

The Beginning

Prior to 1896 there was only one Polish parish in the whole of Brooklyn, St. Casimir's. The Poles who had begun to settle in South Brooklyn, Williamsburg and Greenpoint, were forced to make a long Sunday trek to hear Mass at St. Casimir's. The situation was alleviated with the establishment of two churches in 1896, Our Lady of Czestochowa in South Brooklyn, and St. Stanislaus Kostka in Greenpoint.

Although the founding year of the parish has been established as 1896, the founding pastor, Father Leon Wysiecki, did not become pastor officially until 1898. There is no mention of a pastor having been appointed prior to 1898, but it can be assumed that Father Wysiecki functioned as ex officio pastor during that period.

Father Wysiecki on October, 1894 purchased the original ten lots on which St. Stanislaus Kostka Church now stands at the corner of Driggs Avenue and Humboldt Street for fifteen thousand and five hundred dollars. The purchase was in itself a feat of no small proportion since the tract centered in an area with a strong German Protestant presence.

One account of the transaction indicates that Father Wysiecki used an intermediary in all but the final stages of negotiations with the German gentleman who owned the property. When the good Father finally appeared in person, it was as a businessman speaking fluent German.

Father Leon Wysiecki

Father Wysiecki was born June, 1866, in Luzino, close to the town of Wejherowo, presently in the province of Gdansk. After completing seven years of elementary school, he emigrated to the United States where in 1886 he entered the Polish Seminary in Detroit. He was ordained a priest in the diocese of Brooklyn on November, 1891 by the Most Reverend John Loughlin. Father Wysiecki became pastor at St. Casimir's seven months later. Fr. Wysiecki was instrumental in the establishment of Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish, as well as St. Stanislaus Kostka, both in 1896.

Father Wysiecki subsequently endured much criticism from those who questioned the wisdom of selecting a parish site in the midst of a sea of German people. When we assess this act from the historical perspective, we must concede the virtue of Father Wysiecki's foresight. Instead of serving just one group such as Williamsburg or lower Greenpoint, he chose instead a more central location, one capable of serving a much broader population. With the influx of later

immigrants the parish developed splendidly. By 1909, it was necessary to establish Our Lady of Consolation Parish in Williamsburg, and in 1917, Sts. Cyril and Methodius Parish in Northern Greenpoint.

The First Twenty-Five Years

Our parish's first building still serves us today under the familiar title of "the old school". Of course, the basic structure has been altered from the original two-story building consisting of church, school, and parish auditorium in the basement under the school.

We are not certain of the exact construction date of the small building connected to the old school, which served the parish as its first rectory, located at 185 Driggs Avenue, and now known as "the old convent." We assume it to be 1896 also, although it may have been built at an earlier date, since it is not known where Father Wysiecki lived during his intermittent stays here while overseeing the church's construction before the dedication. There has always existed the unconfirmed opinion that this indeed is the oldest parish building. It may be that originally it consisted of only one floor, and that it was expanded in 1901-02 to become the convent after the new rectory was built. An examination of its unusual construction lends some evidence to this theory since we can see that the building actually has two distinct main entrances, one at the head of the outside stairs, and one underneath them.

Our Parish Church

By the end of 1896 we had the essentials for the development of the parish: a church and a school. Important as they were, however, they represented only the initial step in the growth of the parish plant. We truly must admire the tremendous zeal and patient efforts of the parishioners of those early days who constantly could be exhorted to ever greater sacrifices. We must admire also the energies of Father Wysiecki who, although deeply involved in the details of building, at the same time was paying off debts, and planning what must be done in the immediate future.

It is not unusual, considering the American tempo of getting things done, that we see built in the space of eight years everything that has made our parish great. By 1900, Father was not looking for a site for the new church, he was looking for the type of church that he would like to build. He found the type and announced to the congregation his ideal. A contract for the new rectory was signed in May, 1901, and work was started the same month, with occupancy scheduled for

1902. Although small, it was handsome and solidly built of the same material that would be used to build the church in 1904. Originally intended for two or three priests at most, eventually it accommodated six priests, and served our parish for fifty-five years.

Father Wysiecki signed a contract for the "beautiful" church in 1903, and the construction with the actual groundbreaking began July, 1903. This church would cost seventy-five thousand dollars, a staggering sum in days when a nickel was considered a large sum of money. Work on the church began on July 1st, and on October 1st, the Bishop dedicated the cornerstone.

The months, following the consecration of the cornerstone, saw unceasing efforts to make the interior appointments comparable in magnificence to the exterior. Father Wysiecki spurred his parishioners on to sacrifice. His enthusiasm was rewarded with a continuing stream of contributions from individuals and organizations for the altars, statues, organs, and clock. Even the school children participated, canvassing parishioners' homes for offerings for the stained glass windows. By November, 1904, there stood a beautiful new church, Gothic in style, with twin towers reaching toward heaven. The church had a seating capacity of one thousand two hundred and fifty, with a thousand seats in the main portion, and two hundred fifty in the choir lofts.

Dedication of the Church

The new church was dedicated appropriately on November 13, 1904, the Feast of Saint Stanislaus Kostka.

To finish the detailing of the parish buildings we must note that many more years were required for the completion of the church. In 1914, funds were gathered for the marble pulpit, the painting of the church, the electric candelabra, the tower clock, and, in 1919, the copper roof. The most significant financial outlay at the time, however, was undoubtedly the thirty five thousand dollars used in 1912 and 1913 to reconstruct the old school which is still in use.

Archbishop Symon In Our Parish

In 1905, Archbishop Albin Symon visited our parish, the first Polish bishop to come to America. Born in 1841, near Żytomierz, under Russian rule, he entered the Seminary there. He continued his studies at the Academy of Petersburg (where he later became rector), as well as, in Germany. He was named Bishop of Mohylew in 1891 and appointed to Plock in 1897. When he refused to cooperate with the Russian take over of the Church in Lithuania, however, he was

exiled to Odessa. Upon being freed, he journeyed to Rome, where in 1901 he was named Archbishop.

During this time, Polish Catholics, like their Irish and German predecessors, had taken root in America for some time. In spite of the large numbers of Polish parishes, however, we had no one in the hierarchy of the church to represent our interests or to settle our disputes. The Polish Catholics, therefore, found it necessary to organize a delegation to Rome. The group was headed by Father Waclaw Kruszk, the author of *The History of Poland in America*. In response to their petitions, Pope Pius sent Archbishop Symon to America as his personal representative to investigate matters and report to him. Archbishop Symon visited America for several months in 1905, which included our parish. As a result of the evidence which he compiled and especially because of the Archbishop's personal involvement with the Polish-American Church, Father Paul Rhode was appointed as the first Polish-American Bishop in 1908. We have since never been unrepresented in the hierarchy.

Paderewski At St. Stan's

On Tuesday, March, 1916, at 7.m. "The Paderewskis will visit us," reads a parish announcement of that time. These were, also, the World War years, when Poland was involved in another bitter struggle for its existence. We know from historical texts the extent of Polish-American participation in this rebirth of Poland, even though not as much is known of our own parish involvement. We know of the existence of a Cadet Military Organization and of Sokol Groups, which had come into being at Father Wysiecki's behest in 1912. From these groups, many volunteers joined Haller's Army to fight for Poland. We know of at least eighty individuals from our parish and from Our Lady of Consolation, who joined these volunteers.

Another announcement from November, 1913, dealt with a meeting of the Rada Narodowa, Council for the Welfare of Poland. This Council, headed by Bishop Rhode, had just come into being and encompassed all religious and patriotic Polish organizations and publications. When Paderewski came to America, the Council created a committee whose aim was to exert influence on the opinion of the United States so that America would support the cause of freedom for Poland. Point thirteen of Wilson's famous Fourteen Points was a direct result of its efforts. This demanded the guarantee of free access to the sea for Poland. The Council also obtained millions of dollars of material assistance as well as twenty-eight thousand volunteers for Haller's Army. Our parish was directly involved in these efforts.

First Twenty-Five Years Our Heritage

Who were the parishioners during the first twenty-five years of the parish of St. Stanislaus Kostka? We can affirm in all certainty, that these were people who were young, energetic, ambitious, and loyal to the Catholic faith and their Polish heritage. The wonderful memorials which they left for posterity attest to and confirm the above.

From whence did they come? Utilizing the parish registers of baptism and matrimony as primary sources, we conclude that approximately one-half of the early parishioners emigrated from that region of Poland that bordered on what was then known as East Prussia, hence from the vicinities of Bydgoszcz, Wloclawek, Plock, Przasnysz, Ostroleka, Bialystok, and naturally from Rostkow—the birthplace of St. Stanislaus Kostka, patron of our parish.

Another part of the pioneer group traces its ancestry from Malopolska (Galicja), hence from the regions of Rzeszow, Tarnow, etc. Following the preceding group, we find emigrants from Pomorze, the district of Poznan. It was not until after World War, that, with the influx of new emigrants, the Poles from the Eastern lands of Poland, Wolyn and Lwow, began to settle within the boundaries of our parish. They had trekked their way to America through hardship and long difficult journeys of exile through Asia, Africa, and South America.

Silver Jubilee

We concluded the first twenty-five years of the parish on a joyful note, with the observance of its Silver Jubilee. The official celebration took place December, 1921, with the celebration of a Solemn High Mass by Father Theodore Regulski, the first priest to be ordained from the parish.

The Next Twenty-Five Years

The second quarter century of our parish's existence did not begin auspiciously. On December, 1921, only a few days after our Silver Jubilee celebration, a fire broke out in the church devastating the sanctuary and the Main Altar which was made of wood. Apparently the fire was caused by the cracking of a candle glass. We can appreciate the extent of the damage from the fact that the Bishop permitted the parish to secure a loan for forty thousand dollars to repair the damage.

At the time of the Jubilee it seemed as though the parish was on a firm footing. The sight of the completed church, school, convent, and rectory gave rise to a collective sigh of relief that at last an end had

come to the wearisome task of collecting money and soliciting donations. The fire caused the entire cycle of solicitations to begin again for several months in 1922.

It was at this point that a feeling of unrest became evident in the parish. Father Wysiecki, in an effort to calm things down, scheduled a Mission for the summertime. The discontent continued to grow, until, in September, it erupted into a full scale revolt against Father Wysiecki who left in the face of this disapproval.

Naturally, one wonders what caused this strife to which Father Wysiecki became a martyr. At the time, no one investigated the causes fully and by now it is impossible to be completely accurate. One thing is certain— there was no one cause. From its very beginning, the parish had a group of malcontents who were dissatisfied with the site of the church. For several years, Father Wysiecki also had to contend with a small cadre of restless nationalists who, shortly before he left the parish, broke away with a sizable number of parishioners, forming their own independent Church of the Resurrection. Finally, these were times ripe for dissent since they marked a growing awareness of national consciousness. Our early parishioners, many of them rural immigrants, had to undergo many hardships and inconveniences before they obtained the necessary documents and arranged transportation to cross the ocean. Here they found themselves in totally unfamiliar surroundings. They had many problems to contend with and insufficient resources to resolve them. The lack of knowledge and uncertainty was expressed in disagreements among themselves.

There was one more element which must be considered as a possible factor in the parochial dissension— money. Consider the thousands of dollars spent in building such a magnificent parish plant. Consider that these people not long ago had torn up their roots in Europe and transplanted themselves where they had to give continuously for twenty-five years. In view of all of the potential strain in the parish, is it right to speculate that instigators could rise to turn a segment of the parishioners against their pastor?

In 1922, after the last Sunday of September, Father Wysiecki left the parish for Poland, resigning in December of that year as pastor of St. Stanislaus. A few years later in 1924, he once again became pastor in Solec Zdroj, Diocese of Kielce, Poland, where he died on December, 1925. He was buried there, but at the request of his family his body was disinterred and buried in Wejherowo, where most of his family was living.

The Vincentian Fathers Come To Our Parish

Following Father Wysiecki's departure, the Bishop appointed a temporary administrator, Father Thomas Nummey, pastor of Holy Child Jesus Parish in Richmond Hill. He was responsible for the financial affairs of the parish, while spiritual matters were turned over to the Vincentian Fathers Mazurkiewicz and Jeczmonka. In December of 1922, the Bishop directed Father Nummey to announce publicly the resignation of Father Wysiecki and the assignment of Father Mazurkiewicz as pastor. Slowly, with the continued efforts of the Missionaries the parish unrest subsided. Nevertheless, in 1923 Father Casper Slominski, C.M., then Provincial of the Polish Vincentians in Cracow, asked that the congregation be relieved of this assignment since the Missionaries were needed elsewhere. At the insistence of the Bishop, a Vincentian Fathers' House was established at St. Stanislaus Kostka with Father Paul Waszko as its Superior. Assuming the role of pastor, as well, he established the official assignment of the Vincentians to our parish, where they remain until today.

Our First Vincentian Pastors

The first of the Vincentian Fathers to take charge of our parish was Reverend Anthony Mazurkiewicz, C.M. Father Mazurkiewicz was born on June, 1877, in the ancient city of Torun, Poland. He attended the Vincentian Fathers' Seminary in Cracow where he received Holy Orders in 1903. He was transferred to the United States in 1907, and the following year he was appointed pastor of St. Stanislaus B.M. Church in New Haven. During his thirteen-year tenure, he was responsible for the building of a fine church.

After Father Mazurkiewicz assumed his pastoral duties at St. Stanislaus Kostka in 1922, the parish gradually returned to a state of stability. Although, only with us for one year at first, he returned to us in 1929 to guide us for six more years.

In 1923 Reverend Paul Waszko replaced Fr. Mazurkiewicz as pastor. Father Waszko was born on September, 1873, in the Silesian town of Twardawa. Like his predecessor, he graduated from the Vincentian Seminary in Cracow where he received Holy Orders in 1898. He came to America in 1903 as one of the pioneer group and was pastor at St. Michael's in Derby, Connecticut, prior to becoming pastor at St. Stanislaus Kostka in 1923.

Under Fr. Waszko's pastorate we acquired our beautiful Main Altar and statuary, the marble Baptismal Font which was imported from Europe, and the organ which, along with a statue of St. Vincent de Paul, was blessed in 1924 on July 19th, the Feast Day of St. Vincent. Father Waszko also acquired the property for the new school site, but

the task of erecting the school fell to his successor.

Reverend John Pieniazek, C.M., became our pastor in 1927, Father Pieniazek was born on November, 1894, in the city of Prezeworsk, Poland. After attending the Vincentian Seminary in Cracow, he was ordained a priest in 1918 and came to the United States in 1922 where he was immediately assigned to St. Stanislaus Kostka as an assistant until becoming our pastor.

Father Pieniazek, though with us only two years, left behind a solid reminder of his efforts in the form of the eighteen classroom school he built. The school, dedicated by the Bishop on the Feast of Corpus Christi in 1929, caused the staggering debt of three hundred and fifty thousand dollars to be repaid during the approaching Depression. Those of us who have children in school during today's financial crisis might well be encouraged by the sacrifices of the parishioners of those earlier days. Father Pieniazek had tuberculosis, and after unsuccessful efforts to check it in Mexico and Switzerland, he returned to Poland to stay in a sanitarium at Zakopane. He died there in 1936 at the age of forty-two.

Archbishop Cieplak's Visit

In November, 1925, Pope Pius sent Archbishop J. Cieplak as his special emissary to the Polish community in America. This Archbishop had been well known to them and to the world at large since 1920, when he had been jailed by the Communists in the purges which they instituted against the religious working in the territories which the Communists had taken over. The death sentence passed upon him was commuted in 1923 and he was committed to life imprisonment. Appeals from the European powers and the United States had led to his release after two years of intense physical and spiritual suffering. He visited our parish on September 8th of the following year, speaking to the parishioners while presiding at Benediction services and imparting the Papal Blessing. This was all the time he could allow for any one place, since in all, he visited three hundred and seventy five parishes and delivered eight hundred addresses. This rigorous schedule imposed on his already weakened physical condition proved too much and he died of pneumonia in Passaic, New Jersey, on Feb. 17, 1927, just before his scheduled departure for Wilno of which he had been named Archbishop. Thus, he returned to his beloved Poland numbered among its martyrs.

The 1930's

After thirty years, the times were changing and so were the people.

Father Mazurkiewicz returned to the parish as pastor in 1929, only to leave it again in six years upon being named Vice-Provincial of the Polish Vincentians. In his stead came Fr. Joseph Studzinski, for whom new problems evolved. The Depression created unemployment which the St. Vincent de Paul Society attempted to relieve. The entire parish became involved with the formation of a Joint Committee of Parish Societies. Bingo, which still exists today, began at this time as a new way to obtain money for parish needs. Even though the forms of their service to the people changed, what did not alter was the dedication of their priests to them. An example is to be found in Fr. Victor Kozlowski who suffered a breakdown from overwork.

Father Joseph Studzinski

At this time, certain customs became established, such as the daily hearing of Confession and occasional Weeks of Recollections for the youth of the parish.

In 1926, Father Mazurkiewicz brought from Rome a relic of the recently canonized Saint Theresa of the Infant Jesus. A statue in her honor was blessed and a novena took place. Novenas then took place with regularity. Devotion to this Saint intensified with the donation to our parish of a magnificent original oil painting by Tadeusz Styka in 1934. This was blessed on May 30th, by Monsignor Puchalski. Father S. Konieczny, the Superior from Derby, Connecticut, preached on this occasion, which also marked the beginning of a novena conducted by the well-known Father Adam Piasecki, C.M.

The Autumn of 1930 marked the Hundredth Anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal and the beginning of novenas to her in our parish. A triduum in honor of Blessed Catherine Labouré, the Daughter of Charity to whom Our Lady appeared, took place on Januaryth, 29th and 30th in 1934. Both, Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal and St. Catherine are especially dear to the Vincentians.

A Calendar of Church Services

Following are the highlights of a typical calendar of liturgical events at St. Stanislaus Kostka Church. Many of these events date back to 1930 and earlier. On the first Sunday of January, the Pastor renders a financial accounting to the parishioners and expresses appreciation to those who worked for the parish during the preceding year. On the Feast of The Three Kings, incense and chalk are blessed, followed by kolenda, the visiting of parishioners' homes by the priests.

From February to March there is the blessing of candles, blessing of

throats and distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday. Forty Hours' Devotion was held in February until 1946 when it was moved to November to coincide more closely with the Feast of St. Stanislaus Kostka. During Lent, Stations of The Cross are held on Wednesdays and Fridays. Gorzkie Żale are held on Sundays. Holy Week ceremonies begin with the blessing of the Palms and conclude with Swieconka (blessing of food in church), and the Resurrection Procession on Easter Sunday morning.

In May, daily devotions to Our Lady and the conferring of the Sacrament of First Holy Communion takes place.

June sees the Corpus Christi Procession and Devotions to the Sacred Heart on Fridays and Sundays.

The celebration of the feast of St. Vincent de Paul, founder of the Congregation of Priests of the Mission (Vincentian Fathers), was part of the July events. The feast is now celebrated in September.

Solemn Vespers on Novemberst, begin the annual novena for the Souls in Purgatory. The church is always crowded for the Christmas Eve Midnight Mass. Wine is blessed and distributed on the Feast of St. John, December 27th. The year concludes with Solemn Vespers on Decemberst.

The Sisters' Convent

One of Father Studzinski's greatest accomplishments was the building of a new convent in 1940. He announced the beginning of construction at a March meeting of the Parish Committee. Open House was held on Octoberst, and the interior was finished by November 15th. The first Vincentian pastor, Fr. Mazurkiewicz, dedicated the building on November 25th. The cost had been eighty-five thousand dollars.

The old convent came in handy just then for a number of wartime projects. One of these was the cooking and sewing school conducted by our energetic Sisters, to which even ladies from outside the parish enrolled. Thus we see that we had a very active parish with a broad spectrum of talents, and activities, all of which would be utilized in the wartime years.

The World War II Years

It is significant to note that the *Patron*, our parish weekly, began its publication in 1941. Although it was not directly connected with the war, because it reported on the activities of the parish and served as a means of communication with our servicemen, there is no doubt that

it increased the effectiveness of our war efforts.

We are all familiar with the calamitous events in Europe in 1939, and particularly those that led to the imprisonment of so many Poles as well as their forced evacuation to the ends of the earth.

The plight of their brothers and sisters stirred the hearts of the Polish-American community to action. Thus, the Rada Polonii Amerykanskiej (Polish- American Relief Committee) was formed organizing the Polish community on a nation-wide scale. This group, operating from Chicago, worked with the Red Cross to see that contributions and donations were received as intended. They helped in Poland until the fall of France and sent countless packages of food, medical supplies and clothing to prisoners of war and refugees all over the world. This assistance continued after the war to the displaced persons. This was only one of the organizations so functioning, others being the Bishops' Committee for Polish Relief and the Catholic League. From the parish announcements and records, we can conclude that our own parish took an extensive part in these activities.

In 1941, there were collections for the Relief Fund and a newly organized Committee for Polish Soldiers' Aid which collected clothes and knitted sweaters and other warm woolen garments. The accounts of Rada Polonii indicate that our 1941 contribution of \$4,320 was among the highest. When the United States became involved actively in the war, the parishioners turned even more devotedly to the war effort. Some one hundred ladies became Red Cross Volunteers. On August, 1942, one hundred and twenty individuals, from both St. Stanislaus and Sts. Cyril and Methodius Churches, including their pastors, gave blood. Clothing continued to be collected and woolen garments knitted. Even, the schoolchildren learned first aid and a group known as the Crusaders wrote to the soldiers from our parish sending them oplatek at Christmas time. The answers of these thousands of young men, especially those overseas, were most moving as they thanked the Sisters, children and their dear ones for the letters and packages.

Even though so many young people who had been our workers, were missing from our parish, nevertheless, there was a great number of fundraising activities to send packages to them. The October, 1945 *Patron* repeats statistics from the *Tablet*. The statistics indicate that while some parishes gave two to three thousand men to the services, the highest number any of them had lost was eighty-four. However, while we gave 1,595, we have the dubious distinction of having the largest number of Gold Star mothers since we had lost ninety-four lives.

Our Help For The Church of The Holy Cross in Warsaw

In our own jubilee year, 1946, we hosted Father Leopold Petrzyk, C.M., pastor of Holy Cross Church in Warsaw. This long-famed and well-known edifice had been almost completely demolished in the 1944 uprising. Father Petrzyk came to his Polish brethren in America for help in rebuilding this landmark. He preached in our parish and in many others, using us as his home base, for here was his schoolmate, Father Studzinski. When he returned with funds to restore the church to its original beauty, he left us a legacy of *Patron* articles recounting the plight of the children in Poland during the German occupation.

The Golden Jubilee of the Parish

St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish celebrated its Fiftieth Anniversary in 1946. The preparations had begun some time earlier since we can find that on January, 1944, a notation is made of the first offering for the painting of the church. This unassuming heading "the painting of the church" actually meant a great deal more, including new lighting fixtures and kneelers, the renovation of the marble pillars, gilt work and the Main Altar. In other words, it meant completely redecorating. The generosity of the parishioners proved equal to the task. With the number of donations increasing daily as the Jubilee approached, it is no wonder that not only was the entire cost of the renovation- forty thousand dollars- met before the Jubilee, but all other parish debts as well! Early in 1946, Father Studzinski announced that, having renewed our place of worship, it was time for a spiritual renovation in the form of a three-week mission which would conclude Palm Sunday.

The actual celebration lasted only three days. A Solemn High Mass was celebrated on November 11th, which happened to be Thanksgiving Day. The celebrant was Father Stanislaus Rysiakiewicz, a parishioner and one of the first assistants in the parish. He was helped by Fathers John Regulski, Edward V. Rutowski and Francis Romanowski, all born in this parish. The preacher was Bishop Stephen Woznicki, Auxiliary of Detroit, Michigan. Our own ordinary, Bishop Thomas Molloy, presided, speaking after Holy Communion and administering a special Papal Blessing while extending his good wishes to us.

There was a banquet in the parish hall at 8.m. on Saturday. On Sunday at 4.m., there was a program in which the schoolchildren, St. Cecilia's Choir, Alumni Choir and the Dramatic Circle took part as well as speakers representing the various groups in the parish. At the

end of the program, with the assistance of the oldest and youngest member of the Parish, Father Studzinski burned the mortgage, symbol of the parish's financial debt. Finally a Mass on Monday commemorated the dead parishioners and benefactors of the parish.

Towards The Diamond Jubilee

Our parish moved into its third quarter century. Some of the first parishioners saw a third generation taking its place in the parish. Gradually, the exclusive use of the Polish language gave way to occasional English announcements. There were still strong ties to the mother country, and our generosity continued, in an effort, to help rebuild it. Continuing stories of atrocities reached our ears. We heard of unprovoked shootings of citizens, of mass graves in the forest, of the martyrdom of eleven Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, and of desecration of sacred vessels and vestments. The Rada Polonii, Bishops' Committee and Catholic League continued to provide material assistance: money, clothes and canned goods to relieve the poverty and destitution. The Fund for Immigrants, operated to assist the displaced persons, especially those interned in Germany. This work continued until the Polish government disbanded the "Rada" leaving the continuation of this work in the hands of individuals. We had our own one-man relief organization in the person of Father Francis Krzyzak.

A Very Special Loss

Our pastor, Father Joseph Studzinski, after successfully conducting the celebration of the Golden Jubilee, returned to Poland to visit his family in 1948. In the Spring of 1949, he became seriously ill, requiring hospitalization and surgery. However, he recovered and returned to work as in the past. Then on November, 1954, he again quietly entered the hospital supposedly for minor surgery. He died December, 1954, at 10 a.m. The news of his death shook the entire parish. There were throngs of tearful people lining the streets as his body was borne into the church on Sunday. Here a vigil was consistently kept by the members of the American Legion-St. Stanislaus Kostka Memorial Post and the Ladies Auxiliary. It was evident that God had indeed taken to Himself not only a good pastor, but a very special man as well.

Father Studzinski died at the age of sixty-seven, having labored twenty years in our parish. After Father Wysiecki's departure, the diocesan priests had remained somewhat aloof, until in Father Studzinski's time the ties were renewed. He had been able to unite two seemingly disparate characteristics: a gentle disposition and a

firmness in executing his responsibilities. The extent of his influence is best measured by the numbers of Masses requested for his soul and the love with which his memory is spoken of to this day.

Father Studzinski's last accomplishment was the renovation of the lower church, which included the installation of a new altar.

On March.14, 1961, on the recommendation of the American Legion Post #1771, the Mayor of New York with his Council authorized *Father Studzinski Square* at the corner of McGuiness Boulevard and Driggs Avenue. Indeed, an honor to a Polish priest in New York City. The square with a monument was officially dedicated on September 15, 1963.

The New Pastor

On Sunday, January, 1955, Father Mazurkiewicz officially installed the new pastor, Father Francis Hladki. No small task awaited Father Hladki as Father Studzinski's replacement. He took on this new challenge, however, with the quiet strength and determination that he had brought to all his previous assignments.

Father Hladki was born December2, 1894 in the parish at Kaczyka, Bukowina. He attended the Vincentian Minor Seminary at Nowa Wies, Cracow where he was ordained on June, 1917. He came to the United States in 1926. From 1935 to 1938 he was the pastor of St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr, New Haven where he managed to pay off a huge debt, build a new rectory and renovate their lower church.

The New Rectory

The first offerings for the new rectory had been noted as far back as 1947, ten years before construction began. Apparently, as soon as all the previous debts had been paid during the Jubilee Year, Father Studzinski began gathering funds for the new rectory. The necessity of this project was obvious to him by the fact that the old rectory had long outgrown its needs since its size did not keep pace with the growth of the parish. Thus the fund continued to grow under Father Hladki. He first had to cope with a more urgent need, the renovation of the church. The repairs on the lower church had to be finished, specifically, the stairs and entrance from the street. Then came repairing of the roof, waterproofing the brick, installing storm windows and regilding the crosses on the roof- all at the cost of one hundred four thousand dollars. The parish societies, as always, hastened to assist in raising the necessary money. The new and energetic Holy Name Society recognized three thousand dollars profit in its campaign of selling "roof tiles." This scheme was followed up by "bricks" the following year, and another drawing to raise funds for a

chapel in the new rectory. In addition to Bingo, a new means of financial assistance was brought into being in the form of a Booster Club. June, 1955 saw a carnival held on the grounds for the new rectory at Humboldt and Broome Streets. The old convent needed to be suitably prepared for use as a temporary rectory, which occurred in April, 1957. The old rectory was razed in May, in spite of a strike-caused delay, and the foundation for the new rectory was dug in June. Thus, the carnival was repeated, but this time in the school yard. In September, a *Patron* cover featured the imposing new rectory, which Father Hladki announced would be finished the following year.

Indeed it was completed by May, 1958, when on the last Sunday an Open House was held. Some eight hundred visitors came in spite of a driving rain. Bishop John Boardman blessed it on June 1st.

Financial Affairs

After the building of the new rectory, Father Hladki turned his attention to the renovation of the other parish buildings. We all know that there is a constant financial outlay required for the upkeep of buildings which, if not made, results in even greater future expenditures. Thus in 1959, the now thirty-year old school needed roof and heating repairs, as well as painting. In 1961, the lower church was painted and electrically rewired. In 1962, kneelers in the upper church were replaced and the murals were restored from the damage caused by the heat, candles, and votive lights. To prolong the life of these art works, the electric votive lights were installed.

His Excellency, Bishop Thomas Molloy, after shepherding the Diocese of Brooklyn for thirty-five years, died on December, 1956. He was replaced in 1957 by Bishop Brian McEntegart, then the rector of Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Long concerned about the needs of Catholic education, the new Bishop launched an extensive fund-raising campaign for the building of new diocesan high schools, estimated at thirty-seven million dollars.

Each parish was assigned a quota, ours was one hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars to be collected by the end of 1962. Our parishioners once again responded with generosity and self-sacrifice.

The Second Fire

An unfortunate event repeated itself at the end of 1963, just as forty-two years earlier at the end of the year, a fire broke out in the church. This time, however, it was no accident. A rash of fires had been set in churches and other buildings in our neighborhood. We were not to be spared Greenpoint's misfortune, because on

December a fire was discovered in our church. We were fortunate in that the damage was confined largely to the sacristy since the blaze was quickly detected and extinguished by the Fire Department. However, all the vestments and liturgical articles were lost. The people were deeply moved by the tragedy, responded quickly. Through their efforts, the church was restored to its former splendor, complete with all new vestments and liturgical vessels.

The Parish Greet a New Pastor

After nine years of arduous work, Father Hladki was replaced by Father Gothard Krzysteczko, C.M. Father Krzysteczko had worked in China from the time of his ordination in 1936 until 1949 when all missionaries had been expelled from China by the Communist regime. He was then assigned to the mission in Whitestone, and in 1951 transferred to St. Michael's Church in Derby, Connecticut to serve as an assistant, where he became pastor in 1961. These were difficult times to be a pastor, especially after Vatican II which was working to revitalize the faith, but in so doing, created a need to maintain a balance between the old and the new.

Fr. Krzysteczko was assigned to us in February, 1964, and immediately immersed himself in the work of our parish. He especially concerned himself with completing the work on the fire-damaged sacristy.

Rev. Gothard Krzysteczko

Father Hladki continued to live and work among us after being relieved of the burdens of his pastoral duties and was honored with a banquet in appreciation for his dedicated efforts on our behalf.

On Saturday, September, Fr. Hladki passed away suddenly. One of our priests found him sitting in a chair in his room with his head bowed to one side and holding a pencil in his hand as though preparing his sermon for the following day. Ironically, his was the first death in the new rectory which he built.

Bishop Krauze

In the Summer of 1965, our own Missionary, the Most Reverend Ignatius Krauze, C.M., who was also the first Polish Bishop in China and Ordinary of many of our priests, was a guest at our parish. He visited our parish for the first time around 1937, when he was here as an Apostolic Prefect before becoming a Bishop. He sought help in the United States for his missions in China. Our parish gave generously,

as always.

When the communists expelled all the Mission-aries from China, the Bishop returned and remained in Whitestone from 1948 to 1952 and visited us several times. He also stayed with us in 1957 when the assistant to the Superior General from Paris, the Reverend Waclaw Knapik, C.M., visited our parish. He returned on his way to the Vatican Council in Rome. In 1969 Reverend Krauze celebrated his Fiftieth Jubilee as a priest and his Twenty-Fifth as a Bishop in Brazil where he has been stationed since 1952. He visited us again, spoke at a meeting of the Holy Name Society, and then in 1971 was invited to a parish in Utica, New York that was also celebrating its Diamond Jubilee. Once again he returned to participate in our celebrations.

1966-Millennium of Poland's Christianity

A Jubilee Committee was formed in New York in December, 1964, composed of prominent leaders and priests from the Dioceses of New York, Brooklyn, and Rockville Centre, of which the late Cardinal Spellman was honorary chairman. Our local Jubilee Committee was organized on November, 1965. During the first nine Saturdays, from January 1st to September 1st, a Millennium Novena was conducted. Responsibility for the attendance at the novena devotions was assigned to the Societies to serve as an example by their presence. To further deepen the religious feeling of the Millennium, a Mission was held from March 1st to April 3rd, the first week in Polish and the second in English. During the Triduum, on the last of the three days of the Millennium, a religious celebration was held at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. It was attended by our Polonia from New York and vicinity, all of which received Holy Communion. A special copy of the *Patron*, edited on Easter Sunday, was devoted to the Millennium. The second Sunday after Easter, April 1st, was dedicated to the Millennium Celebration with a Solemn High Mass celebrated by Father F. Romanowski with a sermon delivered by Reverend E. Fus, J.C.D. The latter part was concluded with a program presented to a full audience at 4 p.m. Once again, our St. Cecilia Choir and the Dramatic Circle participated. On this day, during the celebration, the Reverend Francis Myszka, C.M., Provincial Visitor of our Vincentian Fathers, honored us with his presence, arriving from Cracow a few days before to visit our mission houses.

The week of September 18th to 25th was one in which all of our Brooklyn Diocese officially celebrated our Millennium. The Most Rev. Bishop Wladyslaw Rubin, Protector of Polonia outside of the Polish boundaries came from Rome, representing His Eminence Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński. He arrived in our parish on Thursday,

September 22nd, and after a short devotion spoke to those present in Polish and English. He departed shortly in order to visit our neighboring parish, Sts. Cyril and Methodius. He celebrated the main Thanksgiving Services in the evening at the St. James Pro-Cathedral in Brooklyn in the presence of the Bishops of the Diocese, clergy, nuns and members of the different Polish parishes.

The Millennium Jubilee was terminated in our parish January, 1968. On this day, our pastor, Father Gothard Krzysteczko blessed the Millennium Plaque. This plaque is engraved with emblems, names of societies, and priests who worked in our parish during this great year. It is the masterpiece of Jan Sowinski.

Two of our parishioners were ordained and celebrated their first Solemn High Mass in our church during 1966. Father Robert Kujawa, C.M., celebrated his Mass on the last Sunday of May, 1966, and Father Robert Czok, on the first Sunday of June. The sermon during his Mass was delivered by the Rev. Professor Zdzislaw Peszkowski from the Polish Seminary in Orchard Lake, Michigan, where Father Czok studied.

Millenium of Poland Christianity

1969-1970

On the feast of Christ The King we were visited by the Most Reverend Bishop Piotr Filipak, Bishop Ordinary of a Diocese in Brazil. His Diocese in Brazil is huge, priests are few, and supplies and help are insufficient. After delivering all of the sermons on the day of his visit, the Bishop thanked the parishioners for their generous contributions.

During the summer of 1968, the restoration of the lower church began; the cost was over one hundred thousand dollars.

On the last day of September, our former Ordinary, Archbishop Bryan McEntegart passed away. His successor was the Most Reverend Bishop Francis John Mugavero.

The Four Hundredth Anniversary of the Death of St. Stanislaus Kostka was observed on the feast day of St. Stanislaus and was preceded by the Forty Hour Devotions.

In November of 1968 we were visited by our Bishop, who concelebrated a Mass in the evening and graciously received and met the nuns and parishioners in the parish hall. Later in a letter to Our Reverend Pastor, Father Gothard Krzysteczko, he thanked him and everyone for welcoming him so cordially.

Preparations were made to organize a Parish Council and its first meeting was held on March, 1969. The Council was to have an

embodiment of thirty members (four ex-officio and twenty-six elected members). The members of the parish and societies voted to select this council.

In May, the Polish Veterans in Exile, the General Sosnkowski Post No.39, together with the Veterans from George Washington Post No.3 observed the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Battle of Monte Cassino. A Mass was offered for the deceased and wreaths were placed at various monuments.

Father Stephen Pujdak, from the Order of The Sacred Heart, who is our parishioner celebrated his first Solemn Mass in sign language in our church so that his deaf-mute parents were able to participate better at the Mass on September 1st.

A Distinguished Guest

Karol Cardinal Wojtyla, Archbishop of Cracow, our most distinguished guest, arrived at our parish on September, 1969. He was able to spend barely five or six hours with us. Our parish was chosen to greet His Eminence with his entourage. He arrived from Doylestown, Pennsylvania, assisted by priests and Polish Bishops - Bishop A. Abramowicz from Chicago and Bishop Szczepan Wesoly from Rome. In addition to the clergy, Bishop Mugavero and other Bishops from our Brooklyn Diocese greeted His Eminence. After introductions, mutual greetings and dinner, all went to church to attend and celebrate Mass. Cardinal Wojtyla then concelebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with the Polish Bishops and with six Polish priests. During Mass, our pastor the Reverend G. Krzysteczko, welcomed everyone, and our ordinary greeted the Cardinal. At the end, the Cardinal addressed the congregation in both Polish and English. After Mass, he met with parishioners and nuns.

Our Seventy-Fifth Jubilee

Our Diamond Jubilee was first mentioned at the Parish Council Meeting held on December, 1969. At the beginning of 1970, volunteers were invited along with the delegates of our societies to form a Jubilee Committee. In December, the Pastor Gothard Krzysteczko announced the goals to be achieved during this time, namely; renewal of faith through a Mission; organizing church celebrations and artistic presentations; and renovation of the sanctuary with a new altar and Communion railings.

The first important event of the Jubilee was a religious concert, which took place in our church on Palm Sunday. Organized by Father Francis Kellner, it was a great success and was favorably accepted by

the press.

The last change in the liturgy was made on Palm Sunday 1970. The whole Mass is to be said in the vernacular. All the daily masses are to be celebrated in Polish with the exception of the 8 o'clock Mass which is the children's Mass. Most Sunday Masses are said in Polish. Sunday 9 o'clock Mass, three Masses in the lower church and the Saturday and Sunday Evening Mass are said in English.

Renovation Of The Sanctuary

The first matter proposed in conjunction with the Jubilee was the renovation of the sanctuary. Work was started on July, 1971 and continued for a month. All Masses, Sunday and daily, were held in the lower church. The Sanctuary and the new marble altar now projected simplicity and beauty. The Communion railings were lowered. This eliminated walking up a few steps to receive Holy Communion. The cost of this renovation was thirty thousand dollars.

Most Reverend Bishop Albin Malysiak

The coming preparation for the main day of the Jubilee which occurred on December, 1971, was a weekly novena held for nine Thursdays followed by the regular nine day novena. The first novena began September 8th and ended November 8th. It was conducted in Polish by our Vincentians from White-stone. The regular novena began November 8th, and ended November 27th. It was conducted in English by Father John Kowalski, C.M. and in Polish by Bishop Malysiak, C.M.

Bishop Malysiak, our own Missionary, is Auxiliary to Karol Cardinal Wojtyla, Archbishop of Cracow. Before becoming a bishop he was pastor of a large Vincentian Parish in Cracow. He accepted our invitation and celebrated the aforementioned novena and High Mass on the Jubilee Sunday. During this time, Bishop Malysiak visited numerous Polish parishes and organizations among Polonia in the United States and Canada. He returned to Cracow in January of 1972.

Welcome Long Awaited Day

The day of the Diamond Jubilee of our Parish was honored with the presence of three bishops and three solemn celebrations, which began with the 9 o'clock Mass for the children. Bishop Krauze concelebrated the Mass with Father Chester Mrowka, C.M., and Father Edmund Gutowski, C.M., who delivered the sermon. During the Mass the

children sang Polish and English hymns.

The main celebration- High Mass - with a greeting by Reverend Krzysteczko, was said in Polish at 11:00 a.m.

Bishop Malysiak concelebrated this Mass with Father Walter Ziembra, D.D., our visitor, the Reverend Henry Sawicki, C.M., Father Walenty Pieczka, our superior; Father Gothard Krzysteczko, our pastor; Father Karol Wawak, Father Kazimierz Szymanski, Father John Kowalski, and Father Edmund Kowalski, Father Ziembra delivered the sermon in Polish.

Present in the sanctuary was Father Edward Fus, J.C.D., representing the bishop from Brooklyn. Our St. Cecilia's Choir sang a Polish Mass, while the congregation and newly organized boys' choir sang the hymns. Also present were numerous clergy, about one hundred and twenty nuns and over eleven hundred people.

Most Rev. Bishop Francis J. Mugavero was the main celebrant at the 4 p.m. Mass. The concelebrants were: Reverend Gothard Krzysteczko, C.M., Reverend Edmund Gutowski, C.M., Reverend Henry Sawicki, C.M., Reverend Edward V. Rutowski, C.M., Reverend Edward P. Spurgiasz, C.M., Reverend Robert W. Czok. Seated in the sanctuary were: Bishop Ignatius Krauze, C.M., and Bishop Albin Malysiak, C.M. Reverend Leon Baltrucki, pastor of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church in Greenpoint delivered the sermon. About fifty priests, one hundred nuns and one thousand people participated. Both Jubilee celebrations ended with the American and Polish Anthems.

Other notable events were a reception for the Priests and Sisters, separate of course, during which the parishioners were able to meet with them and discuss old ties and memories.

The commemoration of the Jubilee continued into 1972 with recitals by the Church Choirs at a "Polish Day" in McGoldrick Park on June, 1972.

There were also two banquets. One in English at Rovnak's Princess Manor on a Saturday evening and the other on a Sunday afternoon, in Polish, in the Parish Hall.

Father Krzysteczko, on termination of his tenure as Pastor in 1973, was transferred to the Mission House in Utica, N.Y. There in addition to his priestly duties, he maintained a large vegetable garden and managed an extensive bee colony. He passed away suddenly on July, 1990. He was buried in his beloved St. Michael's Cemetery, Derby, Connecticut, where he labored extensively as its caretaker.

1973 to 1982

On February, 1973 Reverend Jozef Szpilski became the first in a series of Pastors relatively new from Poland, more sensitive to the mentality and heritage of the Solidarity-oriented Polish immigrant.

He was born on March, 1933, of Andrzej Szpilski and Janina Kiraga, in Wojslawice, Kuczki Parish, Diocese of Sandomierz. He received his secondary schooling in Random and the Vincentian Minor Seminary in Krakow. He was affiliated with the Vincentians on September, 1950, and pro-nounced his vows on October, 1955. He completed his seminary training at the Vincentian Theological Institute, Stradom, Krakow, where he was ordained by Auxiliary Bishop Stanislaw Rospond on June, 1956.

As a parochial vicar at Holy Cross Parish, Warsaw, Poland (1956-62), he studied at the Catholic Theological Academy. Between 1962 and 1964, he was a parochial vicar and catechism teacher in the Vincentian parish at Zagan, Poland.

He arrived in the United States in 1964. After studying English in Washington, D.C., he conducted missions in Erie, Pennsylvania (1965-1969) and Whitestone, New York (1969-1973). When, he assumed the duties of pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka he immediately arranged a celebration for the 500th Anniversary of the birth of the world famous Polish astronomer Copernicus.

He introduced annual retreats for the parish-ioners; hosted distinguished Polish bishops who came to the International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia (1976); prepared a Brooklyn celebration of the installation of Pope John Paul II (October, 1978) which culminated in naming the area in front of the church Pope John Paul II Square; and on May 17, 1981, observed his own Silver Jubilee of Priesthood. In 1978, the "*Polish American World*", named him "*Citizen of the Year*".

Rev. Jozef Szpilski

During the Pastorship of Father Szpilski, not unlike those who preceded him, he was plagued with the constant maintenance, repair and renovation of Church properties. The main organ had to be refurbished at a cost of over \$100,000, both spires needed painting at a cost of over \$50,000 and repairs to the upper and lower church were made at a cost of over \$21,000. Some renovation was done in the Convent and "Old School". In Addition, the staircases in the new school were repaired at a cost of about \$13,000 and the windows replaced, costing approximately \$60,000.

Looking to the future Father Szpilski was able to procure two dwellings. One on Newell St. which enlarged the school yard and the

other on Broome St. The latter remains a dwelling.

During Father Szpilski's Pastorship there were several innovations that need to be mentioned.

He introduced the practice of instruction sessions for parents of the First Holy Communicants. They met in two groups, one in Polish and one in English, and their attendance was compulsory. The practice continues to date.

In 1977, with Father Szpilski's cooperation and blessing, the St. Cecelia Choir cut its first record "*Pasterka*" which proved to be a financial success.

In 1979, he led a pilgrimage to Rome in which 100 participated and met with the Holy Father John Paul.

Because of the large number of participants at the Christmas Midnight Mass, Father Studzinski, in 1940, requested the members of the Children of Mary Society not to attend due to lack of space. In 1946 there were two Midnight Masses, one in the Upper Church and one in the Lower Church. In 1970, Father Krzysteczko introduced a midnight mass in Polish in the upper church and in English in the lower church. The crowds continued. To alleviate the problem somewhat, Father Szpilski added the 10 p.m. Shepherd's Mass in Polish in the upper church. Today there is also a 10 p.m. Shepherd's Mass in the lower church in English.

During his Pastorship the Athletic League was formed. At first for boys then later, also for girls. The sports played were primarily basketball and volleyball. Practice sessions are still held in the "Old School" and the teams participate in the Diocesan League competition.

When Father Szpilski's term as Pastor ended, July, 1982, he was transferred to the Mission Group in Whitestone where he continued contributing socio-religious articles to the Polish American Journal, *Glos* and *Nowy Dziennik*. In January of 1992 until September 1994 he served as a Parochial Vicar again at St. Stanislaus Kostka. He is presently at Ansonia, Connecticut.

1982-1988

Rev. Walenty Pieczka, C.M. was Pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka from July, 1982 to August, 1988. This long standing parochial vicar at St. Stanislaus Kostka was the fifth pastor to come from Slask (Silesia). He was born in Brzezce, Diocese of Wroclaw (now Katowice) on the vigil of the first anniversary of Polish Independence, November, 1919. He

completed the local elementary school and attended the Vincentian Minor Seminary in Krakow. On December, 1937, he joined the Vincentian Community on November, 1935 and pronounced his vows after his novitiate in Wilno. After his theological studies in Krakow he was ordained by Bishop Jan Lorek, C.M., on July, 1943.

His first pastoral assignments were in the Diocese of Kielce, then Krakow, later Warszawa at Holy Cross parish, and again in Krakow. From September 1947, as a young priest, he administered St. Joseph's Parish in Wroclaw for one year.

He arrived in the United States on Memorial Day, 1959, and resided at St. Stanislaus Kostka as a student of English, and became a parochial vicar there in 1964. On December, 1966, he became the Superior of the Brooklyn House and Provincial Procurator of the Polish Vice Province.

On June 3, 1982, Bishop Mugavero appointed him pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka and he assumed his new duties July, 1982. Experienced in pastoral work, Fr. Pieczka promoted spiritual life among the parishioners conscientiously, supervised the parochial school, and extended his paternal ministry to the increasing Solidarity Era Polish immigrants.

The never-ending care and conservation of church properties continues. In 1983, Father Pieczka under-took the renovation of the Sanctuary. The altar and murals were retouched and several statutes were repainted. A likeness of St. Maximilian Kolbe was incorporated into the mural by the altar. He also had the main organ reconstructed and built up to its full capacity. The process required two years to complete at a cost of over \$80,000.

During Father Pieczka's tenure as Pastor, two new organizations were formed, the Living Rosary and the Golden Age Club. The "Living Rosary" is a reorganiz-ation of the Rosary Society. It is strictly a prayer group for both men and women without any fees or dues.

The Golden Age Club was organized on Feb.23, 1984 with the aim to give an occasion for meeting and socializing. One must be at least 50 years of age to become a member.

In 1986, as part of the Diocesan overall plan, Father Pieczka initiated a program to aid the illegal Polish immigrant to obtain legal status. Called the Amnesty Program, certain eligible aliens without status were able to secure work permits, then Green Cards and eventually United States Citizenship.

An offshoot of this program was the establishment of English as a Second Language Agenda. English classes for adults began in January of 1988 and continue to date.

Popieluszko Square

Through the efforts of Greenpoint Polonians, on October, 1986, a square in honor of Father Jerzy Popieluszko of Warsaw was dedicated after a Mass at St. Stanislaus Kostka. Martyred for the Solidarity cause, the popular Polish priest was extolled at the unveiling on Bedford Avenue. The bust was later vandalized then restored.

Father Pieczka relinquished his duties to his successor on August, 1988, and after a short stay at St. Joseph's in Ansonia, he was then assigned to St. Stanislaus Kostka and Martyr Parish in New Haven and is presently in Derby, Connecticut.

1988-1992

The first Pastor from Poland's northeast region, Father Stanislaw Staniszewski, C.M., inherited the office of Pastor on September, 1988. He was born October, 1937 in the village of Abramy, Piski Parish, Diocese of Łomża. After completing the local elementary school (June, 1952), he entered the Salesian Minor Seminary in Rozanystok and when it was closed by Communist authorities in 1954, he completed the studies in Warsaw June, 1956. He entered the community of the Vincentian Fathers on October, 1956, pronounced his vows on June, 1962, and was ordained on June, 1963, by Bishop Karol Wojtyła, Pope John Paul II.

He received his pastoral experience in Poland in several places. He was a parochial vicar in Odporyszow, Diocese of Tarnow (1963-64); in Trzciel, Diocese of Gorzow (1964-65); and Grodkow, Diocese of Opole (1965-69). On November, 1969, he arrived in the United States and studied English at St. Michael's College, in Winooski, Vermont. From December 29, 1970 until September of 1972, he worked at St. Michael's Parish, Derby, Connecticut. He followed this with a course in English at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. From February 15, 1973, until 1976 he was a parochial vicar at St. Stanislaus Kostka, Brooklyn; a teacher at St. John Kanty Prep, Erie, Pennsylvania, for a year (1976-77); a member of the mission group at Whitestone, N.Y. (1977-78); again returning to St. Michael's at Derby, Connecticut (1978-82); and became superior of the Mission House in Utica, New York (1982-88). In 1987, he took a course at the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium.

On Aug. 18, 1988, he was appointed pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish, Brooklyn, by Bishop Mugavero and on September, 1988, he assumed his responsibilities.

Not to be repetitive but, Father soon had to make extensive renovation

to both the upper and lower churches and the new school basement. A jolly and likable individual, Father stayed with us as Pastor for less than four years. However, during his tenure several happenings did occur.

In July of 1989 a small group of former Oaza (Oasis) members approached Fr. Staniszewski asking permission to establish a local group. He entrusted the group to Father Roman Gorowski. These small basic Christian Communities arose in Poland during the 1980's. Composed of young adults, their desire is to increase their spiritual and religious lives.

Early in 1990, Father Staniszewski expressed a wish for organized singing at the 10 a.m. English Mass. Father Gorowski was assigned the task and on June, 1990 the new ensemble was formed, for a trial period, as a summer choir. They are performing year round to date.

In 1991, he introduced the tithing concept for the Sunday collection.

On June 24, 1992, the PSA (Parish and School Association) was formed.

Lech Walesa

The third prestigious visitor to the Parish was Lech Walesa, the President of Poland. Together with his wife, Danuta, he came for private prayer at Mass on Shrove Tuesday, March, 1991. It was to be a low-key unannounced visit but rumors of it brought a capacity crowd to the 7 a.m. Mass. No one spoke to him nor he to anyone. Privately, he promised to return for a formal visit.

Cardinal Glemp

On Saturday, September, 1991. Cardinal Jozef Glemp, Primate of Poland, celebrated Mass at St. Stanislaus Kostka. It was part of a tour to meet with Polish communities throughout the United States. He came to bring greetings from the home country in a spirit of unity.

On July 10, 1992, on a routine assignment, Fr. Staniszewski was assigned to the St. Joseph's Parish, Ansonia, Connecticut and is now in New Haven, Connecticut.

Rev. Roman Gorowski, C.M.

Father Roman Gorowski, C.M. was born in Tarnow on July, 1945. Accepted into the Vincentian Community November, 1966, he was ordained a priest June, 1972. He succeeded Father Mietelski as director of the "schola" singers at St. Vincent de Paul Church,

Bydgoszcz. In 1974, he went to Grodkow for two years.

Assigned to the United States, Father Roman Gorowski first studied English at Temple University, Philadelphia from 1976-77, and until 1982 remained as vicar at New Haven.

At Derby, Connecticut in 1982, Father Gorowski was the Director of the parish school, where he organized afternoon classes for Polish-Americans to learn Polish (40 in three groups), and introduced Jaselka (Christmas Plays). In July of 1986, Father Gorowski returned to Poland for an assignment, but returned in two years to be vicar at St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Brooklyn, Superior of the House in 1991 and Pastor July, 1992.

When Father Gorowski took over as Pastor there were still some repairs not completed during Father Staniszewski's Pastorship. Once they were out of the way, Father Gorowski undertook an extensive restoration of St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in preparation for the many celebrations to be held in connection with the Parish's 100th Anniversary.

Fr. Roman Gorowski painstakingly reviewed all suggested plans and encouraged parish members to voice their opinion. Work was completed in the Summer of 1994.

In addition to the Church, most other buildings also required attention. The new school received new waste lines, a new basement floor, new windows and lavatories. The "Old School" was resurfaced and had its windows replaced. The Convent had its washrooms redone and new bedding installed while the "Old Convent" had the upper two floors completely renovated. The Rectory office and waiting room were reconstructed and the building received a new air conditioning system.

Much work still needs to be done. The two remaining floors of the "Old Convent" need to be refurbished and the sidewalks surrounding the Rectory and extending to Newell Street must be replaced.

Notwithstanding, the energies expended toward renovation, Father Gorowski has never overlooked his role as Spiritual Leader of the Flock. In addition, he continued to oversee the Oaza Group and initiated retreats and a special monthly mass for members of the Athletic League. He attended weekend retreats with the young people and even took a group of them to see the Pope in Denver, Colorado.

Much to the delight of the young ladies in the Parish, Father Gorowski instructed them toward becoming altar servers. A good number of girls responded after the Bishop gave permission.

In October of 1992 the Parishioners witnessed the ordination of Rev. Mieczyslaw Krupa by Auxiliary Bishop Rene Valero.

October 1992 also marked the First Blessing of Animals (Feast of St. Francis of Assisi) in our Parish.

Not wanting to have the historic milestone of the 100th Anniversary of the founding of our Parish and School go unnoticed or to perform the arrangements at the last minute, Father Roman Gorowski, formed a Centennial Committee to assist in the planning of the celebrations to be held. Several Committees have been formed and they have already organized events.

Being a Pastor of such a large parish with the special needs of immigrants to be considered is an awesome task under normal circumstances. With the approaching Anniversary, it becomes so much greater and fortunately, Father Roman Gorowski is handling it extremely well.

Centennial of Our Parish and School

The Centennial of the Parish and School was preceded by many special preparations both materialistic and spiritual. On the material side, our Church was renovated by the company D'Ambrosio Ecclesiastical Art Studios, Inc. Our old school building was completely renovated externally. Thanks to the generosity of Parishioners and Friends of St. Stanislaus Kostka Church, we were able to collect and still are collecting funds to help pay for these renovations. The decision to renovate the Church, replace the pews in the Church, relocate the pulpit and to replace the sound system in the upper and lower church, was preceded by many discussions with parishioners. It must be emphasized, that the joint efforts of the parishioners and Fr. Pastor Roman Gorowski were very positive. The Church and school buildings were renovated just in time so that in November 1995 we could begin the most important task of the Centennial spiritual preparation.

The Centennial Program is very rich in events. It is continuing throughout the year. Committees were formed to handle the preparations for the particular celebrations and events: the Liturgical Committee, Social Committee, Banquet Committee and the Journal Committee. Before this Journal was sent to print, the following events took place.

Prior to the opening of the Centennial Celebrations on the first Sunday of Advent, on December 3, 1995, a Parish Mission began in both English and Polish. The English Missions were conducted by the Passionist Fathers and the Polish Mission was conducted by Fr. Jan Kowalik and Fr. Tadeusz Maciejewski. Thousands of people participated in this Mission, and the majority of the faithful availed themselves of Confession and received Holy Communion. Both

Missions were concluded on Thursday with the Blessing of the Mission Cross. On Friday, during the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Parish was given into the care of our Blessed Mother at each Mass. At the evening Mass, this act was carried out by His Excellency Archbishop Tadeusz Gocłowski, C.M., from the Archdiocese of Gdansk in Poland.

The main ceremonies opening our Centennial took place on Sunday, December 10, 1995. On this day, two Masses were celebrated. The main celebrant and homilist at the Polish Mass was His Excellency Archbishop Tadeusz Gocłowski. Our Parish Choir, the St. Cecelia Choir, under the direction of Mr. John Bartosiewicz and the accompaniment of Mrs. Halina Kalitka, sang at this Ceremony. Other participants were Father Chester Mrowka, Provincial of the Congregation of the Mission of the New England Province, as well as many other Priests from the Congregation of St. Vincent DePaul. The second Mass in English was celebrated by His Excellency Bishop Thomas Daily, Bishop of the Brooklyn Diocese. The Word of God, in Polish, was preached by Archbishop Tadeusz Gocłowski and, in English, by the Provincial of the New England Province, Fr. Chester Mrowka. Other participants included 45 Priests from both the Congregation of the Mission and the Diocese. During the English Mass, our Choral Group sang under the direction of Ms. Krystyna Gutt and the accompaniment of Mr. Adam Mikula along with our Parish's Children's Choir under the Direction of Mr. Adam Mikula. The Church was decorated both internally and externally for these ceremonies. Thousands of parishioners and friends of our Parish participated. After the Mass, Parishioners, Bishops, Priests and Sisters gathered in the new school auditorium for cake and coffee, which was beautifully prepared by the Social Committee with the financial assistance of Mr. John Czaplinski.

The next celebration took place on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul on January 25, 1996. This was the Day of the Vincentian Fathers. In attendance were Fr. Karol Holubicki (Provincial of the Province of Poland), Fr. Chester Mrowka (Provincial of the New England Province, and 25 Priests and Brothers from this Province. A Ceremonial Mass was concelebrated by the Provincial Fathers along with the other attending Fathers. The Polish Homilist was Fr. Karol Holubicki and the English Homilist was Fr. John Sledziona, Member of the Provincial Committee and Pastor of the St. Peter Parish in Concord, NH. Through the attendance of the Polish Provincial Father Karol Holubicki, the ceremony took on a special character, since the connection between both Provinces was not only exhibited but deepened. The Polish Province helps the New England Province by sending priests for pastoral work.

The main celebration of the Centennial of Saint Stanislaus Kostka School took place on February 4, 1996. The main celebrant and homilist at this Mass was His Excellency Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito, Auxiliary Bishop of the Brooklyn Diocese. The entire ceremony was coordinated by the Principal of our School, Sr. Marita. Priests, Sisters, Faculty Members, Parents, Children and many parishioners took part in these ceremonies. During the Mass, our Children's Choir sang under the direction of Adam Mikula.

On Sunday, February 25, the Parish and School Association organized its third annual International Day with the theme being the Birthday of our Parish and School. An auditorium, beautifully decorated by the Parish and School Association with much help from Mr. John Czaplinski, greeted a huge crowd of Parishioners. During this event, many children performed a special Centennial program prepared under the direction of Sr. Marita and Mr. Adam Mikula. Much of the success of this event was due to the great dedication of the Parish and School Association under the Direction of the President, Mr. George Czastkiewicz.

During the month of March (The Lenten Season) the Parish experienced a time of prayer, alms and fasting. The only event at this time was the Retreat. In English, the Retreat was conducted by the Franciscan Missionaries. This was an especially beautiful Retreat, in which a few hundred English-speaking parishioners participated. The Retreat in Polish, conducted by a Missionary from Poland, Fr. Wojciech Kozlowski, Director of Missions in Warsaw. Fr. Wojciech (a young Priest with a big heart and tremendous energy) conducted this Mission splendidly. For all parishioners this was a tremendous experience and a spiritual renewal.

A very important part of our Centennial celebrations was a gathering of the Alumni of our School. This event took place on April 21, 1996. A special Mass was celebrated by His Excellency Bishop Joseph Sullivan, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn. The Word of God was preached by Fr. Edmund Gutowski, C.M., who was a native of this Parish and was a student of our School. After Mass, there was a get-together at the Parish School Auditorium, and everyone was invited to visit the classrooms that the Alumni attended between 1 year and 50 years earlier. This was a wonderful gathering of the past students of our School.

During the month of April we saw 129 students receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and in May 105 children receive First Holy Communion.

On May 5, we had the Annual "Krakowianki and Gorale" Spring Show. The theme of their performance was the Parish Centennial. A

beautiful performance was seen by a full auditorium. After the show, there was a special celebration.

On Sunday, May 19, the Athletic League of our Parish held their Centennial Awards Dinner under the direction of the President, Frank Carbone. During this celebration, awards were given out to the athletes. The Athletic League currently has a membership of about 350 children and young adults.

On Wednesday, May 22, we hosted at our Church the former President of Poland, Mr. Lech Walesa. He participated in a concelebrated Mass, with the principal celebrant being our Pastor, Father Roman Gorowski. Many Polish dignitaries participated in this celebration of the Mass along with the faithful, numbering in the thousands.

At the conclusion, President Walesa spoke urging optimism on matters concerning Poland.

Particularly festive and joyous was the parish picnic, which took place on Sunday, June 2, 1996. Hundreds of Parishioners, young adults and children participated. The picnic was sponsored by the Parish and School Association under the direction of the President, Mr. George Czastkiewicz. This was a splendid day for all, exhibiting unity within Polonia.

Corpus Christi on Sunday, June 9 displayed a special character with a Special Concelebrated Mass at which the Principal Celebrant was our Pastor, Fr. Roman Gorowski. Thousands of faithful participants processed along streets to four altars set up outside the Church. The homily was preached by Father Rafal Kopystynski, a vicar of our Parish. The procession consisted of Parish Organizations, the Living Rosary, altar servers, First Holy Communion children, school children, Krakowianki & Gorale, Members of the SPK in Army Uniforms, and our Parish's St. Cecelia Choir. The altars emanated Christ's presence throughout the 100-year existence of our Parish and School.

The Centennial Pilgrimage to Rome and Poland took place from June 26 through July 8 under the leadership of Fr. Pastor Roman Gorowski and Fr. Rafal Kopystynski. In Rome, the group participated in a Mass celebrated by the Holy Father John Paul II on the day of the feast of the Apostles, Sts. Peter and Paul. The group also was given the opportunity for a private audience with the Pope on Sunday evening, June 30. This was an unbelievable experience for all participants of the pilgrimage. In Poland, the most important moment was attending Mass at the Church of Our Lady of Czestochowa on Jasna Gora. The entire group stood with tears in their eyes, directly, in front of the Altar. There we thanked our Blessed Mother for all the graces which

our Parish received during these 100 years. We prayed for blessings for all parishioners, for our children and our youth. The entire pilgrimage went very well and everyone was very satisfied.

Since the Centennial Journal will soon go to print, we will conclude this sequence of events with one which is currently in progress, the bicycle trip across the United States. A group of young adults from our Athletic League are riding on bicycles almost 3,500 miles across the United States in two months, July and August 1996. This is a Centennial event under the theme of "Bike for Life '96". This extraordinary event was headed by the President of our St. Stan's Athletic League, Frank Carbone. Our Parish will be welcoming them back from this journey on Thursday, August 29, 1996.

Events still to come: Sunday, September 22 - Family Day, a joint prayer meeting of the families of the Parish; Sunday, October 20 - Mass of Thanks-giving and Centennial Banquet at Terrace on the Park; November 10,11,12 - 40 Hour Eucharistic Devotion in honor of our Patron, St. Stanislaus Kostka; Sunday, November 17 - 100th Anniversary of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth working at our Parish School; On Sunday, December 1, the conclusion of the Centennial Celebrations with the participation of the Bishop of the Brooklyn Diocese, Bishop Thomas Daily. This will be a ceremonial display of thanks to God while we all sing out with joy —TE DEUM — PRAISE BE TO GOD!!

Weekly Parish Publication

The original idea of a parish publication was conceived by the Reverend Pastor Joseph Studzinski. It was his decision that launched the publication of a parish newsletter.

Meanwhile, Rev. Boleslaw Bielski, C.M., the man who was to become the first editor had been working at St. Stanislaus for over a year. He was a young, alert, energetic, native parishioner, who had much in common with the youth, its spirit, and language; and was associated with the alumni of our school in the capacity of moderator. This newsletter was to serve as a medium of communication; it was to transmit significant information, not only to the alumni about activities related to them, but also to the parish as a whole. Since the alumni assumed the major role in formulating the *Patron*, it was logical that the first issues were primarily concerned with their activities.

With time, the *Patron* changed its character from a purely alumni to a parish publication. Only the most experienced alumni remained with its first editor. They were joined by other contributors, some of whom were clergy, and others were parishioners.

On June, 1944, Reverend Bielski (editor), received an official notification of his assignment to St. John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania as an instructor of the English Language.

In the issue of June, 1944 was the following notice: "Reverend Karol Wawak, new editor of the *Patron*". Father Wawak arrived at this parish from St. Joseph's, Ansonia, Connecticut, a complete stranger to the parishioners.

Thanks to Mother Superior Alphonsilla, "*Mother Patron*" and later Sister Josephine Marie, an involvement with the school and its events were incorporated into the *Patron*. Through her consistent efforts, during her administration and later, there was always a Sister on the faculty staff responsible for transmitting information on school personalia and submitting numerous interesting articles in English. Articles relating to religion, patriotism, and other significant parish activities were a major portion of the *Patron* and were handled personally by the Reverend editor.

Outstanding original articles were offered by Reverend Adalbert Kranc, C.M. In the early part of 1949, Reverend Wawak was forced to discontinue his work as editor due to illness. For about six months, he showed the new editor all phases of the journalistic workings of the *Patron*.

In 1949, Father Kranc assumed editorship of the *Patron*. He possessed a keen sense of observation and had an ability to narrate experiences.

Fr. Kranc, from the beginning of his editorship, performed with maximum devotion and dedication and marked The *Patron* with qualities of logic, conscientiousness and diligence. Upon his arrival in the United States, he served as a professor for many years at St. John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania. In 1937, doctors diagnosed his illness as possible tuberculosis. Undergoing a cure, first in Poland and later in Texas, Father Kranc finally overcame his illness. He displayed a great talent as financial organizer while working on the *Patron*. Not only did he introduce a system of first class advertisement, but he also established within the *Patron* something in the nature of a shop. This was a fund-raising device, whose income at more than one time aided the publication in its days of dire financial need.

Reverend Kranc succumbed to heart failure on Wednesday, July 24, 1957. When the news reached Reverend Wawak, he edited the next issue, and included a biography. At the request of his superiors, Father Wawak resumed the editorship of the *Patron* after an interval of eight years.

In the year 1966, commemorating the Millennium of Polish

Christianity, the *Patron* observed its twenty-fifth anniversary. It is with just pride that the *Patron* could boast of its continued existence among its Polish sponsors, especially since a great number of Polish publications went out of existence.

The *Patron* often encountered many difficulties due to circumstances, time, and in spite of the efforts of its contributors. Therefore, the issue of August, 1971, was the last issue edited by Reverend Wawak.

Rising printing costs continued to plague the *Patron* to such an extent that in 1943 the Parish had to subsidize its publication. In 1949 the Subsidy rose to \$6,000. Financial appeals, special collections and the reduction in number of pages did not alleviate the situation.

On August, 1971 the Rev. Edward Spurgiasz became the editor. He increased the subscription rate, decreased the number of pages and allowed a private printing company to use the photo offset method to print the weekly publication for the price of advertisements collected by the Company.

In 1978 the format was changed becoming more of a parish bulletin than a magazine. The Parish now receives a percentage of the Advertising Revenue.

The Vincentian Fathers

The Congregation of the Mission known also as the Vincentians Fathers has served St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Brooklyn, New York for close to seventy-five years.

The Founder of this group of priests and brothers was St. Vincent de Paul. He was born in France in 1580 and died in 1660. In 1625, this Holy Man organized a new religious community with the help of a group of diocesan clergy. It was officially called the Congregation of the Mission and its motto was and still is, "The Lord has sent me to preach the good news to the poor".

It all began by preaching home-missions to the poor country people. Slowly, it was necessary to give retreats to those who would be ordained as priests. Spiritual days of recollection were preached to the diocesan clergy. From there, this group of priests became chaplains to the prisoners on galley ships of the king of France. Vincentians were sent to various countries of Europe as well as other foreign missions. The congregation grew and a community of sisters, The Daughters of Charity, was formed to take care of the sick in hospitals and the orphaned. The Ladies of Charity assisted St. Vincent and his Sisters, materially and financially. God blessed the good work begun by this saintly man.

In 1651, Vincent de Paul sent his priests and sisters to Poland, a country ravaged by wars, poverty and disease. They established themselves in Warsaw near Holy Cross Church. It was here that the foundation mission of the Vincentian Fathers began in Poland. The Congregation prospered through difficult times as well as good times. Today, the Polish Province is made up of 267 priests and 5 brothers.

In 1904, the first Vincentians arrived in the United States. They proceeded to found the St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr Parish in New Haven, Connecticut, in order to minister to the newly settled Polish immigrants. These hardy Vincentians took root and soon founded a parish in Derby, Connecticut, as well as, several parishes in the Philadelphia area and a school with a preaching group of missionaries in Erie, Pennsylvania.

In 1920, a Polish Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission was established in New Haven, Connecticut. In 1923, the Bishop of Brooklyn asked the Vincentians to take charge of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish in the Greenpoint section of Brooklyn, New York. During that same year a Mission House was established in Whitestone, New York. The Priests in residence preached triduums, novenas, parish missions and helped the local clergy with hearing confessions and provided other temporary parish assistance. Another parish located in Ansonia, Connecticut was added to the list of Vincentian Parishes and a Mission House was established in Utica, New York, in 1965.

On April 23, 1975, this group of Vincentian Priests and Brothers was established as a full self-governing Province and was urged to orient its pastoral efforts towards the New England area.

In the few years since the beginning of the new Province a central provincial house had been located in West Hartford, Connecticut and a small parish had been taken on in Lisbon Falls, Maine. In 1983, the Bishop of New Hampshire asked the Vincentians to take over St. Peter's Parish in Concord, New Hampshire. In 1995, De Paul Provincial Residence was built in Manchester, Connecticut. The priests stationed at Lisbon Falls had been asked by the Bishop to add to their ministry two other parishes that would ultimately be combined into a single parish. In Brooklyn, New York the Local Ordinary requested that the Vincentians take over the parish of Sts. Cyril and Methodius located in the Greenpoint area of Brooklyn.

Today, the poor, the oppressed, and the suffering still require assistance. Many hands reach out to the Vincentian Community for their knowledge, for understanding, for guidance, for love, for healing, and for the joyful presence of Christ. Like St. Vincent de Paul, the

men of the New England Province dedicate their lives to the service of God's people as preachers, parish priests, chaplains and catechists.

In the New England Province, our "little company" looks forward to the future, consciously determined to make good use of every opportunity given to us by God's Providence. St. Vincent said: "Do the good that presents itself to be done. I do not say we should go out indiscriminately and take on everything, but rather, things that God lets us know He wants of us. We belong to Him and not to ourselves. If He increases our work, He adds to our strength also."

St. Stanislaus Kostka School

To a Pole, Religion and the Polish language are treasures. Treasures, that are vital and cherished. This is the picture of the Polish immigrants in Brooklyn. From the beginning they organized and associated themselves with others of their kind, to better keep these traditions. In 1875, they erected their own church, near the Brooklyn Navy Yard and named it, St. Casimir's. Soon after, they opened a small Polish Catholic School in an empty house on North 7th Street in Williamsburg. The school began in the year 1883 - as noted in the *Pamiętnik* of St. Casimir's Parish. From the well-known annual, *The Catholic Directory* (which offers data on the Catholic Church in America) shows 1887 as the date of the oldest Polish School.

It was not an eight grade school. In the beginning just thirty students attended, but shortly the enrollment increased to one hundred and twenty-five. The one lay teacher who first taught was soon joined by another. Then, in 1891, the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth arrived and established their home in the Brooklyn Diocese. They settled in South Brooklyn and taught in the little school on North 7th Street. Soon, another Polish School arose, also under the direction of the Sisters of Nazareth. After a lapse of a few years, another church came into existence - the Church and Parish of Our Lady of Czestochowa.

The Sisters of the Order of The Holy Family of Nazareth were brought to America through the efforts of the pastor of St. Casimir's Parish, Father Vincent Bronikowski. Four Sisters were in the first group of arrivals. The history of the Sisters of Nazareth began on March 8, 1891. Their activities were part of the histories of many schools associated with Polish Parishes.

Our school - one year older than our parish of St. Stanislaus Kostka - was started on September, 1895 with an enrollment of 60 students. After being assigned three Sisters for its management, Father Leon Wysiecki, organizer of two parishes, builder of St. Stanislaus Kostka, and later its first pastor, established the Sisters in this new school.

It is not certain where the Sisters lived, or even where they taught the children. Perhaps, it was in an empty house situated on the "lot" on Driggs Avenue. Records listed in the "Central Home of The Holy Family of Nazareth" located in Des Plaines, Illinois, indicate that the first nuns in Greenpoint, lived in a cold, drafty house. It was probably near the site of the old school, which was being built at that time. The house was torn down in a year or two, and the site at 185 Driggs Avenue became the location of the first rectory.

The year of 1896 was an eventful one for the Polish Colony of Greenpoint and Williamsburg. In Greenpoint, on Driggs Avenue, a school was erected to which children were admitted in the Fall of the same year. This new building housed also a temporary church and chapel, in which the bishop during Confirmation ceremonies, announced to the people that as of this date the Parish of St. Stanislaus Kostka was formally in existence.

In 1896, there were one hundred and fifty students in school, within a few years the figure rose to above four hundred. In the year of 1909-1910, a seventh grade was added, and in 1912-1914, the school was remodeled and enlarged with an eighth grade being opened for the following year. Five hundred and six children were taught in these eight grades.

June of 1914 saw our first four graduates. The graduates were Anthony F. Zasowski (who later became a prelate), Leonard Piasecki, Konstanty Chrzanowski, and Mary Baranowska. At this graduation the pastor proudly stated, "Whoever from the eighth grade would wish to go to High School will receive a diploma signifying completion of Parochial School training." This year closed the first era of the school's life. Throughout this period, the school served the needs of the Polish population of Greenpoint and Williamsburg. The period experienced the loss of our oldest Polish School, begun in 1883 in the Parish of St. Casimir's on North 7th Street in Williamsburg. After the opening of St. Stanislaus Kostka School, she no longer had any reason to exist, since all her duties were taken over by our school. It can be claimed with natural pride, that St. Stanislaus Kostka's roots reached back to the year 1883.

As the Parish of St. Stanislaus Kostka grew so did the school enrollment. As can be readily seen by the school enrollment of 1019 students during 1923-1924, the children were everywhere. They were down in the lower church and up in the school hall. The conditions were crowded and oppressive. The number of children in one classroom was so great it was unbelievable. In the school hall two classes were separated by movable partitions. The second grade had ninety-eight pupils in the years 1927-1929, and in the sixth grade the pupils numbered one hundred and twenty. On Saturdays and

Sundays, the school hall was used for all sorts of functions designed to raise money for a new school. Before every function, everything had to be removed. Very early Monday morning the hall had to be aired out and readied again for classroom purposes. A new school was a real necessity. In 1929, this dream was realized with the building of a new school dedicated to the advancement of education. There were eighteen classes, a new hall, and several extra rooms. It was a great leap forward. The efforts of the parishioners, who accomplished this, were amazing. Everyone rejoiced; those who planned, those who built and those who paid off the debts. To this day the building is a source of pride and joy.

The building of the new school on Newell Street in 1929 brought the parish to its most current period. The Parish now had school buildings with a significant number of classrooms and equipment which gave greater possibilities as we proceeded into the future. Naturally, this does not preclude the necessary interior and exterior upkeep to maintain the buildings in proper order, for which large sums of money were expended. The current times, however, necessitated different categories of improvements.

In 1966, television sets with a closed circuit station assigned by the diocese was installed. A school Library was opened in 1968 replacing a former classroom.

As the enrollment slowly declined, classrooms became available for other uses. A science lab and central computer room were opened as the school moved ahead to keep up with educational and technological advances of the times.

Along with the decrease in student enrollment St. Stanislaus Kostka School saw a decrease in the number of Sisters in the classrooms. As the number of lay faculty increased the school began to become a financial concern of the parish. However, just as the people of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish supported the financial burden of building a school in 1926, they continue to support it today.

Through the continued support of our parish family our students are offered classes in Art, Music, Gym and Computer in addition to the core curriculum. A well founded English Second Language (ESL) program as well as remedial services are made available through the efforts of our retired Sisters. In addition funds are received from the NYS government to assist with needed supplies and services for our school. Though, St. Stanislaus Kostka School has changed greatly since its birth in 1895 it is still striving to educate our students spiritually, academically and socially thus enabling them to take their place in a rapidly changing world.

In our educational endeavors, the personal development of the

student, as a Christian and as an individual person, are the hallmarks of the philosophy of Saint Stanislaus Kostka School. As a school community we believe that the primary purpose of the school is to lead individuals to live a Christ-like life by coming to know and love God through the Gospel teachings.

The faculty of St. Stanislaus Kostka School believes that knowledge is a value in itself and leads to self-improvement. We strive to develop the intellect of our students by recognizing their individuality. The faculty firmly believes in each child's learning potential and unique learning style. Hence, curriculum is developmental with emphasis on the whole child.

Our aim is to foster a positive learning experience which will eventually culminate in creating an individual who is an asset to himself, to the community and to humankind.

Important to its identity as a Catholic school, various liturgical celebrations are planned. The students participate in monthly First Friday Mass, class masses, seasonal prayer services, class Stations of the Cross, processions for various Church holy days, May Crowning and frequent opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In addition, classes preparing for the reception of the sacraments have additional service projects and prayer services to add to the "specialness" of the sacraments.

Activities take place throughout the school year to add to growth of school spirit, global awareness and nurturing of student talents. The activities include Academic Jeopardy, International Night, Spelling Bees, Christmas Pageants, Thanksgiving Food Drive, World Hunger Day, various events during Catholic Schools Week, donations to the Propagation of Faith and Lenten sacrifices for the poor.

The students are fortunate to have a variety of after school activities open to them. Our children can enjoy being members of the Altar Servers, Athletic League, Children's Choir, Krakowianki and Gorale, Lectors and Blessed Virgin Mary Sodality. The religious, faculty and parents respect one another's roles as we provide for a healthy environment for our children. An environment which will allow our students to grow emotionally, socially, intellectually and physically as members of St. Stanislaus Kostka School.

Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth

The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth are an international apostolic congregation called to extend the Kingdom of God's love through dedicated service to the Church, especially in ministry to the

family. The community was founded in Rome, Italy, in 1875, by Frances Siedliska, who is now known as Blessed Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd.

After establishing convents in Krakow, Poland, in 1881, Mother Mary turned her eyes to the United States. She, accompanied by ten Sisters, landed in New York on July 4, 1885. The first three American houses were founded in Chicago in 1885. Four homes were founded in Brooklyn between the years 1891 to 1896.

The Sisters continued throughout the early 1900's to establish homes throughout the United States and Europe. By the time of the death of their foundress Mother Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd in 1902, 29 foundations had been established in Poland, France, England and the United States. Today, there are more than 1,700 Sisters in Australia, Bellarus, England, France, Italy, Philippines, Poland, Puerto Rico, the Ukraine and the United States.

Parish Societies

We have mentioned various activities which were important fund-raising sources for the parish, especially during the late twenties and early thirties. These were organized by the Parish Societies for the sole financial benefit of the parish. The enthusiasm with which these activities were received by the parishioners truly was impressive, especially when we consider the general financial difficulties of the period.

In that year, 1930, there were dances scheduled for seven out of the nine Saturdays between New Year and the first Sunday in Lent. These Dances or "Balls" as they were proudly known, were not stiff, formal affairs. Rather, the atmosphere was relaxed and family-like. Everything ended at midnight since there was either work the next morning or Sunday Mass.

Lent was observed more strictly then, and so there were no dances but there were theatrical presentations of a serious or religious nature and, in later years, films. Beginning with Easter, almost every weekend some society presented a show or ran a dance until June, with its graduation ceremonies and parish picnic. In those days societies occasionally sponsored picnics, although the primary one was run for the parish and in 1930 produced the outstanding profit of \$1,920! September to December saw additional festivities, including the bazaar, which then lasted for a week with the societies each taking turns being responsible for a night. Even in Advent there was a dramatic presentation and a film. In those early years, the schoolchildren unfailingly presented their *Jaselka* at Christmas time.

All of these activities were well patronized. We must note that the generosity of the people in supporting these activities extended beyond their own parish to causes dear to their heart, such as the Catholic University in Lublin and seminaries in Poland as well as to assisting missions in far-off Japan.

During the 1940's (in spite of World War II) and 1950's the Parish was the hub for many social and cultural activities.

There were some 35 Societies and affiliated organizations that sponsored many activities to expand their treasuries and aid the Church.

There were Butcher's Balls, Baker's Balls, Grocer's Balls, Society Yearly Balls, Barn Dances and special fund raising dances. The Parish had a Booster Club, an Alumni Association, a Vocation Club, a Youth Action Group, an Orchestra, a Symphony Orchestra, a Mandolin Orchestra, Sea Cadets and their Bugle/Drum Corps, a School Band, a Boy Scout Troop, a Library, a Parish Museum and the Adam Mickiewicz Dramatic Circle that presented theater in both Polish and English.

The St. Aloysius Society had a baseball team, a softball team, a basketball team and two bowling teams. The Altar Boy Society had two basketball teams and the Alumni Association had one.

During the late 50's and throughout the 1960's interest, in just about all of the aforementioned activities, began to decline and as a result many organizations were dissolved. For example, The Children of Mary Society, the oldest society, organized in 1895 with the renewal of womankind as its aim, was dissolved in 1991.

The Saint Barbara's Society, the oldest Fraternal Society, organized in 1903, is now united with the St. Ann and Sacred Heart Societies. The Adam Mickiewicz Dramatic Circle, though technically in existence, has been dormant for years.

We are not about to delve into the reasons why, but we will pray that what we have today, will continue to flourish and perhaps even some of the old will be revived.

Since the beginning of the parish, various societies have been organized. Some of these societies were entirely religious in nature, while others devoted themselves exclusively to social activities. The majority of the organizations, however, have always worked closely with the parish. In order to avoid duplication, it was necessary to coordinate the work of the societies. For that reason, the Parish Committee was organized during the pastorate of Father Leon Wysiiecki. The Committee is composed of the presidents of the various

parish societies and their chosen delegates.

The Committee meets several times a year to plan and discuss various parochial activities such as: the parish jubilees, the Pulaski Day Parade, the New Year's Eve Ball, and the celebrations on the anniversary of ordination for the priests of the parish.

In accordance with the decrees of Vatican Council, it is the desire of the Parish Committee to involve all societies within the parish territorial limits in its activities. Several newly organized societies have already joined the Parish Committee.

In the year 1902, the founder and first pastor of our parish, the Reverend Leon Wysiecki, met quite frequently with a group of young men whose only desire was the formation of an organization consisting solely of young parishioners.

On February 3, 1903, the dream of these persistent young men materialized. "The St. Aloysius Young Men's Catholic Club" was organized. The name of St. Aloysius was a most appropriate choice, for he is the symbol of all Catholic youth.

The Club, or St. Al's as it is commonly known today, was founded on three basic principles: first, to organize the Polish-American youth and aid them in the fulfillment of their religious and moral obligations; second, to maintain a characteristic of brotherly love; and third, to keep the Polish language, customs and traditions alive, and maintain a continued interest in the affairs of our nation, community and parish. Needless to say, through the many years that have followed, numerous changes have taken place. However, these three basic principles have always been adhered to by the membership.

Socially, the organization sponsors many events; some of which are an annual Communion Breakfast and a Barn Dance, held each Thanksgiving season.

As far as sports are concerned, the games of basketball and bowling have always been the predominant interests of the Club. The organization, however, has always taken a keen interest in many other activities, such as baseball, softball, handball and gymnastics. Today it is a strong supporter of the St. Stan's Athletic League with several of its members actively participating.

For recreational purposes, the Club maintains a spacious sitting room, equipped with modern furniture, television, radio and reading facilities. The bowling alleys have produced many championship teams in the Catholic Bowling League.

With respect to the parish itself, the members of the St. Aloysius,

YMCC have continually taken an interest and an active part in all parish affairs and problems: in an advisory capacity, as a member of the Parish Committee; physically assisting at all picnics, bazaars, socials; financially, by donating thousands of dollars to the Parish throughout the years beginning with the construction of the school building on Newell Street. With regard to the parish, this Society has always maintained an attitude of sincere affection. Neither did the members of the Club shirk their duty toward the Government of the United States. In World War I, two members gave their lives. During World War II, one hundred and twenty members saw active service, four of whom never returned. A granite monument stands in front of the Club in their memory.

The organization has a large membership, all of whom are proud to be members of a progressive institution. This feeling not only stems from the Club's being one of the oldest in the parish, borough, city and state, but from its progress, due to its adherence to the principles adopted at its inception.

Father Kruszka, a historian of early Polonia, noticed that at the beginning of the century, "... every Polish church had a hall equipped with a stage for amateur theatrical presentations". Children and young adults presented Polish plays in the Polish language. The first parochial theater is recorded in 1883, culminating in a professional Polish Theater in Chicago in 1908.

A parish theater was also organized at St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish by Father Leon Wysiecki in 1899 when he founded the Dramatic Circle. Beginning on July 2, 1905, the Dramatic Circle began "acceptable" annual productions.

When the Vincentian Fathers arrived at St. Stanislaus Kostka in 1922, the Dramatic Circle was still active in presenting its *Little Theater* productions. In 1928 Father Pieniazek reorganized the Circle as the Adam Mickiewicz Dramatic Circle and he encouraged new members to join. During the Great Depression it worked enthusiastically for the benefit of the Parish.

The year 1932 proved to be prosperous for The Circle. After performing on January 22, April 2, and May 1, the Circle presented an elaborate play -*Krakowiaczy i Gorale*- with native costumes in September. Father Mazurkiewicz was so impressed with the caliber of the presentation that he invited all the parishioners to attend the next performance.

The following years were also very productive. There were up to 5 performances a year. In 1941, under Fr. Francis Kellner's direction, the Circle presented the operetta *Krakowiaczy i Gorale*.

In 1944, "... after the director and most of the men went into military service, the circle limped along. However, by December 23, 1945, it had its own president and officers. It revived with the safe return of the servicemen. On February 24, 1946, the Circle presented " ... a very fine performance."

In 1951, Father Wiktor Brzoska, C.M. directed L. Rydel's *Betlejem Polskie*. An estimated 600 people attended the performance. In January of 1953, the Circle took *Betlejem Polskie* on tour to New Haven, Derby, and Ansonia, Connecticut "... to the acclaims of all." In the following year, the Circle rotated the Christmas plays and presented *Żłobek Betlejemski*.

The Circle was revived with an influx of new Polish immigrants during the Cold War. "We acknowledge that the presentations of the circle are better with each year," stated the PATRON. "Great Strides are made in furthering Polish literature, maintaining the ideas and native traditions, igniting love of the Polish language," so continued the PATRON.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Circle was observed in 1953 by honoring the first chaplain, Father Wiktor Kozłowski, C.M. and the first president, Kazimierz Dabrowski.

A total of fifteen presidents presided over the first 25 years, and from 1941 to 1953 \$12,738.61 was donated to the parish from the performances.

On April 28, 1968, the Circle performed its first play in the English language, henceforth, alternating performances between Polish and English.

Today, the Dramatic Circle exists in name only. Its few members remain faithful to its tradition and continue to treasure and cultivate the Polish language, its culture, and the Faith of our fathers.

Holy Name Society

Sixty-seven men assembled on March, 1954 at 8 p.m. to form our Holy Name Society. Under the leadership of Mr. Joseph Roman (District Chairman of the Holy Name Extension Committee) with Reverend John Redzinski, C.M. (the first spiritual director), the purposes, aims and spiritual benefits to be gained by being a member were explained to all.

Each year, usually during Lent, the Society participates as a group in the Annual Communion Breakfast. The purpose of the Holy Name is to honor and revere God and to aid the pastor and the priests. On Holy Name Sunday each month many men attend meetings after

Mass.

In its years of service to the parish it has aided, along with other parishioners and donors, in the brick and shingle campaigns for the repair of the church, and in the building of a new rectory. The repair of the old school and the renovation of our fire-damaged church. Members helped in soliciting funds for the diocesan High School building campaign, and also aided the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth in their building fund bazaar.

St. Ann's Society

St. Ann's Society, Group of the Polish Union of North America, was founded as a fraternal insurance group in 1940 by Mrs. Ewa Warzynska.

The Society, however, existed prior to 1940 as an auxiliary to St. Stanislaus, B.M. Society. The group aimed to exemplify family traits, and do humanitarian, philanthropic and community work

St. Stan's Athletic League

After being dormant for a number of years, the St. Stan's Athletic League was reinstated in 1989 with a new and revitalized focus and direction. Unlike its predecessors, the current athletic league has blossomed into a multi-faceted youth organization just after a few years of existence. Initially, moderated by Fr. Stanley Staniszewski, then dramatically expanded under the guidance of Fr. Roman Gorowski and directed by Frank P. Carbone. The St. Stan's Athletic League has made a significant, far-reaching impression among the youth of the Parish.

Consistently demonstrating its mission - to create an opportunity for the grammar and high school students of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish by developing and enhancing their skills along athletic and social planes. The League strives to promote well-rounded individuals ready to accept the challenges that exist outside the regular school curriculum. Toward this end, the St. Stan's "Screamin' Eagles" have positively impacted the lives of over 500 young people in just over 7 years of operation.

The unparalleled combination of a dedicated core of 65 volunteer parents and students offering their services, knowledge, skills, and advice coupled with a sponsor base of 35 local businesses and individuals annually contributing essential funding have enabled the St. Stan's Athletic League to maintain its diverse program offering:

Get To The Point-5K Run - 450 Entrants, 110 Volunteers

Intramural Basketball League - 150 Entrants, 15 Teams

Catholic Youth Organization (C.Y.O.) Basketball -75
Entrants, 7 Teams

Intramural Bowling - 55 Entrants

Intramural Volleyball - 45 Entrants

Tae Kwon Do - 25 Entrants

Catholic Youth Organization (C.Y.O.) Softball - 15 Entrants,
1 Team

Catholic Youth Organization (C.Y.O.) Baseball - 20
Entrants, 1 Team

Amateur Athletic Union (A.A.U.) Basketball - 12
Entrants, 1 Team

In addition, the Athletic League promotes these special events as a supplement to their regular curriculum:

Christmas Dance, Christmas Caroling, All-Star Weekend, Valentine's Dance, Cake Sale, Awards Banquet, Scavenger Hunt, Great Adventure and Action Park Trip, Ice Skating, Car Wash, Annual Weekend Retreat at Esopus, New York and the St. Bonaventure University Basketball Camp.

Some of the more notable accomplishments of the Screamin' Eagles have included numerous Catholic Youth Organization basketball local and division championships in both the girls and boys divisions as well as a Greenpoint softball championship. Our Young athletes have been offered the opportunity to travel to different states-Connecticut, Colorado, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, and Wisconsin-representing the League and the Parish as they competed in various sports events. We are extremely proud of our Student Athletes, who have merited academic and sports-related scholarships to various high schools and universities throughout the metropolitan area and the east coast.

During the Parish's centennial year, the Athletic League embarked on its greatest and most significant endeavor to date: the sponsoring of a Cross-Country Cycling Exhibition called the Bike for Life '96. Four of St. Stan's elite members will travel from Seattle, Washington to Brooklyn, New York by bicycle, covering 3,500 miles in just 58 days to celebrate the Parish's 100th anniversary and promote the significant accomplishments of the young people in the community.

With its foundation firmly set in Greenpoint, the St. Stan's Athletic League will look to continue its standard of excellence in providing quality sports programming and positive opportunities for the youth of the Parish for many years to come.

The St. Stanislaus Kostka Choir was formed in 1899, by Reverend Leon Wysiecki and Mr. Alexander Fiust, the first organist. On October, 1903, it was decided the choir would be known as the "St. Cecilia Choir".

The activities of the early years of the choir are vague, since no records were kept. We do know, however, that the choir took a very active part in the growth of the new parish. It continued to do so under the direction of Mr. Walenty Bak, the organist, from January, 1906 to December of 1911. In 1912, Reverend Alexander Cizmowski began keeping records of choir meetings and events.

The choir sang at the start of construction of the new church, and in 1913 at the opening of the renovated school on Driggs Avenue.

From the first days of existence, credit for the high artistic standing of the choir must be given to its organists, Messrs. Alexander Fiust, Joseph Klein, Walenty Bak and Jan Surowiec. The choir was brought to a high degree of excellence with the appointment of Mr. Stanislaw Suchodolski as organist. From 1917 to 1954, his devotion and musical expertise was unsurpassed and greatly respected. Prof. Konrad Czynski followed in 1955, concentrating his efforts on Church music and maintaining the choir's overall high standards until his retirement in 1974. From 1974 to 1994, Mrs. Halina Kalitka was appointed organist. Her boundless spirit and enthusiasm enhanced the choir's liturgical functions as well as many secular performances outside St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish. Currently, Mr. Adam Mikula, an accomplished musician, is the choir's organist.

Of the many Pastors, Chaplains and Music Directors who guided the choir, special recognition must be given to Reverend Victor Brzoska and Reverend Francis Kellner. Under the meticulous direction of Reverend Kellner, the choir sang at both the 1940 and 1964 New York State World Fairs. Other presentations included the Commemorative Celebration of the Millennium Anniversary of Poland's conversion to Christianity and the 75th Diamond Jubilee of our Parish. As Music Director and Conductor since 1974, Mr. John T. Bartosiewicz has devoted much time and energy to perpetuate the rich traditions of the choir. His arrangements and orchestrations have enhanced the choir's musical anthology and broadened its repertoire to include religious and secular performances with orchestral accompaniment at special Masses and celebrations within as well as outside the St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Community.

Under the guidance of Reverend Joseph Szpilski and Reverend Walenty Pieczka, the choir recorded a total of 4 record albums. In 1977, "*Pasterka, a Treasury of Polish Carols*" was recorded followed in

1978 by "*Boze Narodzenie, the Spirit of a Polish Christmas*". In September of 1980, in honor of the choir's 70th Anniversary, "*Hymns of Praise*" was released. January 1985 marked the recording of "*Wielkanoc: A Spring Celebration*".

It is impossible to enumerate the choir's many performances over the years. Several Parish highlights include sponsoring a Christmas concert at the closing festivities of our Parish's 90th Anniversary; singing at a special morning Mass welcoming President and Mrs. Lech Walesa to our church in 1991 and 1996; participation in a special Mass marking the 200th Anniversary of the Polish Constitution con-celebrated by Jozef Cardinal Glemp, Primate of Poland held in our church and our most recent participation at the Polish language ceremonies of the Parish's 100th Anniversary celebration officiated by Archbishop Tadeusz Coclowski of Krakow on December 10, 1995.

Some highlights of performances outside our Parish community include singing for Pope John Paul II in Shea Stadium during his first visit to New York City; six invitations to sing at St. Patrick's Cathedral for the Annual Pulaski Day Parade Mass; singing in the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf Astoria at the 46th Annual Kosciuszko Foundation Ball and the 50th Anniversary Pulaski Day Parade Banquet; participation in the closing ceremonies of Polish Heritage Month at St. James Pro-Cathedral in Brooklyn; three fund-raising events sponsored by the Polish Children's Heart Line Fund at the Polish Consulate in New York City; two appearances on the Sunday Mass Program sponsored by the Passionist Fathers TV Network; twice participated in ceremonies sponsored by the Speaker of the New York City Council honoring the Pulaski Day Parade at New York's City Hall.

The St. Cecilia Choir looks forward to the future with the hope, that we may continue to serve our Parish and promote Polish-American religious and cultural endeavors throughout Polonia.

Early in 1990, Reverend Stanislaus Staniszewski, Pastor, expressed his wish for organized singing at the 10:00AM English Mass. He thus planted the seed which grew into the Choral Society.

Krystyna Gutt, together with the Reverend Roman Gorowski, began to formulate plans for a new chorus. They worked out the logistics, prepared the publicity, ordered hymnals, and sought out a music director. They were fortunate to obtain the services of Jan Sporek, a noted conductor from Poland. He remained in this post for two years.

The new ensemble met for the first time on June, 1990, for what was essentially to be a trial period. As September approached, the 22 chorus members opted to continue singing throughout the year and

the Pastor consented.

On December 24, of that year, prior to the beginning of the Midnight Mass, the Choral Society sang its first concert of Christmas carols. The chorus' repertoire grew and, by the time of its first anniversary, the choristers had learned and performed 115 hymns and songs by such composers as Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Franck, Faure, and Sibelius.

In 1992, Krystyna Gutt assumed the position of Music Director. The following year, the Choral Society sang its first Thanksgiving Mass; this has since become an annual tradition.

The Choral Society participated at the English language ceremonies of the Parish's 100th Anniversary celebration officiated by Bishop Daily on December 10, 1995; as well as the Masses for the Alumni and Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

The banner above the Choral Society's name reads *St. Esprit vous garde* or *Holy Spirit keep you* as it is believed that He is the guiding force behind this dedicated group.

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The Consolidated Democratic Club, Inc.

With the consolidation of the Kosciuszko and the Pulaski Polish American Citizens Clubs, the Consolidated Democratic Club, Inc. was formed in 1921.

Many members of this Club aided others in applying for papers to become citizens of the United States. In addition, instruction is given on how to vote during the primaries and elections. Through the efforts of the Board of Directors and the Ladies Auxiliary, the many who came to the Club were assisted in obtaining federal, state and city positions, and also in becoming captains and inspectors in the various election districts.

The Club is interested in its members, the community and the church, and provides assistance when it is needed.

On February 23, 1984 Father Pieczka, as Pastor, and Mrs. Stephanie Adamkiewicz as its First President organized this group with Father Gicewicz as moderator. Golden Age Club is opened to new members age 50 and over. Annual dues are one dollar.

The aim of the club was to give an opportunity for meeting and socializing for senior citizens. They have a Christmas Dinner Party and sponsor several outings to interesting places. Bingo and card playing are enjoyed after each meeting and cake and coffee is served. Speakers are often provided for talks on various subjects of interest to seniors. The group meets every Thursday at 12 Noon to 4 PM in the school basement on Newell Street.

The Krakowianki and Gorale Dance Group

The Krakowianki and Gorale Dance Group is composed mainly of children and young people, and is the oldest youth organization of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish. The first meeting of twelve Krakowianki was held on August, 1938, under the sponsorship of St. Barbara's Society. With the encouragement of the late pastor, the Reverend Joseph Studzinski, the lay founders, Agnieszka Jaskot, Maria Kowalska, Maria Augustyn and Zofia Bagley, this small group began its task of learning Polish songs, dances and traditions. Officially, however, the

first dance lesson with a teacher was held on October, 1942. In 1954, boys were invited to join and by 1957 the group numbered over two hundred. Singing instruction was begun in 1942 by the late Reverend Victor Kozlowski. In 1962, Reverend Francis Kellner combined the singing and dancing as part of a single lesson and the whole group of over two hundred members had been and is now singing together.

The Krakowianki and Gorale have participated in various programs sponsored by the church, school and civic associations. On an annual basis they take part in church processions and the Pulaski Day parade. In December of each year they present their own Christmas show with the ever popular "Jaselka" for the enjoyment of parents and friends. In May they present a program beginning with a morning Mass for their intention and having a grand song and dance festival in the afternoon to mark the end of the annual dancing season.

Beyond our parish grounds, the group has appeared at many functions. Their first television appearance was on May 19, 1956, on Channel 13, WATV, on Eddie Gronet's Polka Party.

During the 1964-1965 New York World's Fair, our Krakowianki and Gorale performed several times at the New York State Pavilion. Another memorable event for the Krakowianki and Gorale was their three day visit to Washington, D.C. on May 9th, 10th and 11th in 1968. The children were received and danced for President Lyndon B. Johnson at the White House. They danced a Mazurka, Oberek and the Krakowiak. It was a most impressive and thrilling experience for all present. To top this performance the group was invited on coast to coast television, Channel 4, on the *Bell Television Hour* with Victor Borge as host, on Christmas Eve in 1968. In May, 1970, a film was made for Thailand entitled *Thai Report* in which this group presented Polish Dances.

In 1979, they greeted Pope John Paul II at St. James Pro-Cathedral presenting His Holiness with a basket of field flowers. In that same year, they took part in the lighting of the Polish flag colors at the Empire State Building in protest of martial law in Poland. Then in 1986 the Krakowianki & Gorale were present at the dedication of the Rev. Popieluszko Square in Greenpoint.

In the last several years, Krakowianki & Gorale have continued to participate in many other community, cultural and religious celebrations, including dancing for the children of the UN School in Queens, taking part in the annual Mass of celebration of Polish Heritage (which takes place on the last Sunday in October at St. James Pro-Cathedral in Brooklyn), and the ribbon-cutting ceremony (in 1995) to dedicate the newly renovated Msgr. McGoldrick (Winthrop) Park. In February 1996, they were present at the 25th

Anniversary of the Catholic Migration Office. Most recently the Krakowianki & Gorale took part in the Mass honoring Mr. Lech Walesa, former President of Poland, who visited St. Stanislaus Kostka Church on May 22, 1996. After working hard all year long, the children are treated to a weekend outing for a well deserved rest.

The Krakowianki & Gorale always bring a special and most colorful "touch of Poland" to so many special occasions.

The Lady of Fatima

The Lady of Fatima was chosen as the Patroness of a Society for the young married women of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish, after long and serious discussions with Pastor Joseph Studzinski, C.M. The Society had its first meeting in December, 1949 with Father Bernard Nieslony, C.M., acting moderator.

The prime purpose of the organization was to unite the young married women to take an active role in parish activities; and help the members spread devotions to the Blessed Mother by perpetual rosary recitation and by attending First Saturday devotions for World Peace. Beside the spiritual aspects— days of reparation, retreats, confraternity classes, communion breakfasts, holy hours, pilgrimages, visiting the sick, and participation in the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women— the social functions have raised funds to build the beautiful grotto by our church; aided school and church improvements; supported orphanages, old folks homes and foreign missions all over the world, particularly in Poland, Africa and South America.

Silver or gold rosaries are given to members on their twenty-fifth or fiftieth wedding anniversaries.

The first moderator, Father Bernard Nieslony, helped lay the foundation for the constitution and Father Stanislaus Stempien, C.M., continued his work for one year.

An integral part of our parish life has always been the many organizations formed by the Polish people to serve their own ethnic needs. Of all of them, the Polish National Alliance is probably most actively involved with the continuing affairs of our parish, more so than in the many others to which its activity extends, even outside New York State. Undoubtedly its common goal, the preservation of the Polish identity, is the starting point of cooperation.

Next, the Z.P.N., as it is commonly known from the initials of its Polish name, Zjednoczenie Polsko Narodowe, began in 1903, and since then our parish announcements consistently mention its

participation in our affairs. In 1905, the Z.P.N. began its own publication, *Czas*, with its own printing press which we have used for the publication of the *Patron* since its inception in 1941. Also in 1941, the Z.P.N. moved its official quarters from 142 Grand Street to a more immediate vicinity, 155 Noble Street.

The organization itself took note of the close ties between us in an article dedicated to our Seventy-Fifth Jubilee. In it, the Secretary General mentions many activities which we undertook in common. After the catastrophic floods of 1934 in Poland, the Z.P.N. organized a Relief Committee which was under the direction of our then pastor, Father Anthony Mazurkiewicz. Within a few weeks they had sent twenty thousand dollars and tons of clothing and shoes. When the global catastrophe of World War erupted, subsequent Relief Committees were joined by every parish priest, who urged all parishioners to assist. The article further tells us that the beloved Father Studzinski himself was the director of the Friends of Polish Soldiers Organization.

Our parish sponsored a total of eight Z.P.N. groups, from Group, Towarzystwo (Society) S. Malachowskiego, to the most recent Group 260, Tow. Sw. Jana Kantego (St. John Kanty)

The Education office of the Diocese of Brooklyn initiated a study on the viability of each parish. The name of the study undertaken was the Convey Study, formulated by Dr. John Convey.

Representatives from our parish and school organizations under the guidance of the Pastor, Father Stanislaus Staniszewski and Principal, Sister Marita conducted the study in our parish in December of 1991.

The consensus of the team was that the church and school operated as two bodies. The Parish and School Association (PSA) was born with the main purpose of bringing these two independent entities closer together and by so doing, the Church and School would work as a unit for the betterment of Community. The PSA was formed on June 24, 1992, with George Czastkiewicz as the first chairman of the organization and the task of recruiting members began.

The main strength of this organization is the cooperation that it fostered between the Parish, the School, the Pastor, the Principal, the Parents, the Parishioners, and the Students. The enthusiasm was visible and it was contagious.

Toward that end, the PSA has sponsored many events which proved to be highly successful. After four years of existence, the International Feast is the most awaited event of the year. It is always a sold out

performance. The Parish Picnic caught on slowly when it was first conceived, but has blossomed, after additional support came from our fellow parish organizations.

The Book Fair, Toys for Tots, the Giving Tree, the Flea Market, the new Parishioners Breakfast and all the PSA activities are events which have gathered parishioners and parents in an environment, which is conducive to sharing and getting involved in the community in which we all live: St. Stanislaus Kostka Church and School in Greenpoint, Brooklyn.

St. Stanislaus Memorial Unit No. 1771 American Legion

The first meeting of the Post was held on September, 1949, in the St. Aloysius clubroom on Driggs Avenue. At this meeting the Post charter was signed by all members present. The man who actually started and laid the groundwork for the organization, Stanley Kugaczewski, was elected the First Post Commander. On Sunday, February 26, 1950, the first Memorial Mass for all deceased veterans was sung at the St. Stanislaus Kostka Church at 11 o'clock. The Post's colors were blessed by Reverend Joseph Studzinski, C.M., Pastor. The permanent charter was presented on Wednesday, February, 1951, by the County Commander. Father Studzinski allowed the newly formed group to hold their meetings at the parish hall on Newell Street. As the membership steadily increased, the Post moved to its own quarters at 119 Driggs Avenue. As the Post continued to grow, it took on more activities in community affairs. Its members always responded and helped the parish at its picnics and bazaars, made visitations to the sick and wounded in the Veterans Hospital, and donated to the Parish Library memorial books in memory of the two parishioners who were killed in action in the conflict in Korea. Each year Christmas packages were sent to boys overseas serving in the Armed Forces. One of the greatest undertakings of the Post in our community was the erection and dedication of a monument in memory of the late pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka Church, Very Reverend Joseph Studzinski, C.M. Today on McGuinness Boulevard and Driggs Avenue, this living memorial known as Father Studzinski Square pays tribute to one who gave a lifetime for God and country. Another giant step was taken in April of 1961, when the Post purchased land on McGuinness Boulevard between Nassau and Norman Avenues. The Post hoped that some day it would be the future site of its new headquarters. On January 2, 1968, this dream started coming true when the ground was broken for the Post's new headquarters. On October, 1968, the Post had a ceremony to dedicate its new building.

St. Stanislaus Memorial Unit No. 1771 American Legion Auxiliary

The St. Stanislaus Memorial Unit No. 1771 American Legion Auxiliary, was organized in November of 1963. The only form of membership that is authorized is active membership, of which there are two classes, senior and junior members. The primary purpose of an Auxiliary Unit is to aid the American legion Post to which it is attached in accomplishing the Legion's projects in the community. The Unit is an Auxiliary to the American legion Post and takes its name and number. On the officers of a unit rest the responsibilities of making the unit an active and vital part of the entire organization, giving the support to the American Legion, and the service to country which are the Auxiliary's reasons for being. The St. Stanislaus Memorial Unit No. 1771 American Legion Auxiliary has prospered and grown from a handful of members who organized the Unit. The many projects that they have are to aid and abet the veteran and his family. The Child Welfare Program covers children of all walks of life if they need help. They help the hospitalized veteran by selling a "*Memorial Poppy*" of red crepe paper, which is made by hand by disabled veterans in the poppy workrooms. The monies that are realized from the sales are used to aid the needy veteran and his family.

Maria Konopnicka Polish Educational Society, Inc.

With the large migration from Poland during the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, the need for an organization to foster Polish religions and national traditions of song and language became very apparent.

For this reason, our Greenpoint Polonia established the Polish Saturday School. The school was established on September 20, 1920, with 28 members. Since then, the school has grown into a membership of 380 children, with about 60% from St. Stan's Parish, and the balance from other parishes.

Prior to the establishment of this organization in 1920, the traditions and language were passed on to the next generation by the parish school and by parents.

Until 1956, classes were held at the Polish National Hall. For the next 2 years, the facilities of Erickson Junior High School were used. Then in September of 1960, our Pastor, Reverend Francis Hladki, C.M. made accommodations available at St. Stanislaus Kostka School building on Newell Street. Our current Pastor, Rev. Roman Gorowski, C.M. is now allowing us to use both school buildings - on Newell Street and on Driggs Avenue.

The school draws students from grammar and high schools and is divided into nine classes with three dance groups. The operational needs of the school are provided for by an adult organization and the Maria Konopnicka Polish Educational Society, Inc., which was established in 1922 solely to give aid to the Polish School.

The Usher Society

The Usher Society of St. Stanislaus Kostka Church has been in existence since the founding of the Parish by Rev. Leon Wysiecki. At that time, they were known as Kolektorzy (Collectors). In addition to collecting the offerings at church services, they also assisted the priests in their monthly visitation to parishioners to collect the parish dues. This practice was discontinued when parishioners began paying their dues at the rectory office.

The Ushers are, and have been, the representatives of the Pastor and the priests. With a smile on their faces, the ushers greet and seat the people and maintain order in the church by adhering to the rules of the Fire Department (keeping aisles and exits clear).

Over the years, many men have dedicated their time to serve as ushers. Messrs. Jablonski, Bulakowski, Gregorek, Romanowski, Marchel, Pawicz, Borny, Sikorski, Czuchlewski, Grochocki, Urbanowicz, Schmitt, Wysteppek, Harsche, Dekarski, Wyrozemski, Wnorowski, Lopatka, Wicelinski, Stefanizzi, Zalewski, Golembiewski, Chlebowski, Kurmel, Stobierski, Klewicki, Altyn, Lupenowicz, Fabisiak — just to name some of the many members.

The present ushers, including Henry Bulakowski (60 years of service), Frank Gregorek (50 years of service), and Walter Petekewicz, are continuing the important tradition of ushers, at the Sunday and Holy Day Masses, Novenas, Retreats, Missions, Special Occasions, etc.

Under the guidance of the Chief Usher, Frank Gregorek and his staff, this society of more than fifty (50) ushers not only perform their duties at the Masses, etc. in Church, they are instrumental in assisting the Pastor, Rev. Roman Gorowski in running the great and well known Parish of St. Stanislaus Kostka in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, NY.