concluded with the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in our parish church.

50 Years of Growth

St. Ladislaus Parish has grown through the years, both in physical and spiritual stature. Today our parish population stands at 850 families, with a total of 3,000 souls - a far cry from the 40 people who faced Father Manka in the original church in Uniondale a half century ago, and a considerable increase over the 230 families who comprised the parish in 1928. The physical growth of the parish plant is evident to any adult who has lived most of his life in the parish; but it is also evident to those who have known the parish only in the recent past.

One fact that is not immediately evident to us is the inner spiritual development of the parish. We can measure statistics in terms of attendance, Communions, Baptisms, etc., but only Our Heavenly Father can truly know the role that St. Ladislaus Parish has played in the spiritual development of the community.

We can be sure that the fruits of the labors of the many priests who served here are inscribed in the mind of God; we can also be confident that many of the people who were members of St. Ladislaus Parish during the past 50 years are now enjoying their eternal reward for their earthly labors under the direction of their devoted priests.

With Prayerful Gratitude ...

Before concluding this brief history of our parish we should express the prayerful gratitude and appreciation of all connected with it to those who have played such a vital part in its development - to the officers and members of our parish societies and organizations, to the devoted parishioners who have never failed to meet the challenges put to them, to the men and women who have volunteered their time and talents to the wide variety of parish projects that have taken place over the years, to our current parish trustees (Joseph A. Leonard and Frank Bachmore) and their able predecessors (including Konstanty Oleksiak, Stanislaus Piekutowski and Ignatius Sliwoski), to the dedicated Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth and the Felician Sisters, and, above all, to the pious pastors and priests who have so skillfully guided the material and spiritual development of St. Ladislaus.

May the faith and efforts of those who contributed to the first 50 years of our parish be rewarded and may it serve to urge us to even greater strides in the years to come.