

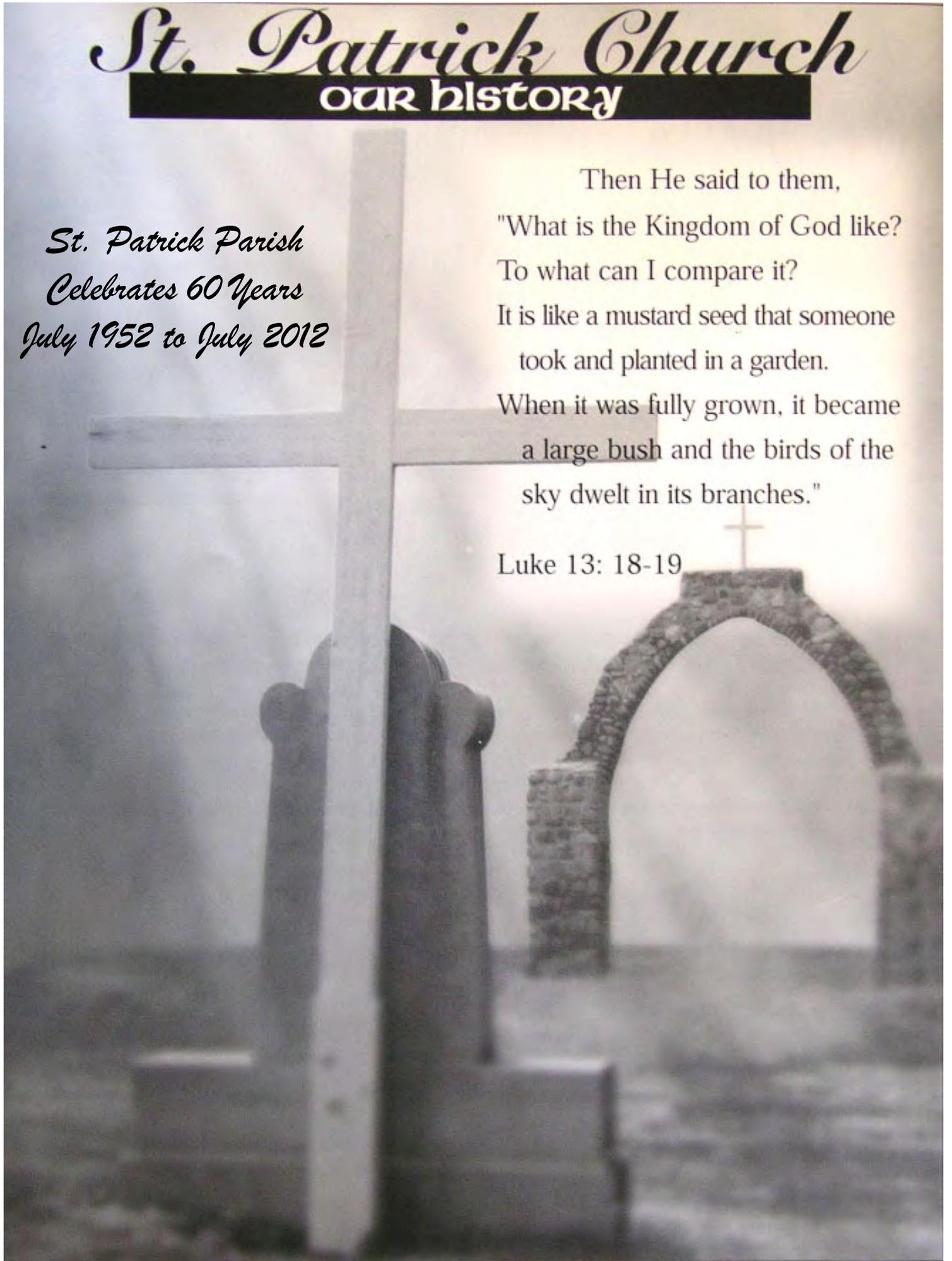
St. Patrick Church

our history

*St. Patrick Parish
Celebrates 60 Years
July 1952 to July 2012*

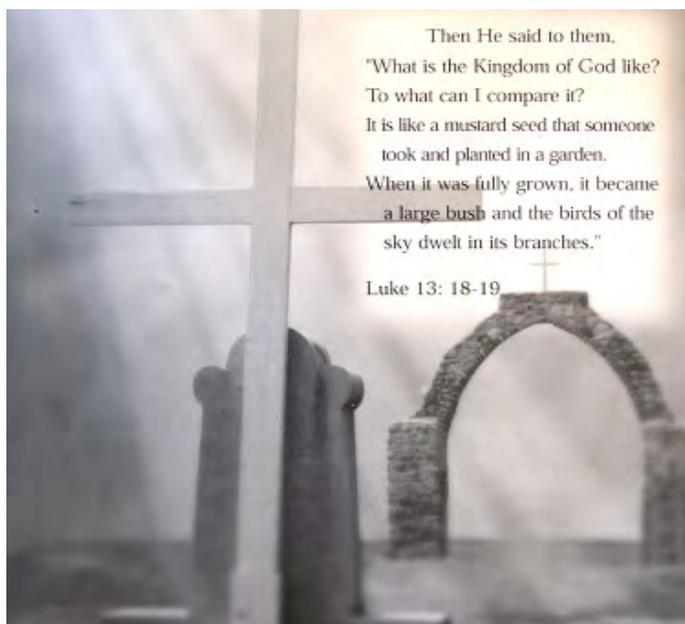
Then He said to them,
"What is the Kingdom of God like?
To what can I compare it?
It is like a mustard seed that someone
took and planted in a garden.
When it was fully grown, it became
a large bush and the birds of the
sky dwelt in its branches."

Luke 13: 18-19



St. Patrick Church, Smithtown, NY

Celebrating our 60th Anniversary



In 1927, the small but growing membership of St. Patrick Church mourned the loss of their church building. The structure was destroyed by fire on a Saturday night - burned to the ground. Today, a white cross stands at St. Patrick Cemetery on Mount Pleasant Road in Hauppauge, marking the spot where the church once stood.

*The story has been handed down among St. Patrick parishioners that the fire was the work of the Ku Klux Klan. The book *Smithtown, New York, 1660 - 1929*, states that "the mysterious brush fire occurred during the height of KKK activities on Long Island." Whatever the cause, the small Catholic community was undeterred. They would build again and their numbers would increase. The seed had been planted and it would grow and flourish for years to come.*

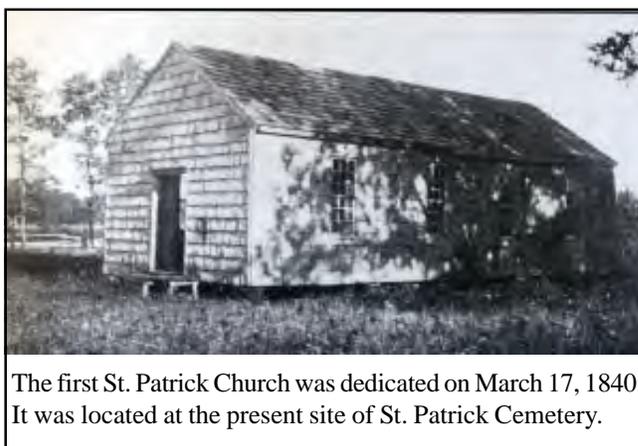
After 60 years as a parish and many more as a church, we take a look back at our history.

Our Early Years

In the early 1830s, a handful of Catholic families made their way to the Smithtown area. Burns, Fisher, Haggerty, Cumminsky, Laughlin, McGinley and Donahue are the names listed for these early Long Island settlers (the list varies slightly according to the source). Their efforts to make Smithtown their home were thwarted by townspeople whose refused to sell or give land to Catholics. Nearby Hauppauge was more hospitable and the Catholic settlers made their new home at the present site of St. Patrick Cemetery on Mount Pleasant Road.

While the area could offer them land, it could not offer them a Catholic Church or priest. The new settlers missed the Mass and the Sacraments. They petitioned the Most Rev. John DuBois, the third Bishop of New York, to send them a priest. Their request marked the beginning of what is today St. Patrick Parish.

The initial response to the petition was the sending of priests to take a census of Catholics living on Long Island. One of the first priests to minister to the scattered Catholic population on Long Island was Rev. John Walsh, pastor of St. James Church on Jay Street in Brooklyn. He was followed by Fr. James O'Donnell, OSA, and Fr. Nicholas O'Donnell, OSA.



The first St. Patrick Church was dedicated on March 17, 1840. It was located at the present site of St. Patrick Cemetery.

In the early years, Mass was celebrated at the Fisher farmhouse. Eventually, a small church was built. The structure resembled a cabin and measured 25 feet by 25 feet - one story and an attic. Inside, the simple church contained hemlock boards, without backs, which served as pews. The Fisher family provided both the building and the property. At the time, this was the only Catholic Church between St. Andrew's in Sag Harbor and St. Monica's in Jamaica, Queens. The church was dedicated on St. Patrick's Day - March 17, 1840 - by Bishop John Hughes of New York.

In 1843, an addition was built on the church. One set of vestments was used and a small projection on the southwest corner served as a confessional and a sacristy. In the decade that followed the dedication of the small church, Mass was celebrated approximately two or three times per year. Sometimes a priest would come from St. James Church in Brooklyn. Often it was Fr. Michael Curren, who was stationed in Flushing. Fr. Curren made the arduous trip to the eastern reaches of Long Island (as far as Greenport) on a regular basis, traveling on horseback. St. Patrick was one of several mission churches of the Flushing parish. Other priests would come and do the same in the years to come.

As the years went by, the Catholic population in the area grew and the little church became too small for its congregation. In 1874, Rev. Peter Kearney built a new church near the old one and eventually had the first St. Patrick Church structure moved across the road. Fr. Kearney stayed in Hauppauge from 1885 to 1887, living in "the first house on the road south of the church."



The second St. Patrick Church was dedicated in June of 1874. It was destroyed by fire in 1927. A white cross now stands in St. Patrick Cemetery, marking the spot where the church once stood.

Sharing a History

From 1888 to 1906, various priests traveled to Hauppauge to celebrate Mass approximately once a month. In 1907, a second church was built in the area - Sts. Philip and James Church in St. James. For the next 45 years, St. Patrick would be a mission church of Sts. Philip and James, and the two churches would share a history. The Rev. William Duhigg became the first permanent pastor in the area. He built the church and a residence in St. James.

Not everyone in the area considered the growing Catholic population to be a positive trend. It is estimated that in the 1920s, one out of every eight Long Island residents belonged to the Ku Klux Klan. On at least three occasions, a burning cross was placed in the field across from St. Patrick Church. Then, in 1927, the church was destroyed by fire. Many, rightly or wrongly, have blamed the KKK for the fire. Regardless of the cause, the destruction of the church was certainly a blow to the Catholic community. Yet, area Catholics continued to practice their faith and began the work of building a new church.

The new church was located at the corner of Mayflower and Edgewater Avenues in Smithtown. The land was donated by Clarence Maloney of Tucson, Arizona. Among the many other donations made to the new church were marble statues of the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph given by Fr. Duhigg. Fr. Duhigg was present when the new church was dedicated by the Most Rev. Thomas Malloy, the Bishop of Brooklyn, on June 30, 1929. Four days later, Fr. Duhigg died. The Rev. Clarence Murphy became the second pastor of Sts. Philip and James, and its mission church, St. Patrick, on July 19, 1929. Fr. Murphy served as pastor of both churches for 22 years. He died on May 10, 1951 and was buried at the approximate site of the altar of the St. Patrick Church structure that was destroyed in the 1927 fire. His tombstone in St. Patrick Cemetery stands directly in front of the white cross that marks the site where the church once stood. Fr. Murphy was succeeded by Fr. Otto Froelich, but Fr. Froelich would serve both churches for only a short period of time.



The third St. Patrick Church was located on Edgewater and Mayflower Avenues in Smithtown. Today it serves as the Byzantine Catholic Church of the Resurrection.

Growing and Changing

St. Patrick was no longer a small Catholic community. It had grown to the point that it could no longer be a mission church. St. Patrick became a parish in July of 1952. Rev. Adam Willman became its first pastor.

Parishioners remember Fr. Willman as a loving priest, a quiet, spiritual man who loved to play the piano. During the eleven years he served as pastor, the parish doubled in size. He is also remembered as a pastor who carefully saved money, enough to give the parish a good start on the building project that was in its future.

It was an exciting time for St. Patrick's. As a newly formed parish, it had, for the first time, its own priest. Fr.



Fr. Adam Willman, our parish's first pastor.

Willman was given a warm reception party in the church basement. Initially, he lived in the Sts. Philip and James rectory, until the diocese purchased a home for him on Juniper Avenue. The home was in need of repairs. Parishioners gladly took on the job, repairing and redecorating before Fr. Willman moved in. Parishioners also finished the church basement - tiling the floor, installing fluorescent lights, and converting the coal bin to a kitchen and bar.

Parish organizations began to spring up, including an active Holy Name Society, a choir, the Blessed Virgin Sodality, and the Rosary Altar Society. Eventually, a second priest was sent to serve the growing parish - Fr. Ned Olewicz. Fr. Ned is described by parishioners as opposite in personality from Fr. Willman - outgoing and a lover of trains, a good trait considering the church's location next to the railroad tracks. Fr. Ned never failed to wave to passing trains and was known by the engineers who passed through. In addition to Fr. Ned, visiting priests came to help accommodate the faithful on Sundays.

The need for a larger church was becoming apparent. Parishioners also longed for a Catholic school. It was parishioners who made the first move in this direction. Jim Mulhall, Peter Bosco, Jerry Von Schamburg, Richard Glasser, Robert Morlath, and George Scryver met with Msgr. Williams, Bishop Kellenberg's secretary, about the need for a new church and school.

The bulk of the responsibility for the building project would fall on the shoulders of Fr. Joseph Canning, who was named the parish's second pastor on June 26, 1963. Fr. Canning is described by those who knew him as a wonderful priest, very kind and supportive. He immediately took steps to relieve the overcrowding at Masses. At this point, crowds were spilling out of the church and onto the sidewalks on Sunday mornings. When trains passed by, the difficult job of hearing what was being said inside the church went from difficult to impossible. Fr. Canning added extra Masses in the basement.



Fr. Joseph Canning, our parish's second pastor.



Our third church building was located at Edgewater and Mayflower Avenues in Smithtown.. Today it is home to the Byzantine Catholic Church of the Resurrection.

On May 26, 1964, fire would once again become a part of St. Patrick's history. Members of the Rosary Altar Society were working on a mailing in the church basement when Maureen Rienzo heard an unusual crackling sound and went to investigate. Looking up the stairwell, she saw flames engulfing the closet containing the altar cloths. Maureen ran back to the basement and alerted Grace Treutlein and the rest of the ladies. "Grace, the church is on fire. Everybody get out," she recalls saying.

Maureen ran to the rectory and informed associate pastor Fr. John Marksamer. Grace called the fire department. Before she could repeat the church's address, she heard the sirens. Fr. Marksamer, along with the firemen, recovered many items from the sacristy, but enormous damage was done to the church.

For the next few months, as the church was being repaired, Masses were said at Smithtown General Hospital (which was located on Route 347), the Smithtown Movie Theater (now the Smithtown Center for Performing Arts), and in tents.

Soon, the doors were once again opened to the faithful, but the decision had been made to build again—both a church and a school. Parishioner Richard Lancer discovered some land on Jericho Turnpike that was available for sale. A committee of parishioners recommended it, and the purchase was made by the diocese.

Our fourth church was dedicated on November 12, 1966 by Bishop Walter Kellenberg.



A New Church and a New School

Plans were drawn up, parishioners pledged money, and in two years, the new church and school became a reality. The new St. Patrick Church and School was dedicated on November 12, 1966 by Bishop Walter P. Kellenberg.

In September of 1967, St. Patrick School opened its doors. Initially the school consisted of grades one through four. For the next few years, one grade was added each year. Fr. Canning invited the Religious Sisters of St. Joseph from Brentwood to staff the school. Sister St. Catherine, CSJ, was the school's first principal. The sisters were no strangers to the parish. They had been coming to Smithtown for years to instruct children in the CCD program. The school's first faculty consisted of six sisters and three lay teachers.

After a busy 13 years as pastor, Fr. Canning was transferred to Immaculate Conception Parish in Westhampton Beach. St. Patrick welcomed its third pastor, Fr. John Mott.



The Religious faculty of St. Patrick School in 1966: (Front row) Sisters Mary Ann, St. Catherine and Marie Patrice. (Back row) Sisters Grace Immaculata, Catherine de Lourdes and Matthew.

Parishioners describe Fr. Mott as outgoing, easy to work with, a solid businessman and someone who allowed for creativity within the parish. When Fr. Mott arrived, the parish was saddled with a heavy mortgage. Within six years, however, the mortgage was paid off and the papers were burned during a special Mass which was followed by a Parish Picnic. The picnic would remain an annual event for many years.

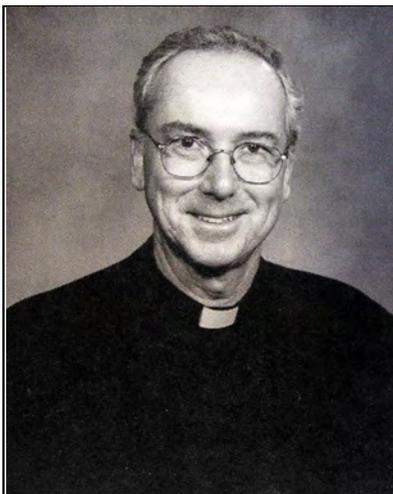
Fr. Mott also had a knack for encouraging the involvement of the laity. Many parish organizations grew and flourished during his tenure, perhaps most notably the Youth Community. Fr. Mott gave Youth Minister Tony Colangelo a free hand in developing programs for young people. As a result, the Youth Community experienced explosive growth. Hundreds of young people participated in the Folk Group, and it wasn't just the numbers that were impressive. The Folk Group became widely known for its high quality performances. The young people went on tour, did recordings, and performed on the radio. Many sports programs were offered to young people for the first time as well. In all the activities, Tony stressed the theme of "knowing Jesus as friend."

Fr. Mott encouraged the creativity of the lay community in other

areas well. The Parish Council, a Liturgy Committee and Parish Outreach came into existence, all adding to the spirit of the parish.

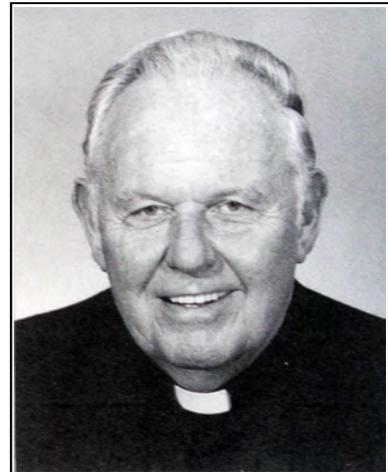
Other changes took place as well. The Permanent Diaconate, having been restored in the Second Vatican Council, led to the ordination of St. Patrick's first deacons. Eucharistic Ministers began assisting in the distribution of Communion, and women began serving as Lectors. Stained glass windows were added to the church as well as some outdoor shrines.

After 14 years as pastor, Fr. Mott was reassigned and Associate Pastor Fr. Paul Walsh took the reigns. Parishioners describe Fr. Walsh as a kind, spiritual man, quick with a smile and sensitive to the needs of every



Fr. Paul Walsh, pastor
from 1990 to 2003

one in the parish. One of the most pressing needs during his time as pastor was the need for more space. Initially, a new wing was added to the school as well as an outdoor sports court and modular units to accommodate Youth Community activities. Still, space problems remained. In spite of a natural reluctance for fundraising Fr. Walsh agreed to embark on a sizable building project. Initial plans called for renovation of the church and the building of a separate gymnasium and youth community offices, however those plans were revised to include building of a separate church and the renovation of the existing church into a gymnasium. (Ironically, the diocese had called for similar plans when our church was built in the 1960s, but lack of funding led to a revision.) Plans calling for an additional wing for the school housing classrooms and meeting rooms were cancelled, for the time being, due to funding concerns. During Fr. Walsh's tenure, our parish grew in numbers also, to approximately 5,000 families. In 2002, our parish celebrated its 50th anniversary.



Fr. John Mott, pastor
from 1976 to 1990

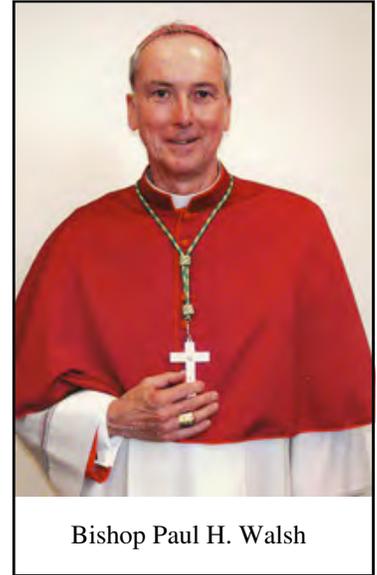
A New Church and a New Pastor

Shortly after our anniversary celebration, a new chapter began in our parish history. On May 29, 2003, Fr. Walsh became Bishop Paul Walsh. As Auxiliary Bishop for the Diocese of Rockville Centre, he was named vicar of the Western Vicariate. He also became pastor of Queen of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Roosevelt.

In June of 2003, Msgr. Ellsworth R. Walden was named pastor of St. Patrick Church, having most recently served as pastor of St. Thomas More Church in Hauppauge. As he arrived, construction on the new church was underway, renovation of the old church into a gymnasium had yet to begin, and our parish was once again saddled with debt.

As construction of the church progressed, Fr. Walden saw to it that parishioners were able to add their own personal touch. "Foundation Day" was held during which parish families were invited to bring rocks with their names written on them to place beneath the sanctuary before the cement was poured.

Families were also invited to place papers with their names on them inside our altar and behind the church cornerstone.



Bishop Paul H. Walsh



Msgr. Ellsworth R. Walden,
pastor from 2003 to present

The new church was dedicated in November 2003. After the completion of the church and renovation of the old church, our parish was left approximately \$1.5 million in debt. Through fundraising efforts that included an annual Car Raffle, the debt was paid and our mortgage ceremonially burned in June of 2011.

Since 2002, our parish has grown from approximately 5,000 families to nearly 6,000 families. Through generous donations, SmartBoards and Smart-Tables were added to all our St. Patrick School classrooms and a new playground was constructed. The universal nature of the Church has also been more in evidence in our parish in recent years. Priests from China, India, the Philippines, Nigeria and Ghana have all joined us at St. Patrick's.



Pictured are (from left): The cornerstone of our current church prior to its placement; Bishop Paul H. Walsh, our former pastor, returns to dedicate our new church; Msgr. Walden and Fr. Frank Parisi bless our new church with incense.

Remember This?



Our "new church" will be nine years old in November. Below are photos of the our church under construction and during the dedication.



Pictured (from top left) are: (1 & 2) Foundation Day when parishioners placed stones with their names on them where our sanctuary and altar now stand, (3) the raising of the cupola, (4) Cornerstone Day when parishioners wrote their names on papers that were placed behind the church cornerstone, (5) parish families placing their names inside our altar, (6 & 7) parishioners helped transfer items from our old church to the new church. and (8 - 10) the dedication of our new church in November of 2003.



Our Story Continues

Many things have changed over the years. We have grown from a small group of Irish Catholic families into a large and increasingly diverse parish. Those who came before us worked diligently to bring priests to Long Island and build churches in the hope of celebrating Mass and the sacraments on a regular basis. Today, our parish offers 26 regular Masses each week. Baptisms and weddings are easily planned. Our Religious Formation program and school prepare young people to receive First Holy Communion and Confirmation. The first members of St. Patrick Church found residents unwilling to sell land to Catholics. Today, we are an influential part of the Smithtown community. Our parish offers many programs to people of all faiths, from food and support groups to educational opportunities and sports.

What has not changed is the need for prayer. As we celebrate our 60th Anniversary, let us join in prayer for our parish as we face the challenges of our time. May God bless our parish today and in all the years to come.

Who We Are Today *St. Patrick Parish At a Glance*

Youth Community

- More than 3,000 young people participate
- Youth Group (grades 7 to 12)
- Music Ministry (Children's Choir, grades 1-5; Folk Group, grades 6-12)
- Sports (Basketball, Deck Hockey, Baseball, Softball, Soccer*)
- Summer Day Camp (ages 3 to 14)
- Before and After-School Care/Academic Enrichment
- Learning Center (Tutoring/Standardized Test Prep)
- Playtime with Mommy/Caregiver (ages 1 1/2 to 3)

*Soccer is run by the St. Patrick/Village of the Branch Soccer Club

Parish Outreach

Direct Service

Clothing, Financial Assistance, Food, Friendly Visitors, Furniture, Holiday Projects, Homecare/Companions, Job Search, Ministers to Homebound and Sick, Ministers to Nursing Home, Share-A-Meal, Shelter, Transportation.

Convening (Support Groups)

Bereavement Group (*for those who have lost a loved one*), Healing Hearts (*for divorced and separated*), LifeNet (*for those experiencing unplanned pregnancy*), Rainbows and Spectrum (*for children and adolescents experiencing loss due to death, separation or divorce*), PRISM (*single parent support group*), Ministry of Prayer, Ministry of Consolation (*assistance at the time of funeral rites*), Singles Fellowship.

Advocacy

Justice & Peace Committee (*Committee members seek to eliminate social injustice through community education and governmental action*), Public Policy Network (*Committee that helps create awareness and understanding of the Church's social teachings on peace and justice*), Campaign for Human Development, Community Organizing.

Religious Formation

- Instruction in the faith for grades 1-8
- Enrollment: 1,600
- All classes held in St. Patrick School
- Community service project for each grade level
- Classes provided for special needs children
- Adult Education course offerings
- Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA) for adults seeking to become Catholic or complete sacraments

St. Patrick School

- Catholic education for students in grades nursery to 8
- Enrollment 500+
- 20-acre campus
- Adheres to New York State and Diocese of Rockville Centre standards
- Founding member of the Catholic Middle Schools Athletic Association (Students compete in soccer, volleyball, basketball, cross country and baseball)
- SmartBoards in every classroom, K-8
- SmartTables in Pre-K and nursery classrooms
- School Mass celebrated every First Friday of the month
- Extracurricular clubs include: FAST Athletic Program, Chess Club, Sparklers, Newspaper, Student Council, Scouting, National Junior Honor Society, Horseback Riding, Liturgical Dance, Art Club, and Ceramics.

Parish Organizations

Altar Servers, Baptism Team, Blue Lancers Drum & Bugle Corps., Catholic Daughters, Choir, Columbiettes, Cub Scouts, Eucharistic Ministers, Girl Scouts, Hospitality, Knights of Columbus, Lectors, Legion of Mary, Marriage Alive, Nocturnal Adoration, Parent-Teacher Partnership, Pre-Cana, Pro-Life Family Ministry, RCIA Team, Rosary Altar Society, Something for Seniors, Sacred Heart Prayer Group, Ushers and Greeters.

A Few Faces from Our Recent Past



We extend a special word of thanks to all the religious (some of whom are pictured here) who have served at St. Patrick's in the past 10 years, as well as all those who came before them and those who will come after.

