



Seventy-Five Years Holy Cross Parish.

Diamond Jubilee Church of the Holy Cross 1886-1961,
Minneapolis, MN, p. 13-17. CAP at Orchard Lake.

This summary of the history of Holy Cross parish was written by the Rev. Edward Chmielewski, M.A. Those who wish a more detailed history may obtain one from him directly. We are most grateful to Father Chmielewski for his contribution to our Memory Book.

The earliest Polish immigrants to come to Minnesota arrived in the late 1860's. They came to the smaller rural communities first. A few years later they came also to Minneapolis and St. Paul. In 1884, when the Poles of Minneapolis began to organize their parish, the following Polish communities had already established their respective parishes: Winona, Wilno, New Posen, Duluth, Delano, Czenstochowa, Glencoe, and St. Paul. When St. Adalbert's parish was established in St. Paul in late 1881, the Poles in Minneapolis eagerly began to plan a parish of their own.

1884 A committee of Poles was organized, under the direction of Father Dominic Majer of St. Adalbert's in St. Paul, to establish a Polish parish on the East Side of Minneapolis. Mr. John Ziemkowski was president; Mr. Frank Lilla was treasurer; Mr. Boleslaus Volkman was secretary. Approximately one hundred Poles lived in the community.

1885 Two lots were purchased by the new committee on January 3 for eight hundred and fifty dollars. These were located on the Southeast corner of the present intersection of Seventeenth Avenue and Fourth Street.

1886 The old St. Anthony church, the first church to be built in Minneapolis, was bought and renovated for the sum of twelve hundred dollars. It was moved in early Spring of that year to the parish lots on Seventeenth Avenue and Fourth Street, with the front doors facing Fourth Street.

Father James Pacholski, newly ordained, was sent to be the first pastor of the new Polish parish in Minneapolis.

On August 21, the Articles of Incorporation of the parish of Holy Cross were signed by Bishop John Ireland, Father Augustin Ravoux (vicar general), Father James Pacholski, Mr. Frank Lilla, and Mr. Boleslaus Volkman. The Articles were filed on September 3. On Sunday, September 16, the church and parish were dedicated to the service of God under the title of the Holy Cross by Bishop Ireland. Father Pacholski celebrated the High Mass, and Father Majer and Bishop Ireland preached. Vespers were sung at two o'clock, after which the church hall was consecrated by Father Majer and named after St. Casimir. The parish ministered to all the Slavic people in the community.

1887 A lot next to the church was bought for a rectory, which was constructed later in the year.

1888 Mieczslaus Cardinal Ledochowski, Prefect of the Propaganda, signed and issued the documents creating St. Paul an archdiocese.

The following parish societies were formed: the St. Anthony Society, the Rosary Society, and the St. Wenceslaus Society (Bohemian). The first Holy Cross School was opened in a small bungalow situated behind the church, facing Seventeenth Avenue. It was taught successively by Messrs. Galuszczyński, Kurek, Kwilinski, and was closed then until 1894.

1889 The Ruthenian Catholics of Holy Cross parish formed their own parish and built their church on Seventeenth Avenue and Fifth Street. (Shortly afterward, a large segment of the parish together with their pastor adopted the Orthodox persuasion and thus left the Catholic fold.)

1890 The church was redecorated, although it was becoming more and more inadequate for the increasing congregation.

1891 The Slovaks formed the parish of St. Cyril. The Holy Cross Society was formed.

1892 On May 15, the cornerstone of the new Holy Cross church was laid. The architect was Anthony Wasielewski, a member of the parish. The church had a plain brick exterior. It was 120 feet long, 46 feet wide and seated 500 people. It was blessed in October by Archbishop Ireland.

The old church was moved to the Southwest corner of Fifth Street and Seventeenth Avenue and was used first as a winter chapel and then as the second Holy Cross school.

1893 This was the year of the Great Fire which spread, under a gusty wind, from Nicollet Island across the river to the East Side "Flats," burning everything in its path from Sixth Avenue to Thirteenth Avenue, from the river to Marshall Street, making hundreds of Slavic families homeless and destitute.

1894 Three Franciscan Sisters of the Congregation of Our Lady of Lourdes arrived at Holy Cross from Rochester, Minnesota to teach school in the old church.

Father James Pacholski was assigned to St. Stanislaus parish at Winona, and was replaced by Father Henry Jajeski (Jazdzewski) of St. Casimir's parish, St. Paul.

1898 A few rooms were added to the old church school because of the increased enrollment.

1899 On July 2, Father Ignatius Murlowski, the first parishioner to be ordained a priest, said his first Solemn Mass at Holy Cross. He died of cancer in 1903 at the age of thirty-two.

1900 Five lots were bought on the Southwest corner of Fourth Street and Seventeenth Avenue for a sum of eighteen hundred dollars to accommodate the proposed new school.

This was a period of increased immigration and brought to the parish not only the problem of expanding facilities but also of adjusting the new parishioners to their new surroundings and to the obligations of America parish life.

1905 The foundation of the new school was laid in November.

1906 The new school was completed at a cost of fifty thousand dollars and opened for the Fall term: It was blessed by Father Jajeski in October. There was a public opening of the new auditorium in December.

Galleries were added to the church to increase the seating capacity from five hundred to eight hundred.

1911 Father Francis Matz, newly ordained, was appointed the first assistant pastor of Holy Cross parish.

1912 Father Frank Rakowski, graduate of the old church-school house, was ordained a priest and said his first Solemn Mass at Holy Cross, and was then assigned to the parish as assistant pastor.

1913 St. Constantine's parish was formed.

1914 In January, Father Jajeski returned to St. Casimir's parish in St. Paul as its pastor. Father Ambrose Kryjewski became the new pastor of Holy Cross.

The parish was in a state of turmoil for some years now due to a variety of factors, such as trusteeism, conflict of personalities, deliberate outside agitation, and sundry other causes.

These led to a permanent schism in the parish and the establishment of the Sacred Heart Polish National church.

St. Hedwig's parish was formed during this year from Holy Cross parish, with Father Max Kiesmit as pastor.

1915 Father Ambrose Kryjewski was transferred to Osseo, and Father Joseph Cieminski became the new pastor of Holy Cross. His greatest work was to reunify the parish and rekindle the flame of Faith and devotion among the parishioners.

1916 All Saints parish was formed from Holy Cross. On March 4, Father Jajeski was shot in his confessional at St. Casimir's by a distraught woman. Holy Cross operated a dining room at the State Fair in order to gain funds for the Polish War Relief.

1917 The United States entered into the First World War.

Polish envoys spoke at the Holy Cross to recruit volunteers for the Polish Army. Recruiting Headquarters were at 1610- 3rd Street N.E. The recruits went to Niagara Falls, Canada, for training.

1918 Twenty-eight Holy Cross boys joined the Polish Army. A unit of the Polish Red Cross was opened in the parish. Archbishop Ireland died on September 25.

1919 The new Holy Cross rectory was built. Archbishop Austin Dowling was installed as archbishop of St. Paul.

1927 Archbishop Dowling laid the cornerstone of the new Holy Cross church on a rainy July 4.

1928 The statues of Sts. Cyril and Methodius were blessed by Archbishop Dowling at the Slavic Chapel in the St. Paul Cathedral. Father Cieminski preached on the occasion.

The new Holy Cross church was dedicated on September 16. Archbishop Dowling blessed the church. Father Cieminski celebrated the Solemn High Mass, assisted by Father Vincent Worzalla and Andrew Wojciak. Monsignor James Pacholski, the first pastor, preached the sermon.

1930 Archbishop Austin Dowling died.

1932 Archbishop John Gregory Murray was installed as archbishop of St. Paul. Father Joseph Cieminski was transferred to Winona, and Father Vincent Worzalla became the new pastor of Holy Cross.

1936 Holy Cross celebrated its Golden Jubilee on September 20 with a parish High Mass, at which Father Frank Rakowski preached. Solemn Vespers were sung at 8 P.M., at which Monsignor F. G. Ostrowski of Chicago preached.

1939 Pope Plus XI died; Pope Pius XII was elected the new Pope. The parish church was redecorated and its new marble altar was installed.

1941 The National Eucharistic Congress was held in St. Paul. The Second World War was begun.

The parish contributed to the war effort during the remaining years of the war by offering its prayers and sacrifices, and the lives of many of its members. The school children saved their pennies to buy War Bonds and collected tons of waste paper for the war effort.

1942 The new Holy Cross convent was blessed.

1947 Father Worzalla was made a Domestic Prelate.

1950 On April 30, the new Holy Cross School was dedicated.

1951 Monsignor Worzalla left Holy Cross to assume the pastorate of Holy Trinity parish in South St. Paul, while Father Joseph Siegienski of that parish became the new pastor of Holy Cross.

1953 The new Holy Cross Recreation Center was blessed by Archbishop Murray.

1955 The 32nd Quadrenniel Convention of the Polish National Alliance was held in Minneapolis. Archbishop Murrery celebrated a Pontifical Mass at Holy Cross, at which Father Ladislaus Sledz preached.

1956 Archbishop Murray died; Archbishop William O. Brady succeeded him.

1957 Pope Plus XII died; Pope John XX III was elected the new Pope. The parish church was redecorated. Father Siegienski was made a Domestic Prelate.

1961 Holy Cross parish celebrates its Diamond jubilee.