



Centennial of St. Stanislaus Church Nanticoke

100th Anniversary 1875-1975 St. Stanislaus Parish, Nanticoke, PA, p. 5-18. CAP at Orchard Lake.

FOREWORD

This history is written to commemorate the Centennial of St. Stanislaus Church. It is also a timely contribution to the Bicentennial observance of our country. It contains the early history of the Parish and a historical profile of the early Polish settlers of Nanticoke; thus contributing to the total story of America.

This historical summary is dedicated to the pioneer parishioners, clergy, and Sisters, whose deep faith, loving sacrifice, and perseverance made the Parish of St. Stanislaus a reality. We should dedicate ourselves to preserve this rich heritage for generations to come.

THE EARLIEST IMMIGRANTS [Poles in American History]

The establishment of St. Stanislaus Church was probably the first organized effort of the group of Polish immigrants who settled in Nanticoke after the

Civil War. The organization of the Polish language church within a decade of their arrival in Nanticoke emphasizes the importance of the Roman Catholic Church to the Polish people and how inextricably their language, culture, and religion are intertwined.

The newcomers from Poland had an impact on the very earliest days of American History — Jamestown, Virginia — in 1607. Then during the American Revolution, the great Polish heroes, Tadeusz Kosciuszko and Casimir Pulaski, became American heroes. The passion of the Poles for liberty and high idealism in the service of God and country is well known. History records the bravery and accomplishments of the Polish Jamestown settlers, the two Polish Revolutionary war heroes; and also three Polish generals of Civil War fame — Karge, Krzyzanowski, and Schoepf. Two Nanticoke Poles who participated in the Civil War were John Szumowski, who arrived here in 1855, and Joseph Stachowiak. This early background sets the pace of the fearless, enterprising, freedom-loving Poles who settled in Nanticoke.

POLISH IMMIGRANT SETTLERS IN NANTICOKE

In the latter half of the 19th Century Poland was partitioned and occupied by Germany, Russia, and Austria. Poles left partitioned Poland and came to America seeking freedom from political oppression and better economic conditions. Those who settled in Nanticoke were primarily from the province of Poznan where they had suffered intolerable conditions which included being forbidden to use their native tongue, their schools being totally subjected to German rule and restrictions, and being conscripted into the German army.

The early Polish emigres who settled in Nanticoke were a part of the large wave of Polish immigration to America which commenced in the 1850's. According to the Susquehanna Coal Co. records entrance of Poles into the Anthracite region can be traced to 1868. One of the earliest couples to arrive was Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Gorecki in 1857 and by 1872 there were over 100 Poles residing in Nanticoke. These early Polish immigrants had heard of this town and available jobs here through letters sent to relatives in Prussian Poland by German settlers in Nanticoke. After settling here, the Poles, in turn, sent letters encouraging their relatives and friends to move here. The letters described Nanticoke as a town of economic opportunity due to the booming mining industry and business opportunities.

The new immigrants were strangers in a strange land and found communication their first barrier. Although the majority spoke Polish and German, most of the earlier settlers spoke only English. Since the prevailing industry was coal mining, most of the immigrants encountered this language barrier when they applied for jobs in the collieries. Because some of their surnames were so difficult to pronounce, their English speaking "bosses" often renamed them. Thus Rzasa became Ronsa, Hajdukiewicz became Douglas, Sosnowski became Poland, Pezynski became Pease, and Wegrzunowicz became Wintergrass. Many laborers had difficulty becoming certified as miners since an oral test in the English language was required. The fact that within a short time the majority of certified miners were Polish is testimony of their triumph over the language barrier.

RELIGION AND THE POLISH CULTURE

Religion and language were inseparable to a Pole. These Poles had fled from a Catholic country to one predominantly Protestant. Their Catholic Church had served and guided them ever since 966 A.D. when Poland's first historical ruler Mieszko was baptized and Poland was converted to Christianity. When the earlier settlers taunted them and ridiculed their language, religion, and customs, they found this incredible. Not to worship in their own way was the greatest indignity a Pole could suffer. Often as they walked to church, they were harassed by name-calling and rock-throwing. Finally, the Kosciuszko Guard, a patriotic society composed of veterans of the Prussian cavalry, came to their aid. Mounted on their horses, the Guard dispersed the crowd with drawn swords. Thus they displayed their intent to remain Catholic Poles.

The Poles have played a vital role in the history of the Catholic Church in America. Panna Maria, established in Texas in 1854, was the first Polish parish in America. The fact that the Poles have built 800 churches and schools in the U.S. is proof of their dedication and generosity. By 1899

there were 13 Polish congregations in this Diocese. At present there are 46 Polish churches. It is significant that St. Stanislaus is one of 50 Polish churches celebrating centennial jubilees throughout the U.S. this year. In the Scranton diocese, it shares this honor with only one other church, St. Mary's of Blossburg; but, in Luzerne County, it has the distinction of being the first Polish Catholic church. It remained the only Polish church in Nanticoke until the Holy Trinity Church was created in 1894, followed by St. Mary's in 1901.

A MISSION FIELD

Prior to 1875, Nanticoke and the other mining towns in the vicinity were mission fields with services conducted sporadically in private homes by missionaries. In the interim, on Sundays and Holy Days, Poles gathered in homes in Pikes Peak, Honey Pot or Dziol (Jowel Hill), West Nanticoke, to recite the Rosary and sing hymns in memory of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Polish missionaries from Chicago arrived periodically to hear confessions in Polish, as well as offer Holy Mass. Father Szulak was one of these Jesuit missionaries who cared for their spiritual needs. Baptisms were conferred by him in Nanticoke but recorded at St. Nicholas in Wilkes-Barre. Masses often took place in the Frank Miklosz home, which he himself built in 1869, on Prospect Street near Broad Street. Mass and the Sacraments were important to them regardless of where it took place.

REVEREND PETER NAGEL AND ST. NICHOLAS

These devout Poles had a strong desire to attend services held in a church. As there were no Polish language churches, the German-speaking Poles chose to walk the long distance to Wilkes-Barre to attend the only German language church, St. Nicholas, organized in 1856. Early St. Nicholas ledgers, written in Latin or German, and signed by Rev. Nagel, Rev. Mattingly, or Rev. Deibel record 36 baptisms and 10 marriages of Nanticoke Polish settlers between 1872 and 1874. Rev. Peter Nagel had become first resident pastor of St. Nicholas in 1858 and had charge of all German congregations in Northeastern Pennsylvania. At that time the Scranton diocese had not yet been formed and the Philadelphia diocese comprised the entire state of Pennsylvania. Not until 1868 was the Scranton diocese created, with Rev. Dr. William O'Hara as the first Bishop.

Most dear to a Pole are his church and his home. Even before their most pressing problems were solved, these Polish settlers began to take active steps toward building their own parish. Their numbers had increased and solidarity gave them strength, satisfaction, and a sense of purpose. It was Rev. Nagel, in 1874, who undertook the task of helping them organize. This was the same year that Nanticoke was incorporated as a borough.

The first parish document is an old ledger in which is recorded a list of the first 120 contributors and dated February 22 and 23, 1874. A total of \$800 was collected toward construction of their church, under the patronage of St. Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr of Cracow. The following is a translation of the Preface to the ledger which was originally written in both Polish and German by Father Nagel:

"Record of contributions for the building of the Polish Catholic Church in Nanticoke, to be named St. Stanislaus. To certify that this is a list of voluntary donors for the construction

of the first Polish Catholic Church of Nanticoke. (Signed) Rev. Nagel More donations in July, August, and September of 1874 increased the total to \$3,167 with a total of 241 donors for that year. The next entry is September, 1875, when \$79.05 was collected for "support of the local priest, building of the Chapel, and various church needs." By 1875 additional new names brought the list of donors to 322.

A committee was selected and funds were collected. The Susquehanna Coal Co. offered a small plot of ground near a creek at the corner of Church and Maple Streets. A frame structure was built, adequate to serve their immediate needs. Made of wood, the original church was a modest, fifty-foot long building, erected on the site of the present church. The early settlers contributed their labor and used their limited funds for materials. Rev. Eugene Zychowicz, a Franciscan missionary, celebrated the first mass in the Polish language. Upon learning of the Polish services, Polish inhabitants of the neighboring villages of Newport, Hanover Township, and Plymouth, attended the church, arriving by horseback, horse and buggy, and by foot. Some traveled from Pittston, a journey of ten miles. Rev. Zychowicz remained at St. Stanislaus until June 1, 1876, a period of 9 months. During that time he conferred many baptisms, officiated at marriages, and conducted funerals which are recorded in an early church ledger.

The parish was served from June 1, 1876, until October, 1877, by Rev. Joseph Juskiewicz, a Franciscan Missionary, and from July 29 to September 20, 1877, by Rev. C. Mattingly.

FATHER GRAMLEWICZ, THE FIRST PASTOR

The first permanent pastor at St. Stanislaus Church was Rev. Ignatz Benevenuto Gramlewicz. Born in Poznan in 1837, he was ordained in 1862. He fled from Prussia in 1875 because he had helped a brother missionary escape over the border to flee from religious persecution resulting from Bismarck's "Kultur Kampf" policy. Rev. Gramlewicz arrived in October 1, 1877, having been assigned to St. Stanislaus by Bishop O'Hara. Having spent his first year from November, 1876, to October, 1877, in Blossburg, he was aware of the challenges facing him in a pioneer mining village.

On October 18, 1877, Rev. Gramlewicz recorded the deed for the two plots of land which were transferred by the Susquehanna Coal Co. to Bishop O'Hara for the token consideration of one dollar. The one parcel had 150 feet of road frontage on the north side of Church Street where the church was located. The other lot provided for a 250 foot frontage on the opposite side of the street. A parcel of land adjoining the St. Francis Cemetery was also donated by the Susquehanna Coal Co. The deed for the cemetery was recorded on October 15, 1877. By 1878, the first brick church was built and dedicated on November 11, 1878 by Bishop O'Hara. The membership of the church continued to expand with the population growth of the borough which by 1880 was 3,884. As a result, it became necessary to enlarge the church in 1883 and again in 1886, when it was reconstructed into the shape of a cross.

EARLY EDUCATION

Besides promoting the family's welfare, Polish parents emphasized the importance of religion and education. With their deep respect for education, church classes were begun almost simultaneously with the building of the church. They were held originally in the basement of the church soon after its reconstruction in 1883. The children attended one of five public schools in existence at that time, namely: West Main, Centennial, and East Main (81 E. Main), Hanover (Middle Road), and Honey Pot. In order to preserve their Polish heritage, educated women such as Mrs. Anthony Klidzio, a former governess in Poland, Mrs. Twarowski, and later Mrs. Budziński taught classes in the language, history and literature of Poland. From 1882 to 1885 George Knoll was not only an organist but also an instructor. Robinson's Directory of Plymouth and Nanticoke of 1889 states that St. Stanislaus had a membership of 2,000 and there were two lay teachers, Charles Okulewicz and Vincent Małkowski, who instructed the 230 children in the parochial school. By 1890, the Parish school attendance was 390 requiring the services of three lay teachers. At that time the parish had four hundred families — miners, farmers, storekeepers, grocers, butchers, saloon keepers, one druggist, and one undertaker.

ARRIVAL OF THE SISTERS

About 1890, Rev. Gramilewicz secured the services of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth from Chicago. Classes were still held in the church basement and the Sisters lived in a small house on Church Street until a convent was built in 1891-92. The first parishioner to enter the religious life was Augusta Chrzan who in 1894 joined the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth from Chicago. They were succeeded by the Felician Sisters from Detroit in 1893. St. Stanislaus made its next contribution to the religious life in 1894 when two of her parishioners, Anastasia Gorski and Bronislawa Chylla, entered the community of the Felician Sisters. After 6 years the Felician Sisters departed and the children were instructed by lay teachers. For one year they were taught by the School Sisters of St. Francis.

THE BERNARDINE SISTERS

The Bernardine Sisters were invited to teach on a full-time basis. The Bernardine Order came into existence more than 5 centuries ago in Poland. Four of them came to the United States in 1894, to teach in Mt. Carmel. In 1895 they moved to Reading where they established a home and convent. From there, the first group of Sisters to arrive at St. Stanislaus was: Mother M. Magdalen, Superior; Sisters Clara, Yoland, and Kunegunda. The basement school consisted of two large rooms where classes numbered in the 80's. By 1906 there were 150 First Holy Communicants. Various Sisters of the Community continued the difficult pioneer work until the death of Rev. Gramlewicz in 1910.

FATHER GRAMLEWICZ'S CONTRIBUTIONS

At the request of Poles in Glen Lyon, Rev. Gramlewicz undertook the task of organizing St. Adalbert's, the first Polish parish there, in 1889. Since the members had previously attended St. Stanislaus, Rev. Gramlewicz prevailed upon Bishop O'Hara to name Rev. Zychowicz, his

assistant at St. Stanislaus, as its first Pastor. During Plymouth's pastoral troubles, from 1889 - 1890, Rev. Gramlewicz or his assistant, Rev. A. Zychowicz, assumed responsibility for their spiritual needs. He was also administrator of St. Joseph's Slovak Parish, built in 1888. During 1905 and 1906 he printed a Polish newspaper, "PRZEGLAD". It was the only successor to "THE GAZETA Z NANTICOKE", a Polish newspaper published by Zygmund Twarowski from 1890 to 1893. The Polish press kept the Poles informed about the intellectual, social, economic, and political trends in the United States and Poland. Its timely advice and explanations assisted in the transition into American culture. Rev. Gramlewicz was also instrumental in acquiring the first pump organ for St. Stanislaus. Many parishioners recall pumping the organ for Mr. Kozakiewicz, organist until 1910. They also recall Mr. Kozakiewicz teaching them catechism until the arrival of the Nuns. Many also remember Rev. Gramlewicz's ferocious dogs and his pigeons.

SOCIETIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

The parish was the hub around which the life of the early Polish settler revolved. While satisfying his spiritual needs, it fostered religious and patriotic societies. Besides the spiritual and social benefits derived, many material advantages were also gained. They also kept alive the religious and cultural traditions of the homeland.

Under the guidance of Rev. Gramlewicz societies and organizations were founded and flourished. Most church societies were of a dual nature, offering both sick and death benefits, as well as upholding the Catholic religion. The earliest was the Order of St. Joseph, established in 1884 and disbanded in 1898. The Fraternal Order of St. Mary's, which included both sexes, was organized in 1892 and disbanded in 1900. This was a Temperance Society and prohibited drinking alcoholic beverages. (For statements of purpose, by-laws and charter members, see Appendix.)

Robinson's Directory of Plymouth and Nanticoke for 1889 lists the following societies: Stanislaus Society — meets at St. Stanislaus, 2nd Sunday after payday. President — Joseph Krauser; Sons of Poland — meets at St. Stanislaus, 1st Sunday after payday. President — Stanley Sakowski; The Guard of Pulaski, #1 — meets at St. Stanislaus the 1st Sunday after payday. Captain — Herman Kempa; Guard of Kosciuszko — meets at Rr. 39 E. Main. Captain — Frank Patrzykowski; Polish Patriotic Society, #100 — meets at Wladislaus Kanjorski's. President — John Sosnowski; and Jagiella Society — meets at James Hall, Market St. President — Thomas Butkiewicz.

The first fraternal order to appear on the local scene was the Polish Roman Catholic Union organized in 1878. Their 18th national convention was held in Nanticoke in 1881. In 1890 the population of Nanticoke was 10,044, approximately one-fifth of whom were Poles in attendance at St. Stanislaus. This increase in population fostered fraternal and benevolent associations of national scope: 1890 — Polish Union; 1900 — Polish Roman Catholic Union; 1905 — Polish National Alliance; 1909 — Ladies Auxiliary, Polish National Alliance; 1905 — Polish Falcons; 1909 — Polish National Union of America; 1910 — Polish Workman's Aid Fund. Besides their prime purpose, these organizations had in common the provisions of care for newly arrived immigrants. Credit goes to these Poles for establishing Nanticoke's first public library in 1892,

which was first located at the home of Thomas Butkiewicz and moved to a hall on Market Street in 1896. Meetings of the various organizations and societies were held in the church basement or in halls until the Polish Falcon's built a hall in 1912. The Poles then had a place for physical fitness drills, dances, amateur theatricals, concerts, etc.

In these social clubs and community centers, Polish songs, rhythmic folk dances, lively music, and stirring dramas were performed and perpetuated. Gems of Polish literature were read and many episodes from Polish history were related. The meeting place was also an exchange for information. The contribution of the church societies and organizations is one of the brightest chapters in Polish American history.

In 1894, a misunderstanding (among the parishioners) caused a number of families to drop out of the parish. This group became the nucleus for the Holy Trinity Church of Nanticoke.

After the death of Father Gramlewicz in 1910, differences arose among the parishioners relative to the appointment of a new pastor. Once more a number of families left the parish and joined other Catholic parishes in Nanticoke. These differences were resolved with the appointment of Rev. Valentine Biczysko as pastor.

Rev. Gramlewicz died on May 31, 1910 and was buried in St. Stanislaus Cemetery, the only priest to have been buried there. Having administered the physical and spiritual growth of this parish for 33 years, he left it in good financial standing with the treasury reflecting a balance of \$7,000. His last ledger of 1909 records a membership of 800 male members. (See Appendix) Throughout these trying years, Rev. Gramlewicz toiled among his flock functioning not only as a priest, but also as a builder, a financier, and a judge. It took heroic efforts to face and solve grave issues of those days. His death ended the pioneer era.

REV. VALENTINE BICZYSKO, SECOND PASTOR

Rev. V. Biczysko was born in Poznan, Poland on February 11, 1883. He came to America in May, 1898 at the age of 15 to join his father in Scranton, where

they were later joined by the rest of his family. At the time of entry at St. Thomas College, Father Biczysko could not speak one word of English, but by the end of the year, he was at the head of his class. Rev. Biczysko studied theology at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Seminary at Orchard Lake, Michigan and St. Bonaventure Seminary at Allegheny, N.Y. He was ordained in Scranton by Bishop Hoban on July 3, 1908. Rev. Biczysko's first assignment was assistant to Rev. Gramlewicz at St. Stanislaus until his transfer in April, 1909 to Dickson City. His first parishes included Church of the Holy Transfiguration, W. Hazleton and St. Cecelia's, Exeter. On January 1, 1914 Rev. Biczysko became the second pastor of St. Stanislaus; the congregation then numbered 300 families.

BUILDING AND EXTENSIVE RENOVATION PROGRAM

Under Rev. Biczysko's dynamic leadership, St. Stanislaus grew by leaps and bounds, thereby necessitating the construction of new facilities as well as many innovations in existing church

structures. Particularly interested in advancing education, his first project was the erection of two additional classrooms under the church, completed in 1917. The first major steps in renovating the church were taken in 1921-22 in preparation for the 50th anniversary when the church steeple was moved from the rear to the front, and a front vestibule added. Brick siding and a new tile roof were added, and the interior was completely renovated and new pews installed at a total cost of \$50,000.

In 1933 a large building was constructed adjoining the convent providing additional classrooms and a large auditorium for school and parish functions. The convent was painted and repaired.

The last extensive improvements took place in preparation for the 75th Anniversary in 1950, when renovations were made in the church, convent, school, and rectory. Donations by individuals and societies included a pulpit, two tabernacles, carpeting, and other sanctuary and church fittings. This vast program was the result of the pastor's untiring efforts and able leadership.

RETURN OF THE BERNARDINES

At the request of Rev. Biczysko, the Bernardine Sisters returned in September, 1914. Sister Bronisława and three other Sisters undertook the tasks of teaching and caring for the sanctuary and sacristy. In 1920 as the population of Nanticoke increased to 22,614, St. Stanislaus' membership grew correspondingly to 428 families or 1,964 parishioners, resulting in larger school enrollment. Between 1924 and 1929 the enrollment increased so rapidly that six Sisters were engaged in the teaching of 250 pupils in eight grades. When mining hit its peak in 1930, the population was 26,043, and the enrollment increased in 1934 to 305 pupils, the highest in the history of the school.

With the decline of the coal mining industry after the 1940's, the population fell to a low 15,061 in 1960 and 14,641 in 1970. From 1945 to 1954 there were five teaching Sisters employed. Because of economic conditions necessitating the migration of young families to larger industrial cities, the enrollment gradually diminished to 113 pupils taught by four Sisters. Today St. Stanislaus Parochial is consolidated with that of St. Mary's under the name of Blessed John Neumann. The staff consists of Sister M. Hilda, principal and eighth grade teacher, Sister M. Hildegard, and Sister M. Mercedes, teachers of the sixth and fourth grades respectively, and Sister M. Claudine, Domestic Sister.

Only fleeting memories now remain of the excellent bilingual training and education in both Polish and English offered in grades one through eight at "St. Stan's" under the fine tutelage of the Sisters. However, the tradition of scholastic excellence, discipline, and spiritual faith shown by them continues to be reflected in the adult lives of their erstwhile students.

St. Stanislaus has been extremely fortunate and grateful to have had a plethora of dedicated, diligent Sisters over the years. Under the capable administration of the following Superiors, the Sisters exuded a positive influence over every aspect of parish life. Their example of spiritual faith, self-sacrifice, and zealous service helped mold the lives of all with whom they came into contact.

SOCIETIES

Under Rev. Biczysko's guidance, societies continued to flourish. Through their money-raising projects, they helped to liquidate the debts of the parish.

At the request of Rev. Biczysko, donations for a new organ were made by a number of societies. They were St. Francis, St. Kazmir, St. Valentine, St. Anthony, St.

Jadwiga, St. Stanislaus, Sacred Heart, and Pulaski Guard. St. Cecelia's Choir, which was reactivated in 1914, raised \$200 through benefit affairs. By 1916 sufficient funds were raised, and the first pipe organ was installed. A modern pipe organ replaced the old one in 1923 for the 50th Anniversary.

Some interesting money-raising projects from 1919 to 1923 for the 50th Anniversary church restoration were: the annual pre-Lenten Suppers, the annual Jaselka in January at the State Theater, benefit moving pictures at the Rex, Passion Plays at the State, an Indian Show, and Theater productions by the school children.

In 1930 there were four societies: the Holy Rosary, Sacred Heart, Holy Name, and Blessed Virgin Mary Sodality. By 1951 the following were added: Ladies' Auxiliary, Women's Catholic Council, Holy Name Athletic Club, Third Order of St. Francis, The Orphanage Unit, and the Defense Unit.

In 1951 the parish, which had 525 families numbering 2,632 persons, was free of debt. This was accomplished through additional affairs such as festivals and bazaars on the school grounds.

HUMANITARIAN AND PUBLIC BENEFACTOR

Rev. Biczysko was not only a very able administrator, devoting his time and attention to his pastoral work and to the interests of his church, and congregation, but he was also prominently active in other directions. Both he and his parish were very active in charitable and patriotic affairs. He gave freely of his experience and labor to all worthwhile civic and benevolent enterprises and similar undertakings. When the flu epidemic swept Nanticoke during World War I, it left many children homeless. This created an immediate need for an orphanage to provide for children of Polish extraction. Father and the parish played a large role in its establishment. Built in Sheatown, St. Stanislaus Orphanage was dedicated by Bishop Hoban in 1918. Under the direction of Rev. A. Zychowicz, its first president, on February 22, 1918, six Bernardine nuns, with Sister Philippine as instructor, were placed in charge of the 200 orphans.

Rev. Biczysko served as president of the board from 1920 - 1928 and also two later terms. His parish was the main support of the Polish Orphanage for 10 years, contributing \$25,000, more than any other Polish parish. Fund-raisers, such as the St. Stanislaus Charity Balls, begun in 1920, yearly picnics at Sans Souci Park, were memorable occasions for all. By 1928 enough money was raised to pay off the mortgage with a balance of \$46,000 for the Chapel Fund and \$20,000 in the Emergency Fund.

No longer had an orphanage, St. Stanislaus Institute, since 1940, provided resident treatment for dependent, neglected, or slightly emotional disturbed children between the ages of five and sixteen. For 56 years it has sheltered and cared for 8,000 needy children. This has been a tremendous record of sacrifice and love by priests like Rev. Biczysko, by Sisters, and by parishioners who worked so hard during all those years.

During both World Wars, the parish was foremost in the U.S. Bond Drives and also in Polish Relief activities. Vitally interested in the Catholic League for Religious Assistance to Poland, it had the distinction of being in first place in the entire Diocese in 1958 for its contribution to this cause — over \$15,000. It also contributed many thousands of dollars worth of goods to the American Relief for Poland. Father Biczysko's steadfast devotion to the cause of Poland earned him the highest award of Poland and he was decorated with the Order of Polonia Restituta. As chaplain of the Polish Union he also extended aid to Polish immigrants.

As members of the Polish American Congress, Father Biczysko and the parish were active participants. The parish paid two delegates to attend the national conventions. In 1920 Michael Swiderski and Joseph Gruszkiewicz went to Washington; in 1944 Mrs. Theodozia Kolenda and Mrs. Lillian Niziolek attended the one at Buffalo.

Father Biczysko had also been a most generous benefactor of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Seminary. His loyalty and his outstanding gifts to that institution brought most deserved recognition when he was honored with the highest decoration, the Fidelitas medal for fidelity in serving God and country. His generosity and unselfishness had no parallel.

In 1929 Rev. Biczysko took his first vacation. While he visited the Holy Lands, Rome, and Poland for three months, Rev. A. Bocianski, a temporary appointment, substituted while he was away. September 29, 1929 a Welcome Home Banquet was held. Revisiting Poland in 1939 while on a three-month tour, he barely escaped through Budapest before the Nazi invasion.

TRIBUTES

Rev. Biczysko's Silver Jubilee in 1933 and his Golden Jubilee in 1958 were celebrated most fittingly with banquets attended by parishioners and guests to pay him homage and tender him the tribute he so richly deserved. The record of his services and good works is far more eloquent than words.

In ill health for several years, Rev. Biczysko collapsed while out walking on April 18, 1961. His sudden death caused great sorrow throughout the parish and community. He was buried in the family plot in Scranton.

Father Biczysko had served the parishioners of St. Stanislaus as pastor for 47 years, longer than any other pastor to date. Historically these years covered three great crises, two World Wars and the Great Depression. Throughout these many years of adversity Father Biczysko remained a bulwark of strength and courage and provided exceptional spiritual leadership. The essence of priestly dignity, Rev. Biczysko sought to keep alive the spiritual legacy of his forebears.

REV. FRANK BARLIK, ADMINISTRATOR

After Rev. Biczysko's death in 1961, Rev. Frank Barlik, who had been assistant to Father since November, 1960, was appointed as administrator. Rev. Barlik was born in 1919 in Duryea; after completing studies at St. Charles College, Catonsville and at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, he was ordained in 1946 by Bishop Hafey. Rev. Barlik made some parish improvements and at the request of the Mother Superior at Reading for better living conditions for the Sisters, Father Barlik instituted plans for a convent. The old one was razed, and the ground converted into a parking area. In 1962 the convent and an addition to the school were completed at a cost of \$155,000. In September, 1963 Father Barlik was transferred to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, Lake Silkworth, where he died suddenly in 1967, age 48.

During his short tenure at St. Stanislaus, he was a conscientious administrator and a dedicated priest, and the parish regretted his transfer.

REV. STANISLAUS BANAS, THIRD PASTOR

Rev. Stanley Banas became the third permanent pastor of St. Stanislaus. Born in Philadelphia in 1914, he completed his studies at Sts. Cyril and Methodius, Orchard Lake, and was ordained in 1939 by Bishop Wm. Hafey. He spent two years as an assistant pastor at Hawley, and then the next four years as assistant to His Excellency, Most Rev. Henry Klonowski, Aux. Bishop of the Diocese and pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary, Scranton. From 1945 to 1948 he was administrator of St. Joseph's, Port Griffith and continued as its pastor until 1957. In October of that year he was assigned as pastor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Lake Silkworth. On September 25, 1963 Rev. Banas was transferred to St. Stanislaus.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Within one year, repairs to the church exterior and the rectory interior were made, and half of a \$30,000 debt was cleared. By 1969 a new rectory was built at a cost of \$154,000. The parish responded to the Diocesan Project Expansion Program by contributing \$42,500. The parish and the St. Stanislaus Guild continue to support the new St. Stanislaus Medical Care Center. Rev. Banas urged and received parish support for the Medical Care Center, which was begun in 1970 but prematurely opened in response to the acute need for medical facilities when "Agnes" flood disaster patients had to evacuate hospitals and nursing homes.

During Rev. Banas' pastorate some of the Second Vatican Directives were introduced and carried into effect, namely: the English language replacing the traditional Latin, the Altar facing the congregation, and congregational participation.

Rev. Banas was feted at a Welcome Banquet in 1963, at his 25th Jubilee Banquet in 1964, and his Farewell Banquet in 1974, attesting to the respect and esteem in which the parishioners held him. Within his tenure of 11 years, Rev. Banas proved himself an able administrator and compiled an impressive record of achievements, both materially and spiritually. Because of his friendly, warm personality, he was often invited to participate in many civic and fraternal affairs.

In September, 1974, he was appointed pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul, Plains.

REV. LEONARD NOVAK, FOURTH PASTOR

Rev. Leonard Novak, the present pastor, is the fourth permanent pastor in 100 years. Born in Duryea in 1931, he studied at St. Mary's College and at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, Orchard Lake, Michigan and was ordained in 1956 by Bishop Jerome Hannan. His appointments as Assistant Pastor included St. Michael's, Old Forge; St. Stanislaus, Hazleton; and Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Scranton. He was appointed administrator of All Saints, Dunmore, and in September, 1974, he assumed his first pastorate — at St. Stanislaus.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Rev. Novak has already made a few more changes to comply with the Second Vatican Council Directives such as the appointment of Lectors, purchase of missalettes, parishioner presentation of gifts for the Eucharist and standing while receiving Communion. Pre-lenten beef dinners have been continued as well as the making and selling of pierogi and chrusciki by the societies. Sundays at 9:00 A.M. Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) religious instruction classes are taught by Assistant Pastor Rev. Richard Kvedrovicz, who is also directing the youth activities. Both Father Novak and Father Kvedrovicz are actively engaged with monthly calendar events during the 100th anniversary year.

This "Calendar of Events" included a number of religious and social activities that were successfully planned and conducted with the cooperation of the membership of all societies of the parish.

Although Rev. Novak has been at St. Stanislaus for only one year, he has accomplished a great deal and endeared himself to the congregation. Soft-spoken and mild-mannered, he is vigorous and progressive, keeping pace with the times.

VOCATIONS:

Twenty-five young men and women from St. Stanislaus chose the Priesthood and Sisterhood as their vocations. This is a credit to their parents, their pastors, and their nuns. Of the 12 priests listed, the first six, after years of dedicated and outstanding service to God and Country, have gone to their eternal rest. Listed also is the date of each priest's ordination.

It is with joy and gratitude that we present this list of those who have dedicated their lives to the special service of God.

12 Vocations to the Priesthood:

Msgr. Stanislaus Szpotanski - 1897

Rev. John Czapliński - 1900

Rev. Stanislaus Dreier - 1902

Rev. Klemens Drapiewski - 1912

Rev. Bruno Walter

Rev J. Szymański

Rev. Vincent Nanorta - 1920
Rev. Raymond Majewski - 1954
Rev. Joseph Horanzy - 1959
Rev. Donatus Shepanski, OFM - 1962
Rev. Raymond Wadas - 1972
Rev. Richard Kvedrovicz - 1972

13 Vocations to the Sisterhood:

Holy Family of Nazareth:

Sister M. Boniface-Augusta Chrzan

Felician Order:

Sister M. Clara-Anastasia Gorski

Sister M. Daniel-Bronislawa Chylla

Bernardine Order:

Sister M. Agnes-Mary Jankowski

Sister M. Modesta-Mary Bobies

Sister M. Stanislaus-Anna Gorka

Sister M. Bruno-Josephine Kishel

Sister M. Athanasia-Hedwig Kishel

Sister M. Ernestine-Mary Ciepiela

Sister M. Amabilis-Martha Witoszczak

Sister M. Claudette-Mary Niziolek

Sister M. Infanta-Sophie Dobies

Sister M. Krescencia-Victoria Szwarc

Besides the vocations of the Priesthood and the Sisterhood, many of St. Stanislaus' sons and daughters have gone on to make their mark in the professions of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Teaching, Law, Pharmacy, Engineering, and Social Services. Others have embarked in business and in political careers.

During these 100 years there have been 10,204 Baptisms, 2,657 Marriages, and 2,529 Deaths.

One hundred years after its founding, the Polish language is still heard in the church as well as in everyday conversation, and Polish traditions are staunchly upheld. To this day Nanticoke and its oldest Polish Parish remain a recognizable Polish settlement. Just as American Catholicism has changed in the past 15 years, the American Poles have become more Americanized, but at the same time, have retained important elements of their culture. As stated by the late eminent sociologist, Florian Znaniecki, "They want to become active participants in the two cultures, which are both theirs, and to fully appreciate both."