The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate - ASSUMPTION PROVINCE in Canada

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Dear Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate and friends,

Assumption Province is celebrating its golden jubilee! Looking back on your proud history of 50 years let us thank God for his abundant gifts and Mary of the Assumption for her never-failing patronage. Let us also proudly recognize the generosity of so many Oblates and so many men, women and children who were part of your mission. While we should ask for God’s mercy as well, this is the time to take a deep breath and step into the next 50 years of mission in Canada with a spirit profoundly renewed.

Your mission all over the country is quite specific: to serve the immigrants. I believe that this fact is precisely one of your important strengths; it makes you enjoy a great clarity of missionary purpose. Though your ministry is directed mainly to the Polish, you also cater to people of other nations, and from there you have undertaken even other types of missionary work. Reaching out, going further, is a characteristic of any community of believers since the time when the Christians of Antioch sent out Paul and Barnabas!

Immigrant ministry looks back on a long tradition in the Oblate Congregation. The young St. Eugene had a heart for the Austrian prisoners in Aix, abandoned and far from home as they were, and he literally risked his life for them. Fr. Albini and various others worked with the Italians in Marseilles in the early days, right from our general house at the Calvaire. As for the Oblates, besides missionary zeal, it is perhaps their family spirit that makes them sensitive to the needs of the immigrants. Oblates have again and again insisted on one truth of our faith: that in a church that is catholic, none could ever be a foreigner!

In today’s world, there are several other groups of Oblates dedicated to a ministry similar to that of the Assumption Province. It would be good if all these could draw on your rich experience as presented in this album. As Oblates we can compare notes with

Fr. Wilhelm Steckling, OMI
Superior General
each other and so project this mission, which is important to the whole Congregation, into its future. The questions are many: how can Christian immigrants continue to live their faith in the secularized society, as one generation follows the other? How can our parishes become even more missionary in nature and share their experience of the Risen Christ with those who remain at a distance? What about the new immigrants, still arriving from so many parts of the world dreaming of a promised land and who urgently might need orientation and help?

I want to thank all of you, Oblates and their friends, for your spirit of faith and your missionary zeal. The fruits are visible indeed: a vibrant Christian life and important external structures, and even a strong presence in the media, show the grace of God at work. I want to especially mention and to encourage the young men who have felt a vocational call through the Oblates of Assumption Province. Please be assured that for missionaries there is always a lot to do out there! I also want to express my gratitude for what the Assumption Oblates are to the neighboring missions of our Congregation in Canada and the US, and to those overseas as Poland and various other countries, where our Gospel workers still need and receive effective help from you.

I wish you a happy celebration of your golden jubilee and renewed strength for the future! May Our Lady of the Assumption, the woman with the crown of twelve stars, continue to guide and protect you. Twelve is the number of the apostles: let the Oblate apostles too, always be to their Patroness and Mother, a splendid crown.

With fraternal greetings,
in Christ and Mary Immaculate

Fr. Wilhelm Steckling, OMI
Superior General

Rome, August 28, 2005
In this year of the Golden Jubilee of Assumption Province, we have many reasons to celebrate and express our gratitude to our loving God and to so many people. Gratitude to the daring of the Polish Oblate pioneers, coming from Europe, who settled first in the Central United States, and then moved north to Canada, hearing the silent call of poor immigrants in need of pastors. Gratitude to so many Oblates, deceased or still alive, who, over the years, guided by the Spirit of Pentecost, have opened new missionary parishes and new fields of ministry in five Provinces of Canada, constantly adjusting to the moves and needs of old and new immigrants. Gratitude to the people whom the Oblates serve, because their Christian communities are vibrant and dynamic, due to the faithful commitment of so many lay collaborators who are bearing witness to their faith and serving their community in many ways.

Our gratitude also encompasses the Oblate Province of Poland, which has constantly been and still is sending new Oblate members to Assumption Province. Having received generously, Assumption Province is also giving generously, sharing its resources with other units of the Congregation which are in need. The youth, enthusiasm and zeal of its members are a great asset for the mission entrusted to the Oblates in Canada. Assumption Province is called to play an ever more important role in our Oblate Region and in the Congregation.

Inspired by the positive achievements of the past, we are then invited, during a Jubilee Year, to look at the future with confidence. But the future carries its own challenges, which must be addressed with reflection and the courage to act. May I briefly comment on what may be the major challenge in the North American context: Mission to Youth? Our last General Chapter has put a special emphasis on Mission to Youth, which was so dear to our Founder. Without the youth, our Church has no future.

In your recent Mission Statement, you commit yourselves to «help people acclimatize to a new society, culture and way of life». Our cultural and religious world has been changing so fast. Children or grandchildren of Polish immigrants are born in Canada, a country in which Catholicism, and even the religious dimension of life, are no longer part of the culture and society. The immi-
grants whom you serve are eager, and rightly so, to transmit to their youth their Catholic heritage. But among the many ways of life proposed by our secularized society, our young people have to make a personal choice for Jesus Christ and the God He reveals, without which the sacraments and the teachings of the Church are meaningless. Will the youth be attracted by the Gospel and the Church if our personal life is not a visible sign of the fullness of life and happiness given in Jesus Christ?

The mission addressed to us Oblates and to our parishioners to witness to the Gospel in a new culture appears to be a frightening challenge. But let us recall that our Founder and even the Apostles of Jesus faced a similar challenge. Saint Eugene founded our Congregation precisely to help discover «who Christ is», witnessing to those who were far away from the Church after the cultural and social changes brought by the French Revolution. In the Primitive Church, the Apostles, who were Jews, were reluctant to go to the nations, that is, to a different cultural and religious world. They received the Spirit and started witnessing beyond the borders of their familiar environment, learning the language of the people, opening themselves to their culture. And this is how the Church became really catholic, that is, universal.

May the Holy Spirit, who has sustained the mission of Assumption Province during the past years, enlighten and guide you in your ministry towards the committed Catholics and, to quote again your Mission Statement, towards «those who most need the consolation of the teaching of Christ and are least touched by the Gospel». May Mary, who was present at Pentecost, received the Spirit together with the Apostles and sustained them in their mission, be always with you and your people in this wonderful missionary endeavor.

Marcel Dumais, OMI
General Councillor for the Canada – United States Region

September 2005
Every anniversary is a time of celebration – but also a time for reflection on years gone by. The fiftieth anniversary of Assumption Province in Canada is similarly a time for us Oblates to look into the past and contemplate the great achievements of our forebears and to look at those worthily continuing the tradition of Oblate ministry in Canada. It is also a time to consider the many works being undertaken by the Province today and to look to the future and how we can best perform the tasks which God has called us to.

The main goal of the founders of our Province was to serve the needs of Polish immigrants in the same way as the very first Polish Oblates in Canada did, working from the end of the nineteenth century among early settlers who arrived in Canada from Poland and its neighbouring countries. Those were heroic efforts due to the meagre resources of the times and vast distances that had to be covered. It was truly an evangelization of the poor, characterized by the Oblate charism. In time, the number of Polish immigrants grew significantly and the Polish Oblates decided to form an independent Province to better serve the needs of the immigrant community. The beginnings of the province were not easy, and could be compared in many ways to the pioneering work done by the Kulawy brothers and their successors during the early years of Polish Oblate missionary work in Canada. Among the many individual Oblates who contributed to the building of the province, Fr. Michael Smith, the Province’s co-founder and first Provincial, remains without doubt a great authority and worthy example for us to emulate. Currently, the Province counts over 50 priests and brothers, mostly of Polish origin – but there are also priests born in Canada, as well as priests of Italian, German and Vietnamese origin.

This book is a look at our past and our present. We have not undertaken an extensive, academic look at our history up to now. This book, too, makes no pretensions to completeness – especially since during its writing we discovered that the sources of information are so very fragmented, incomplete and often difficult to obtain. In addition, human memory can often be disappointingly selective. However, the collaboration of many people has resulted
in a cursory look at our history, which we present in the first part of this work. This book takes a humble look at the contributions of many Oblates of Polish origin in Canada and Oblates from Poland working among the Polish immigrants throughout Canada.

In the second section, we have concentrated on current ministries undertaken by the Oblates of Assumption Province and have created a guide to the various ministries – mainly our parishes which we run with the help of lay people dedicated to the Church, who assist us in a myriad of ways in our outreach to the Polish community. Looking at all the initiatives and undertakings, it can confidently be said that Assumption Province has much to its credit in promoting the religious life of the Polish community of Canada. We are also glad that our ministry has expanded on to other ethnic communities as well, most notably the Italian and Vietnamese communities. We have also seen increased involvement in the dioceses and Canadian Oblate structures.

The third part of the book contains short biographies of Oblates currently working in our Province and of those who have passed away. The bios are sure to remind each of us of a priest or friend close to us.

May this book refresh our memories, help us appreciate the sacrifices of those who went before us, and strengthen our own enthusiasm for our ministry.

May God bless you.

Janusz Blazejak OMI
Provincial
Chapter 1.

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate
Assumption Province in Canada

A Short History
St. Eugene de Mazenod (1781-1861)
Founder of the Missionary Oblates
The Oblate Voyage to Canada

The first Oblates came to Canada from France, where their religious community was formed by St. Eugene de Mazenod. The Oblates’ pastoral and missionary work quickly spread across Canada, and the French Oblates were soon aided by the local Canadian Oblates and those from other European countries, including Poland.

St. Eugene de Mazenod (1781-1861), Founder of the Missionary Oblates

Pope John Paul II described St. Eugene de Mazenod as a man who readied the coming of our times and hastened the advent of the Kingdom of God on Earth. A relic of the saint graced John Paul II’s desk in the office where he worked.

The Bishop of Marseille and founder of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate was born in Aix-en-Provence in southern France in 1782. Although he came from an aristocratic family, his childhood was not worry-free. As a result of the French Revolution of 1791, St. Eugene, then a child, was forced to leave the country along with his parents. For eleven years he lived in what is currently Italy. While in Venice, he met Fr. Bartolo Zinilli and began to feel a call to priesthood. Social life, however, drew St. Eugene away from that pursuit for some time.

In 1802, St. Eugene returned to France. During a certain Good Friday, he experienced a radical transformation before an image of the crucified Jesus, and once again felt a call to devote his entire life to God and to priestly ministry. At the age of 26, he entered the Sulpician seminary in Paris. Following his ordination, he ceased parish work and was offered the post of Vicar General in Aix-en-Provence. However, he instead found himself ministering to the young orphans of the French Revolution, servants, laborers and Austrian prisoners or war – this last instance of ministry nearly costing him his life. St. Eugene preached the Gospel to the townsfolk and country dwellers of Provence using their native Provençal dialect rather than French, which the poor did not understand. Simple people gathered around St. Eugene, but his wide-reaching ministry and dedication to the poor aroused contempt, not only among the aristocracy from which he descend-
ed, but also among certain members of the local clergy.

The needs of this ministry were great, and St. Eugene knew that he could not possibly do all the work on his own. To this end, he formed the Missionaries of Provence in 1816 - a group of priests who devoted themselves with great zeal to the goal of saving souls. In 1826, this religious community was officially recognized by Pope Leo XII as the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. In 1832, St. Eugene was made a bishop and in 1837 he took charge of the Marseilles diocese. He died on May 21, 1861 in Marseilles. Pope Paul VI beatified him on October 19th, 1975 and Pope John Paul II canonized him on December 3, 1995.

Montreal: Gateway to a multitude of peoples

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate began their missionary work first by concentrating on evangelization among the poor of Provence – the founder’s homeland – and later, throughout France. However, from the time of the community’s official recognition by the Holy See in 1826, St. Eugene explained to Cardinal Carlo Maria Pedicini, who was responsible for preparing the official dossier for the Vatican, that the goal of the new community was to serve the poor of whichever region the Pope or local bishop would send its members to. The members of the new community began to rapidly look for new frontiers all over the world. From 1830-1833 they tried to establish a mission in Algeria but the attempt was not fruitful. However, the visit of Bishop Ignace Bourget, Ordinary of Montreal, who was on his way to Rome, would prove fortuitous. On June 20, 1841, he visited Bishop Eugene de Mazenod, then Ordinary of Marseilles and Superior of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and asked him to send Oblates to his diocese.

Bishop Ignace Bourget saw the great good that parish missions delivered by Bishop Charles de Forbin Janson, founder of Missionary Society of France, did in reviving the faith life in his diocese. However, due to limited resources, the community could not continue the work it had begun. The Montreal Ordinary had under his care not only Catholics living outside parish boundaries, but especially those completely without pastoral care (e.g. farmers living in the townships) as well as forest workers, who began to form an ever-more numerous group after 1810. Every autumn, many thousands of loggers would head for the woods for five or six months during winter to cut trees along river banks and float them toward the sawmills. Two years after visiting Marseilles,
Bishop Ignace Bourget wrote to Bishop de Mazenod comparing the workers of the backwoods to the lost sheep of Israel. The Ordinary of Montreal also wanted to ensure that tens of thousands of French-speaking Catholics living on the American side of the border would receive pastoral care. He also intended to send Oblates to work among the Indians who lived in his sprawling diocese – something he also mentioned to Bishop de Mazenod.

Bishop de Mazenod directed the question of expanding the Canadian mission to all the members of the community. The community responded positively and with enthusiasm. Accordingly, a month after Bishop Ignace Bourget’s visit to Marseilles, Bishop de Mazenod informed him of the community’s decision. “A beautiful new mission is opening up before us”, noted the founder of the Oblates in his diary on July 16, 1841 – the same day on which he sent Bishop Bourget his positive reply. Bishop Bourget was staying in Rome at the time. Bishop de Mazenod reminded the first Oblates who were about to leave for Canada that their assignment was to establish the Oblate community in the far-away lands they were going to, and that Montreal was merely the gateway to souls in many more lands.

On September 29, 1841, the first group of Oblates – four priests and two brothers – left Marseilles and arrived in Montreal via Havre and New York on December 2, 1841. They settled at Saint-Hilaire parish in Rouville, from where they would travel to Longueuil a few months later and, in 1848, on to Montreal.

### Into the Canadian Heartland

The first group of Oblates in Canada devoted itself primarily to conducting parish retreats and missions in the Montreal diocese. From 1841-1846 they preached over 120 missions and parish retreats – an impressive number testifying to their great zeal and energy. In 1844, they began working among Catholics in the United States. That same year, the missionaries took on their first mission among the Indian population of the Montreal diocese and later, among the Indians of the Quebec diocese. In effect, their mandate included the evangelization of the entire northern section of that diocese. The Oblates were at that time based at the convent established at Saint-Alexis.
In the spring of 1844, Bishop Norbert Provencher issued a formal request to the Oblates in Longueuil for missionaries for his Northwestern Apostolic Vicariate. The Oblate community accepted enthusiastically. The pioneering task of establishing an Oblate presence along the Red River fell to Fr. Pierre Aubert, who on June 25, 1845 set out towards the sprawling prairies and woods in the company of a novice, Alexandre-Antonin Taché. However, the first experiences working with the Indians did not prove fruitful. Fr. Pierre Aubert resigned from the mission among the native population in the Wabassimong and Lac-à-la-Pluie. Fr. François-Xavier Bermond, who arrived in the West in 1847, similarly resigned from the mission. However, the young Alexandre-Antonin Taché was successful in his work among the Montagnais and the Cree in the faraway Ile-à-la-Crosse mission in what is today northern Saskatchewan. From there, he traveled farther northwest, eventually reaching Fort Chipewyan, on the shores of Lake Athabasca. In 1846, Louis Dobé, the first brother to serve in this territory, joined Fr. Taché.

In 1850 Fr. Alexandre-Antonin Taché was named Bishop Coadjutor of the Northwestern Apostolic Vicariate with right of succession to Bishop Norbert Provencher. Eugene de Mazenod saw the will of God in this nomination and enthusiastically embraced the huge opportunities for evangelization in these new lands. The result was that additional missionaries were sent to Canada.

After beginning the mission in northern and western Canada, the number of novices in Europe began to grow tremendously. In Canada, the Oblates also began gaining new members. Both developments resulted in the growth of new missions. By 1853, Oblate missions counted almost four thousand Indian Catholics. Soon afterwards, the Church’s administrative structures grew as well by way of new mission vicariates and dioceses. The Oblates situated along Red River moved on towards Hudson Bay, the Bering Sea and Baffin Island. They preached the Good News to the Cree, the Blackfoot, the Montagnais, the Dogrib and to many others. In 1860 Fr. Henryk Grollier appeared as the first “black robe” among the Eskimos.

The blossoming of Canadian missions among this young religious community was an encouraging development: the Oblates not only built up God’s Kingdom in the hearts of the faithful with whom they worked, but also contributed to the development of the vast nation of Canada. Many lakes, cities, rivers and regions bear names of Oblate missionaries. There is even a lake bearing the name of de Mazenod. At the time of the founder’s death in
1861, the community counted 414 members with one third working in the vast reaches of the New World (95 in various parts of Canada). Eighty years later, the Oblates would count 2,000 members in Canada alone. Their work among the Indian and Eskimo peoples resulted in Pope Pius XI calling them “specialists in the most difficult missions” – an apt term, given the difficulties they encountered. This is even acknowledged by Fr. Roger Buliard, who dedicates his book, “Inuk”, to his brother, Fr. Joseph Buliard OMI who perished in the tundra. In October 1956, as well as to 40 Oblate missionaries who died, were murdered, froze to death or drowned preaching the Good News in the Far North of Canada. Many Oblates, such as Fr. Albert Lacombe, Bishop Vital Grandin and Bishop Emil Grouard, became legendary. On the 150th anniversary of the Oblates’ arrival in Canada, then-Governor General Raymon John Hnatyshyn wrote to the Provincial Superior of the Oblates of Assumption Province, Fr. Chris Pulchny, conveying his best wishes to the Oblates on behalf of the Canadian people in recognition of the Oblates’ apostolic work in Canada.

Polish Oblates in Canada (1896-1956)

Towards the end of the nineteenth century Archbishop Adelard Langevin OMI of St. Boniface sent distinguished missionary, Fr. Albert Lacombe, to Europe to seek out priests who spoke the various languages of the many new immigrants who were settling in Canada from Central and Eastern Europe. The Canadian Oblates saw the need to provide pastoral care for people in their native languages. In 1896, the first Polish Oblate, Brother Antoni Kowalczyk, arrived in Alberta. After many years of humble service and a saintly life, he died in 1947 – a true saint, in popular opinion. Others followed and continued the task of evangelization, beginning with Western Canada.

The Kulawy Fathers – pioneering pastors in the Polish community

In 1897, the Superior General of the Missionary Oblates promised Bishop Adelard Langevin OMI two Polish Oblates who were just finishing theological studies in Ottawa. They were two brothers: Jan and Wojciech Kulawy. Immediately after their ordination, they traveled to Winnipeg, where Fr. Wojciech Kulawy was named pastor of the Poles, Slovaks, Ukrainians and Germans in the St. Boniface archdiocese, which stretched from Winnipeg to the Rocky Mountains. In one of his first voyages along the train route from
Calgary westward, Fr. Kulawy stopped at several towns that had grown along the railroad: Cochrane, Canmore, Anthracete and Banff. He arrived in British Columbia and preached retreats at Fernie for the local Poles, Slovaks and Ukrainians.

Fathers Jan and Wojciech Kulawy concentrated their efforts in Winnipeg and gave thought about forming a multicultural parish there. In 1899, both Fathers organized a Eucharistic procession with the participation of then-Archbishop Langevin OMI. At that time, the Archbishop presented a plan to create a new parish for the German and Slovak communities. On August 20 of that same year, the cornerstone of what would become Holy Ghost parish was blessed. Archbishop Langevin OMI wrote in one of his letters that the Polish priests could be characterized by a pastoral zeal of the highest quality. Fr. Jan Kulawy OMI was named pastor of the new parish.

In 1901, Fr. Karol Gretchel OMI and Fr. August Forner OMI joined the Kulawy brothers in pastoral service. Together with Fr. Wojciech Kulawy, they visited Polish settlements throughout Manitoba.

Holy Ghost parish in Winnipeg developed ever more actively and soon became a centre of Polish life there. It should be noted that from the very beginning there was a Polish school at Holy Ghost parish. The Polish-language weekly, “Canadian Voice”, had been published at the parish since 1904. The publication was costly both in terms of finances and personal commitment, so it was discontinued for a certain period of time. However, in 1908, it was re-issued with the name “Gazeta Katolicka” (Catholic Gazette) and, later, “Gazeta Polska” (Polish Gazette). In 1951, the undertaking merged with the National Polish League and the publication now became known as “Glos Polski” (Polish Voice), which to this day is published in Toronto. In 1903, Fr. Pawel Kulawy – the third of the Kulawy brothers – arrived in Canada. He travelled to Alberta, where he worked until his return to Poland in 1921.
Sisters of the Order of St. Benedict

North American Benedictine women originated from Europe. In 1852, Mother Benedicta Riepp from St. Walburga’s Monastery in Eichstatt, Bavaria, founded the first Benedictine convent in the United States in Pennsylvania. In 1863 a group of her sisters started a community at St. Joseph, Minnesota from where stemmed the community of Duluth, Minnesota in 1892. The community at Duluth was still young when at the urging of the Oblate Fathers at Holy Ghost parish in Winnipeg, Archbishop Langevin invited the sisters to come to Winnipeg to minister to the Polish and German immigrants and to teach in the parish school at Holy Ghost. The sisters from Duluth answered the invitation in 1903 and arrived in Winnipeg in 1904. In 1912, the Duluth community recalled the Sisters to serve home needs. However, because they saw the need for Polish speaking sisters in Manitoba, four sisters remained in Winnipeg to plant the seeds from which St. Benedict’s Monastery has grown. The new community was approved by Rome on August 19, 1912. Under the guidance of Mother Veronica Zygmanska and her assistant, Sister Candida Jacubik, the small Benedictine community pioneered in serving the Polish community in Winnipeg and beyond.

Their outreach included the provision of religious education to children through summer school and week-end catechism classes in most rural parishes operated by the Oblate Fathers, throughout Manitoba and Saskatchewan, preparing altar boys, church choirs, and young girls for the Sodality of Mary. For many years the Sisters ministered also as housekeepers at the Holy Ghost Rectory and Sacristans at the Church. Whatever the need, the Sisters responded to the call. Thus a strong relationship was built and maintained between the Oblate Fathers and the Benedictine Sisters, till 1989 when the last Sister to teach at Holy Ghost School retired, ending 85 years of service in the parish since their arrival in Winnipeg.

Oblate vocations among the settlers

During this time, more and more Polish Oblates from Europe began to settle in Winnipeg. Holy Ghost parish became the focal point from which the missionaries headed out towards the settlements with the Good News and sacramental ministry. It did not take long for new vocations to arise from the Polish families who had settled in Canada. On December 22, 1920, Fr. Stanislaw Baderski OMI was ordained in Edmonton. He was the first Oblate of Polish descent to be ordained in Canada. A few years later, Fr. Jan Czujak OMI, Fr. Stanislaw Puchniak OMI, Fr. John Bednarz OMI, Fr. Frank Kosakiewicz OMI and Fr. Michael Smith OMI would follow.

At first, the focus of the Oblates working among the Polish immigrants centred mainly on Manitoba. However, the immigrants
settled in other areas as well, i.e. Saskatchewan and Alberta. Already as early as 1899, the Poles had built the tiny St. Kunegunda Parish in Otton, (SK), and a bit further south, a missionary house was established in Grayson (SK). Other places included Mariahilf (SK), Regina (SK), Fish Creek (SK), Kronsberg (SK), Melville (SK), Rama (SK), Dobrowody (SK), Tiny (SK), Kuroki, (SK), Lintlaw (SK), Fosston (SK), Lethbridge (AB), Calgary (AB), Edmonton (AB), Canmore (AB), Skaro (AB), Flat Lake (AB), Ardmore (AB), St. Paul (AB), and Bonnyville (AB).
The establishment of an independent Oblate province in Poland

In 1920, by decree of the Superior General, the Oblates in Poland were released from the jurisdiction of the German province and came under the direct control of the General Administration. At this time, a few of the Polish Oblates working in Canada returned to Poland to help with the task of establishing the new province – Fr. Teofil Nandzik, Fr. Paweł Kulawy, Fr. Francis Boniface Kowalski (the first Provincial in Poland) and Fr. Leonard Nandzik. Fr. Baderski also went to Poland to help set up the new province. Among those Canadians of Polish origin who traveled to Poland to study were Fr. Felix Kwiatkowski, Fr. Thomas Nowak, Fr. Michael Kucharski, Fr. Michael Smith and Fr. Leopold Engel. The Polish Province of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate was officially formed in 1925.

Polish Oblates and their service to St. Mary’s Province

The 1920’s in Western Canada was a significant period in the expansion of Oblate missionary activity where the religious community saw the formation of new organizational structures. In 1926, a province was formed for the German and Polish Oblates and was based in Regina: St. Mary’s Province. This province covered all the communities served by Polish and German Oblates in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Fr. Leonard Nandzik OMI was a part of the first provincial council and represented the Polish Ob-
lates. By this time, the period of “traveling missionaries” in the history of the Canadian Church was essentially coming to an end. The number of priests grew. New priests came from Poland.

Besides pastoral ministry, the Oblates also provided education. In 1908, St. John’s Juniorate, a high school for candidates for the priesthood, opened in Edmonton. In 1943, its name was changed to St. John’s College. A large group of Poles studied there. In 1917, the Oblates established what in 1927 would become known as St. Joseph’s Seminary in Edmonton – so named by Archbishop Henry O’Leary. In 1926, Archbishop Sinnot of Winnipeg turned to St. Mary’s Province with the request that the Oblates form an English-language high school for boys in Winnipeg (St. Paul’s High School). In 1932, a juniorate and seminary were also established at Battleford (SK). In this way, new structures were formed that would help in the formation of new Oblate missionaries – including those of Polish descent.

The first parishes in Toronto

The first Oblate in the Toronto Archdiocese was Fr. Stanislaw Pu
chniak OMI, who on June 29, 1935 arrived at St. Stanislaus Kostka parish and began working there. Two weeks later, Fr. Thomas Schnerch OMI joined him, and was a brief time later replaced by Fr. John Bednarz OMI. Fr. Bednarz devoted himself to ministry among those who had become indifferent to religion and who were far away from God. The parish was rather stratified and full of divisions; for this reason, the Fathers decided to visit each Polish family individually. They also held the conviction that parishioners could attain true peace only by means of the Sacra
ments. In his first homily, Fr. Puchniak said:

“The only barometer for your faith comes in the form of the confessional and Holy Communion”.

St. Stanislaus Kostka parish was the second truly Polish parish in Toronto after St. Mary’s and, in the early days the parish played an important role in the life of the Polish community. St. Stanislaus parish was the focal point for Polish community organizations and groups. The Fathers were instrumental in the formation of organizations, musical ensembles, schools and other groups. What the first Fathers founded at St. Stanislaus parish continues today. Although the number of parishioners is not what it was in those early days, the Catholic traditions and religious life have remained a constant feature at St. Stanislaus parish. The first years in the life of the parish were characterized by trials and difficulties, but eventually they gave way to joy and success for both the Fathers and the parishioners.
The arrival of the Felician Sisters

In 1937, the Felician Sisters arrived at St. Stanislaus parish. Their arrival without a doubt marked of the most important chapters in the history of this and other parishes throughout Ontario. The sisters ran the kindergarten, taught public-school students catechism, gave Polish-language instruction, and foresaw activity in volunteerism. Of special importance was their ministry among the sick. The dedication of the Sisters soon brought forth lasting fruits. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Sisters were also active at Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre as well as at St. Maximilian Kolbe parish during its formative years.

The role of ethnic parishes

The Fathers attempted to systematize parish work. Ethnic parishes had to play an important role in the lives of its members. In addition to meeting the spiritual needs of its members, both older and newer immigrants needed services that they could not obtain without a working knowledge of English. Therefore, the parishes had to respond by taking part in the formation of social life. One of the Fathers began to offer English-language instruction, first on his own, but later as the number of people attending grew, with the help of competent lay-people. In time, the Felician Sisters took over this task and continued it until such time as the government instituted English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.
Canada continued to develop, but ministry remained difficult and parishes were far apart from each other. In the pre-war years, there existed only four major parish centres: Holy Ghost parish in Winnipeg, the Rama district in Saskatchewan, Holy Rosary parish in Edmonton and St. Stanislaus Kostka parish in Toronto. In early 1939 there were 35 Fathers and 2 brothers of Polish background, including a few others who were not Polish but who had learned to speak the language.

The Credit Union

Towards the end of the 1930s, as a result of high unemployment, certain families were encouraged to acquire farms in the Niagara Peninsula and gardens in Bradford. Interested Polish families often turned to their pastors for help in these matters. The needs eventually grew to such an extent that not all the requests could be handled. In 1944, the Fathers looked at the operations of a lending institution. In June 1945, weekly meetings began taking place with experts in the Credit Union movement. Interested individuals were presented with the benefits of membership in a Credit Union. The Fathers’ efforts soon proved successful for the faithful under their pastoral care. As the institution grew, thousands of Polish immigrants received the financial assistance they sought. Over 60 years of service, the St. Stanislaus - St. Casimir’s Polish Parishes Credit Union has become an integral part of the life of the Polish community and it would be hard to imagine the community today without it.
Post-war Immigration to Canada

After World War II, the economic and social structure of Canada’s Polish community fundamentally changed. Labourers became more numerous compared to farmers. Some 76% of Polish Canadians now lived near industrial centres of production. A new wave of immigrants came to Canada, mostly soldiers from the disbanded Polish Army stationed in England. They knew English and were more educated compared to the earlier immigrants. Many academics, engineers, doctors and other professionals also immigrated to Canada. Some 80% of these new immigrants settled in urban centres. The post-war immigrants were better-suited to life in a foreign land thanks to their skills and education. Also, their knowledge of English greatly helped them in improving their place in society; mobility was not nearly as easy for the older immigrants. Often, the two groups of Polish immigrants did not completely relate to one another.

According to statistics, 35,819 Polish immigrants came to Canada from 1946-1950. The parishes, despite all efforts, could only meet the most basic needs of the new immigrants. Social life also changed in significant ways after the war. In the past, relationships seemed to be more developed and heartfelt, and more tied in to the ethnic group, and this was easy to see at family and parish gatherings as well as during cultural events. After the war, things changed considerably – and the standard of living also improved. Poles now stepped ever more outside the confines of their own ethnic group. This also influenced social life and the actions of community groups. Older organizations were reformed and new ones were created. The Polish community began to feel much more a part of Canadian society, but remained proud of its heritage and achievements.

The Oblate House of Studies

In 1946, the Oblates at St. Stanislaus parish decided to expand their work towards gaining new vocations, especially to ministry in the Polish parishes. After ecclesiastical permission was granted, a property was acquired on Avenue Road near St. Michael’s College School. Later on, the house of studies was moved to Montfair Avenue in Islington. Over the course of history it is clear that these efforts bore fruit. The house of studies helped form many priests – both diocesan and Oblate. For many years, Fr. John Mazur OMI and Fr. Rudy Nowakowski OMI, who lived at the house of studies, taught at Michael Power high school.
Poles in Northern Ontario

Already in 1916, a few Poles lived in the far northern regions of Ontario. Quite a few families moved up to the area in 1925, but the largest group settled in 1948. Fr. Franciszek Sowinski was the first Polish priest to minister to the immigrants living in Kirkland Lake. The first Oblate to visit the Polish community of Kirkland Lake was Fr. Peter J. Klita. In October 1951, Bishop L. Rheaume OMI turned to the provincial, Fr. Wachowicz, with the request that the Poles of Kirkland Lake be provided with permanent pastoral care in their native language. Fr. W. Golus OMI was chosen for this task. He quickly got to work, organizing a parish community and building a church. Already at the end of 1953, a new church was built and blessed by Bishop Rheaume.

The formation of a Polish Oblate Province in Canada

The idea of forming a separate Polish Oblate province in Canada had existed for quite some time. For years, there was a desire to make the work of the Polish Oblates in Canada run more efficiently. The Polish Oblates felt that they were too few in number to form an administrative body. But towards the end of the 1940s, the vision of an independent Polish province seemed ever more real. On August 22, 1956, Fr. Leo Deschatelets OMI erected a so-called vice-province under the name of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for Polish Oblates in Canada. This structure com-
To the Oblates of St. Mary's Province and Assumption Province.

Rome, August 22, 1976

My dear Rev. Father and dear Brothers,

Some four years ago, it was our pleasure to send to your Oblate sons in M. Mary's Province a special message on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the Province. It has been canonically erected as such by our Congregation of Propaganda, on March 15, 1976. Abiding the jubilee occasion, we recalled with grateful pride and pious prayer the words for the magnificent liturgy of God during the period of difficult beginnings and peaceful but rapid expansion of the Province. The history of M. Mary's Province is the history of Oblate missionaries striving "solely for the glory of God, the welfare of the Church, the salvation of souls, and the sanctification of their fathers" (Holy Rule, Proem). In the light of these maxims sacred to us, our venerable Founder's ardently desired the founding and the strengthening of our beloved Congregation near to be guided.

After due and prayerful consideration, in a constant endeavor to live up to these ideals, if Bishop the Missionaries, inspired with the same(all) the sentiments that were his and which he has handed down to us in the sacred heritage of our Holy Founder — long since approved by the Pontiff — (Our Apostolic Authority), and confiding in the full force of Our Apostolic Pardon (Pius XI), we take this occasion on the feast of Our Divine Mother to make official announcement of an important and far-reaching decision concerning our beloved Congregation and its missionary work in M. Mary's Province.

With the previous council of Council (Act., 135, no. 3; 579), we have issued a decree (Aug. 17, 1972, No. 431/561) whereby a new Vicariate of Mission, to be known as "Assumption Province" is canonically erected. Its principal ministry will be among the poor and new Christian of Irish descent.

The new religious jurisdiction comprises the following districts: London, Redcliffe, and London, and the personnel thereof, all formerly attached to M. Mary's Province:

1. The entire religious district of Toronto.
2. The entire religious district of Ottawa.
3. The religious district of St. John, New Brunswick.
5. The religious district of St. John, New Brunswick.
Assumption Province

We have turned this decision an important one. We have worked it carefully in the presence of God, asking only the Divine Will. We have enrobed the institution from heaven, under the Patronage of St. Mary's Province, and to constitute the new "Assumption Province," to her maternal care. We beseech her, Mother Queen of All Saints, to guide, bless and sanctify each and every one of our Oblate Sons of both Provinces, bringing them ever closer to her Dispensation in their faithful and loyal attachment to their Oblate vocation and the Oblate way of life. May it be our fervent prayer, and with it we extend our paternal blessing.

In our hand, Virgin Immaculate, and our Servant Founder,

Reo Bechellet, S.V.L.
Superior General.

The first Provincial of the new Province was the assignee of the Toronto district and pastor of St. Eustace's Church, Michael J. Smith.
prised 42 Fathers, 11 scholastics and one novice. All the Brothers remained part of St. Mary’s Province.

The Polish vice-province in Canada incorporated parishes in the districts of Toronto (ON) and Rama (SK); Holy Ghost parish in Winnipeg (MB); St. Henry’s parish in Melville (SK); St. Casimir’s parish in Vancouver (BC); St. Michael’s parish in Krydor (SK); St. Stanislaus parish in East Selkirk (MB); St. Michael’s parish in Lemberg (SK); Most Sacred Heart of Jesus parish in Garson (MB); Holy Trinity parish in Tolstoi (MB); St. Teresa’s parish in Rossburn (MB) and Most Sacred Heart of Jesus parish in Elphinstone (MB).

The Provincial House

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, like every other religious community, possesses its own structure. At its head is the Superior General with his council in Rome. Individual groups of Oblates are organized by province, with a Provincial and his council heading each province. From the time of the formation of Assumption Province, Fr. Smith OMI, our first Provincial, looked for a place to house the provincial administration and a residence for the older Fathers. He purchased the property at 71 Indian Trail, Toronto, which is where the new Provincial officially moved to in the fall of 1958.

The Italian Confreres

Also belonging to Assumption Province were several Italian Fathers who worked primarily in Holy Angels parish and St. Catherine of Siena parish. In the 1970s there were twelve such Fathers – a significant number. Today, the number of Italian Fathers in Assumption Province is much lower and their ministry is limited to Holy Angels parish.
Chronological order of the churches the Polish Oblates are still presently working in:

1898 - Holy Ghost Parish, Winnipeg, MB
1906 - St. Henry’s Parish, Melville, SK
1911 - Holy Rosary Parish, Edmonton, AB
1924 - Mary Queen of All Hearts Church, Lestock, SK
1928 - St. Casimir’s Parish, Vancouver, BC
1933 - St. Patrick’s, Sturgis, SK
1933 - St. Thomas Church, Norquay, SK
1933 - St. Leo’s Church, Rockford, SK
1933 - St. Anthony’s, Rama, SK
1935 - St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish, Toronto, ON
1940 - St. Mary’s Parish, Toronto, ON
1940 - St. Stanislaus Church, East Selkirk, MB
1940 - Corpus Christi Church, Narol, MB
1946 - St. Anne’s Church, Buchanan, SK
1947 - Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, Welland, ON
1948 - St. Casimir’s Parish, Toronto, ON
1949 - Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, St. Catharines, ON
1951 - St. Hyacinth Parish, Ottawa, ON
1957 - Provincial House and Mission Centre, Toronto, ON
1960 - Holy Angels Parish, Toronto, ON
1963 - Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre, Mississauga, ON
1979 - St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish, Mississauga, ON
1990 - Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish, Edmonton, AB
1992 - Italian ministry in various parishes in the London diocese
1994 - Catholic Youth Studio, Toronto, ON
1998 - St. Eugene de Mazenod Parish, Brampton, ON
2003 - St. Mary’s Parish, Grayson, SK
2003 - St. Michael Church, Lemberg, SK
2003 - St. Elizabeth Church, Killaly, SK
2003 - Sacred Heart of Mary Church, Marieval, SK
2005 - St. Mary’s Parish, Wilno, ON

It is also important to underline the fact that in Western Canada the Polish Oblates built over 50 churches not including schools, mission chapels and the like.

The following is a list of some of the foundations the Polish Oblates built or worked in over the past century.

- House of Studies - Toronto, ON
- St. Anne’s Parish - Fenwick, ON
- St. Joseph’s Parish - Kirkland Lake, ON
- St. Hedwig’s Parish - Oshawa, ON
- St. Catherine of Siena Parish - Toronto, ON
- Holy Spirit Mission - Barrie, ON
- St. Wilfrid’s Parish - Toronto, ON
- St. Michael’s Church - Windsor, ON
- St. Joachim’s Church - South Porcupine, ON
- St. Augustine Church - Toronto, ON
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel - Tiny, SK
- St. Catherine Church - Quill Lake, SK
- St. Helen’s Church - Kuroki, SK
- St. Mary’s Church - Wadena, SK
- St. Theresa Church - Lintlaw, SK
- Blessed Sacrament Church - High Tor, SK
- St. Joseph Church - Kelvington, SK
- Mary Queen of Poland Church - Fosston, SK
- Rose of Lima Church - Rose Valley, SK
- Christ the King Church - Rose Valley, SK
- St. Felix Church - Archerville, SK
- St. Andrew Bobola Church - Invermay, SK
- Sts. Peter & Paul Church - Dobrowody, SK
- St. Joseph’s Church - Canora, SK
- St. Anthony’s Church - Regina, SK
- Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish - Saskatoon, SK
- Queen of Peace Church - Prud’homme, SK
- St. Florentine Church - Fish Creek, SK
- Sacred Heart Church - Tarnopol, SK
- Holy Trinity Church - Alvena, SK
- St. Michael Church - Krydor, SK
- St. Theresa’s Church - Krydor, SK
- St. Joseph’s Church - Alticane, SK
• St. Anthony's Church - Redfield, SK
• St. Michael Church - Janow Corners, Meath Park, SK
• Sts. Peter & Paul Church - Claytonville, SK
• St. Mary's Church - Honeymoon, SK
• St. Helen's Church – Brooksby, SK
• St. John The Baptist - Bear Lake, SK
• St. Stanislaus Church - Cudworth, SK
• Our Lady of Perpetual Help – Goodeve, SK
• St. Solange Church – Hafford, SK
• St. Thadeus Church – Henribourg, SK
• St. James Church – Albertville, SK
• Holy Cross Church (Holy Name) – Ruda, SK
• St. Elizabeth's Church – Stenen, SK
• St. Philip Neri Church - St. Philips, SK
• All Saints Church – Mayfair, SK
• John the Baptist Church – Ormside, SK
• Holy Trinity Church – Orolow, SK

• St. Stanislaus Church - Ituna, SK
• St. Stephen’s Church – Kamsack, SK
• St. Margaret Mary Church – Kelliher, SK
• St. Henry's Church – Kronsberg, SK
• St. Thomas Church – Mikado, SK
• Presentation of Mary Church – Masefield, SK
• St. Theresa’s Church - Rossburn, MB
• St. Catherine’s Church - Oakburn, MB
• Sacred Heart of Jesus Church - Garson, MB
• St. John the Baptist Church - Tyndall, MB
• St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus - Walkleybour, MB
• Holy Cross Church - Ashern, MB
• St. Helen’s Church - Shoal Lake, MB
• St. Michael’s Church - Cook’s Creek
• Holy Trinity Church - Tolstoi, MB
• Holy Rosary Church - Lancaster, MB
• St. Mary's Church - Beausejour, MB
• Our Lady Queen of Poland Church - Beausejour, MB
• Sts. Peter & Paul Church - Ladywood, MB
• Visitation of Our Lady Church - Birghstone, MB
• St. Joseph's Church - St. Norbert, MB
• St. Augustine Church - Whitemouth, MB
• St. Anthony’s Church - Elma, MB
• St. John the Baptist Church - Hadashville, MB
• St. Isidore's Church - Vita, MB
• St. Euphrasia - Sandy Hook, MB
• Sacred Heart Church - Komarno, MB
• Holy Rosary Church - Winnipeg Beach, MB
• Precious Blood Church - Fraserwood, MB
• Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church - Felsendorf, MB
• St. Michael Church - Meleb, MB
• St. Philip Neri - Arborg, MB
• St. Edward Church - Old Arnes, Rembrandt, MB
• St. John the Baptist - Ledwyn, MB
• St. Joseph’s Church - Shorncliffe, MB
• Immaculate Conception Church - Fisher Branch, MB
• St. Anthony’s Church - Zbaraz, MB
• St. Benedict Church - Camp Morton, MB
• Our Lady of Mercy Church - Finns, MB
• St. Hyacinth Church - Portage la Prairie, MB
• Holy Trinity Church - Sifton, MB
• Church of the Assumption - Ashville, MB
• Corpus Christi Church - Winnipegosis, MB
• Christ the King Church - Glenella, MB
• Our Lady of Loreto - Fork River, MB
• Holy Trinity Church - Garland, MB
• Precious Blood Church - Keld, MB
• Church of Nativity of B.V.M. - Ethelbert, MB
• Sts. Peter & Paul Church - Pine River, MB
• St. Ann’s Church - Flin Flon, MB
• Sacred Heart Church - Elphinstone, MB
• St. Jude the Apostle Church - Erickson, MB
• St. Anthony’s Church - Rackham, MB
• St. Anthony’s Church - Angusville, MB
• St. Andrew Bobola Church - Mulvihill - MB
• St. Theresa Church - Gypsumville – MB
• Sacred Heart Church - St. Andrews (Victoria Parc), MB
• Church in Victoria Park - Rosedale, MB
• Immaculate Conception Church – Agardsley, MB
• Sts. Peter & Paul Church – Berlo, MB
• Sts. Peter & Paul Church – Brokenhead, MB
• Holy Rosary Church – Foley, MB
• Sacred Heart Church - Fisher River, MB
• Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church – Gimli, MB
• Corpus Christi Church – Gonor, MB
• Immaculate Conception Church – Grahamdale, MB
• St. Anthony’s Church Church – Hass, MB
• Our Lady of the Scapular Church – Husavick, MB
• Notre Dame du Lac - Lac Du Bonnet, MB
• Assumption of Our Lady Church - Oakburn Farms, MB
• St. Monica’s Church – Rathwell, MB
• St. Isidore’s Church - Stuartburn, MB
• St. Joseph the Worker Church – Transcona
• Holy Ghost Church - Coleman, AB
• Our Lady of Perpetual Help - Mundare, AB
• St. Bonaventure Church - Chipman, AB
• Sacred Heart/St. Michael the Archangel Church - Wostok, AB
• Our Lady of Good Council - Skaro, AB
• Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine - Skaro, AB
• Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine - Webster, AB
• Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church - Flat Lake, AB
• St. Stanislaus Church - Lake Demay, AB
• St. John the Baptist Church - Kopernik, AB
• Visitation of Blessed Virgin Mary - Rabbit Hills, AB
• St. Stanislaus (bishop) - Round Hill, AB
• Sts. Peter & Paul Church – Hay Lakes, AB
• Missions in Nisku, AB
• Missions in Conjuring Creek, AB
• Missions in Sexsmith, AB
• Missions in Rouyn-Noranda, QUE
• Holy Rosary Church - Kroze, MN, USA
• St. Casimir’s Church – St. Paul, MN, USA
The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate Assumption Province in Canada

Our Ministry
PROVINCIAL HOUSE

Missionary Oblates
71 Indian Trail
Toronto, ON; M6R 2A1
Tel: 416-769-4971
Provincial office: 416-767-4760
Fax: 416-769-5165
E-mail: provincial@omiap.org
Web: www.omiap.org

Provincial:
Very Rev. Fr. Janusz Blazejak OMI

Residents:
Fr. Chris Pulchny OMI
Fr. John Szkodzinski OMI
Fr. Jacob Szwarc OMI
The first aim of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate is to preach the Gospel to the poor. With the help of the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Virgin Mary, the members of Assumption Province, as Oblates, dedicate themselves to this goal. The main ministry of the Oblates of Assumption Province is work among ethnic groups. Presently, more than 50 Oblates most of whom are of Polish descent, belong to Assumption Province. However, there a number of our members who were born in Canada as well as others who hail from Italy, Germany and even Vietnam.

Pope Pius XI, speaking of Oblate missionaries, called them “Specialists of the most difficult Missions.” That maxim holds true for the Oblates working in Canada which includes not only our work among immigrants but also Oblate ministry throughout Canada and the far North. Assumption Province was created as a Province by means of a decree given by our Superior General on August 22, 1956. Fr. Michael Smith OMI was named the first Provincial. Following is a list of the Provincials who served Assumption Province over our 50 year history:

**Provincials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provincial</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Smith OMI,</td>
<td>1956 - 1966</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Felix Kwiatkowski OMI,</td>
<td>1966 - 1971</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Edward Swiatek OMI,</td>
<td>1971 - 1977</td>
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<td></td>
<td>John Mazur OMI,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Antoni Mendrela OMI,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Christopher Pulchny OMI,</td>
<td>1990 - 1996</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tadeusz Nowak OMI,</td>
<td>1996 - 1999</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christopher Pulchny OMI,</td>
<td>1999 - 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Janusz Blazejak OMI,</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOLY GHOST PARISH - WINNIPEG

314 Selkirk Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R2W 2L8
Tel: 204-582-4157
Fax: 204-582-1543
parish@holyghostparish.net
www.holyghostparish.net

Pastor: Fr. Maciej Pająk OMI
Associate: Fr. Antoni Ludwiczak OMI
Resident: Fr. Sławomir Trzasko OMI

Parish Details
Membership numbers about 1800 families; Sunday Masses are regularly attended by approximately 1200 worshippers.

Masses
Monday to Wednesday & Friday: 7:00 AM (Eng) & 7:00 PM (Pol);
Thursday: 7:00AM at the Missionaries of Charity Chapel; 9:00AM at the Polish Manor; 7:00PM (Pol); Saturday: 8:00AM (Pol)

Sunday Liturgy
Saturday: 5:00 PM (Eng); Sunday: 8:00 AM;
9:30 AM (Eng); 11:15 AM; 1:00 PM (Children’s Mass); 6:00 PM;
Radio programs

Sunday Eucharist is transmitted on the radio (CKJS 810 AM) every Sunday at 2:30 PM.

“Strengthen Your Faith”, a program produced by the Missionary Oblates, is transmitted every Sunday at 4:45 PM on CKJS 810 AM.

Devotions

First Fridays: devotion to the Sacred Heart and Divine Mercy at 6:30 PM.

Every third Wednesday of the month: Devotion to Our Lady of Perpetual Help at 6:30 PM.

Every third Friday of the month: Devotion to Jesus of the Divine Mercy at 6:30 PM.

Season of Lent:

Lenten Lamentations every Sunday at 5:30 PM.

Way of the Cross: Friday at 6:30 PM (Pol) & Saturday at 6:30 PM (Eng).

May Devotions: every day before the beginning of the evening Mass during the month of May. Devotions to the Sacred Heart: every day at 6:30 PM during the month of June.

Rosary Devotions: every day at 6:30 PM during the month of October.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: every Friday at 2:00 PM in the Chapel.

Educational Programs:

The Parish has run a Catholic elementary school for over 100 years. The Parish offers religion classes to those children attending public schools every Saturday during the school year from 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM & 1:15 PM - 2:30 PM. About 160 children take part in English and 80 children take part in Polish. The Canadian Polish Congress sponsors Saturday Polish School from 10:30 AM - 1:00 PM.

Parish Organizations & Groups:

Parish Pastoral Council; Parish Finance Committee; Liturgy Committee; Altar Servers; Youth Group; Children’s Formation; Seniors’ Ministry; Ministry of the sick (Seven Oaks Hospital); St. Cecilia & Millenium choirs; Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist; Ushers & Lectors; Catechists, Prayer Group; Cemetery Maintenance Committee; Knights of Columbus, Catholic Women’s League; RCIA; Family Services

Parish History

On April 20, 1898 Archbishop Adelard Langevin OMI of the St. Boniface Diocese, appointed Fr. Wojciech Kulawy, OMI pastor of all the Central and Eastern European immigrants arriving into the Winnipeg area. With his arrival on May 6, 1898 and that of his brother Fr. Jan Wilhelm Kulawy, OMI on May 8, 1899, the foundation of the first Polish Roman Catholic Church as well as Polish religious history began in western Canada.

The cornerstone was laid and blessed by the Archbishop on August 20, 1899 with the first Holy Mass celebrated on November
1, 1899 and the consecration of the newly built church on June 3, 1900. In 1902 the Archbishop blessed three new bells and the church and on September 8, 1902 the Archbishop gave Holy Ghost Parish to the Polish Oblates in perpetuity with the first pastor being Fr. Jan Kulawy OMI. A new rectory was completed in January of 1904 and enlarged in 1906. Construction of “Dom Polski”, a spiritual and cultural meeting place, began in 1930. The cornerstone was laid and blessed in October of 1931.

The enthusiasm of the Polish people continued to grow with the opening of the first Polish school in Canada. Holy Ghost School had its temporary beginnings in the basement of the church in 1899 accommodating 150 children. The completion of the three-storey building took place on October 24, 1902. Five Benedictine Sisters arrived in 1904 to take over the running of the school and continued their service at the school until 1989. The present day school was opened in 1958 and the adjacent building was purchased in 1987. The school continues to offer Catholic education to children of Polish descent and other ethnic groups.
In late 1984, with a great deal of effort and commitment the pastor, Fr. Chris Pulchny OMI, organized the parishioners to finance and build a new church complex which was completed in June of 1987. The sanctuary furnishings purchased were specifically built for the visit of Pope John Paul II at Birds Hill Park in September of 1984. On September 20, 1987 Archbishop Adam Exner, OMI solemnly blessed and consecrated the new church.

On the occasion of the 90th Anniversary of the parish, his Eminence, Henryk Cardinal Gulbinowicz, Metropolitan Archbishop of Wroclaw, Poland, blessed the Stations of the Cross and the new banquet hall. The Cardinal was also the main celebrant on Sunday, October 1st, 1989, for a Mass of Thanksgiving. The tapestries, handmade by our parishioners, were completed soon after. They express the work of the Holy Spirit in God's plan of Redemption, the history of the Polish people, and the life within our parish community.

From 1986 to 1989, due to the political situation in Poland, the parish undertook the difficult task of sponsoring a total of 716 Polish refugee families. Radio transmission of Sunday Mass began on Sunday June 5, 1988. Holy Ghost Church was declared an historical site by the Manitoba Heritage Council in 1988.

In 1999 the parish celebrated its 100th Anniversary and chose the motto “The Spirit is Our Life” from Galations 5:25. On October 2, 1999 many honoured guests were present for a concelebrated
Mass and banquet on this Jubilee Day.

Holy Ghost Parish nurtured many vocations to the priesthood and to religious life. The faith and devotion of the very first immigrants have been an example that the parishioners of Holy Ghost have been faithfully followed from generation to generation.

**Pastors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wojciech Kulawy OMI</td>
<td>1899-1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Kulawy OMI</td>
<td>1901-1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wojciech Kulawy OMI</td>
<td>1904-1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karol Grecezel OMI</td>
<td>1906-1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franciszek Kowalski OMI</td>
<td>1909-1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonard Nandzik OMI</td>
<td>1917-1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antoni Sylla OMI</td>
<td>1927-1933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanislaw Baderski OMI</td>
<td>1933-1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanislaw Wachowicz OMI</td>
<td>1940-1946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanislaw Baderski OMI</td>
<td>1946-1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antoni Rabiega OMI</td>
<td>1949-1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franciszek Kosakiewicz OMI</td>
<td>1957-1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Józef Kucharczyk OMI</td>
<td>1963-1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sajewicz OMI</td>
<td>1969-1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joachim Michałowski OMI</td>
<td>1970-1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zygmunt Musielski OMI</td>
<td>1972-1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakub Szwarc OMI</td>
<td>1981-1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Pulchny OMI</td>
<td>1984-1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wojciech Wojtkowiak OMI</td>
<td>1990-1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zygmunt Musielski OMI</td>
<td>1991-1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Wądołowski OMI</td>
<td>1993-1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Władysław Karcz OMI</td>
<td>1996-1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antoni Degutis OMI</td>
<td>1999-2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maciej Pająk OMI</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ST. HENRY’S CHURCH - MELVILLE

729 Main Street
Melville, SK S0A 2P0
Tel: 306-728-5702
Fax: 306-728-4900
e-mail: sthenrysparish@sasktel.net

Pastor:
Fr. Wendelin Rolheiser OMI

Parish Details
Membership numbers approximately 700 households; Sunday Masses are regularly attended by some 1,000 worshippers.

Masses
Monday to Friday: 7:55 AM; holidays at 9:00 AM.

Sunday Liturgy
Saturday: 7:00 PM; Sunday: 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM (July & August: 10:00 AM)

Devotions
Every Monday in May at 6:30 PM; holidays at 8:30 AM
Every Monday in October at 6:30 PM; holidays at 8:30 AM
During Lent: Stations of the Cross on Fridays at 6:30 PM
Parish Organizations and Groups

Parish Pastoral Council; Finance Committee; Eucharistic ministers and lectors; Music ministers; Shaegula (children’s choir: junior grades 3&4; senior grades 5-9 and adult choir); Children’s Liturgy; Rosary Sodality; The Catholic Women’s League of Canada; The Knights of Columbus; Youth Ministry (through St. Henry’s School); Altar servers

Parish History

The history of St. Henry’s Parish began with the arrival of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railroad in 1906, and the consequent birth of the town of Melville. Fr. Henry Kuegener OMI, resident in St. Delphine’s Parish in the Ituna area, began visiting the community and said Mass in private homes. In the autumn of 1908 he began to say Mass once a month in a public hall. Fr. Peter Vorst was the first resident priest (April – July, 1911). During the term of Fr. M.J. Kasper OMI, a small rectory and church were built; in 1914 a two-room separate school was built. The church and school were both named St. Henry after Fr. Henry Kuegener OMI. Fr. Kasper was followed by Rev. Francis Pander; during this time a second floor was added to the school. The rectory and church buildings were sold; the upper floor of the school was used as the church. Fr. Stanley Wachowicz OMI started a new era with the construction of a new church in 1939 which was completed in 1944. In 1960, fire completely destroyed the beautiful church. For nearly two years Mass was said at the school. The opening and dedication of the new St. Henry’s Church were celebrated on September 9, 1962.

During the term of Fr. Rudy Nowakowski OMI, the parish centre adjoining the church was built; it was officially opened on November 5, 1989. The bell tower was erected in the 90th year of St. Henry’s Parish; the bell was rededicated and blessed on October 26, 1996.

St. Henry’s School has experienced continued growth and development resulting in several structural changes through the years. In 1960 an eight-classroom high school was constructed. In 1983 the old brick building was closed and demolished, reducing the system to two schools. Further renovations and additions have
In 1940, the Sisters of St. Martha agreed to take over the Melville Municipal Hospital, renaming it St. Peter’s Hospital. A new 55-bed structure was erected the following year; in 1960 an additional 52-bed extension was built. In August 2002, the new St. Peter’s Hospital was completed in a different location; occupancy followed in September.

At the present time (2005) St. Henry’s Parish includes the church families and shut-ins, St. Peter’s Hospital, St. Henry’s Junior and Senior Elementary Schools and shared ministry at the St. Paul Lutheran Home. The care of the parish was originally with St. Mary’s Province, but in the fall of 1956 it was ascribed to the Oblates of Assumption Province.

### Pastors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pastor</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Henry Kuegener OMI</td>
<td>1906 - 1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Vorst OMI</td>
<td>1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.J. Kasper OMI</td>
<td>1911 - 1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis Pander</td>
<td>1915 - 1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Schimnowski OMI</td>
<td>1928 - 1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Schnerch OMI</td>
<td>1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Nelz OMI</td>
<td>1929 - 1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.P. Ehmann OMI</td>
<td>1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Czujak OMI</td>
<td>1932 - 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanley Wachowicz OMI</td>
<td>1937 - 1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Kosakiewicz OMI</td>
<td>1940 - 1944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanley Baderski OMI</td>
<td>1944 - 1946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert J. Pilikowski OMI</td>
<td>1946 - 1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanley Wachowicz OMI</td>
<td>1947 - 1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Bednarz OMI</td>
<td>1950 - 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Nowak OMI</td>
<td>1958 - 1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casimir Krystkowiak OMI</td>
<td>1973 - 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casimir Sulej OMI</td>
<td>1977 - 1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zbigniew Zapasek OMI</td>
<td>1981 - 1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudy Nowakowski OMI</td>
<td>1982 - 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Pulchny OMI</td>
<td>1997 - 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocky Grimard OMI</td>
<td>1999 - 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendelin Rolheiser OMI</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Edmonton, Alberta

HOLY ROSARY PARISH - EDMONTON

11485 - 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5G 2P8
Tel: 780-477-2450
Fax: 780-479-6759
www.hrp.ca
E-mail: office@hrp.ca

Pastor: Fr. Roman Majek OMI
Associate: Fr. Francois Dyjak OMI

Parish Details
Membership numbers about 1500 families; Sunday Masses are regularly attended by approximately 1200 worshippers.

Masses
Monday - Wednesday, Friday: 7:00 PM;
Thursday: 12:00 noon;
Sunday Liturgy:
Saturday: 6:00 PM
Sunday: 9:00 AM (English); 10:15, 12:00, 6:30 PM.
(June-August at 8:00 PM)
Devotions
Wednesdays at 6:30 PM - devotion to Our Lady of Perpetual Help;
First Friday of the month - adoration of the Blessed Sacrament after Mass until 1:00 AM;
During Lent - Lenten Lamentations on Sundays at 5:45 PM; The Way of the Cross on Fridays at 6:30 PM; May Devotions - half-an-hour before weekday evening Masses;
October Devotions - Rosary devotions half-an-hour before weekday evening Masses.

Parish Feast Day
October 7th - Our Lady of the Rosary

Educational Programs
Religion classes for grades K-9: every Friday at 6:00 PM from September to May. About 150 children attend; First Holy Communion classes (grade 3): weekly from September to May on Thursdays at 6:30 PM; Confirmation classes (grade 6+): weekly from December to March.

Parish organizations and groups
Parish Pastoral Council; Finance Committee; Building Committee; Eucharistic ministers; Lectors; Cantors; Altar servers; Catechists; St. Cecilia Choir; Betlejem youth choir; Gloria children's choir; Men's Club; Rosary Sodality; St. Teresa Mission Circle; Knights of Columbus; Seniors' Friendship Club; Friends of KUL; Prayer groups - “Good Shepherd”, “Totus Tuus”, Christ the King” and “Most Precious Blood of Christ”.

Parish History
The origin of the Holy Rosary RC Parish for Polish people in Edmonton, Alberta is closely linked to the spiritual work done by two brother priests, Fathers Jan and Pawel Kulawy OMI, also by Father Anthony Sylla OMI who served the people in the south as well as in northern Alberta at the beginning of the 20th century. Residing in Winnipeg, they travelled here serving the spiritual needs of the Polish pioneers. Through their work, the first Polish parishes were established in the province of Alberta in Bankhead, Round Hill, Rabbit Hill, Kopernik, Flat Lake, Coleman, etc. A steady increase of Polish people residing in Edmonton necessitated the need for establishing a Polish parish in the city.

The first meeting held to build a Polish church was on Oct. 27, 1911 for the 100 families who were interested in such a project. Since the first meeting was held in October the name of Holy Rosary was chosen as the name of the future parish. In 1912, Fa-
ther Pawel Kulawy received permission from Bishop Emile Legal, OMI to build the first church which was canonically erected on August 1, 1913. The first group organized was St. Cecilia’s Choir in 1914. The priests served Edmonton and surrounding areas. Father Antoni Sylla OMI finished building the church and rectory in 1919. Because of the lack of Oblate personnel the Oblates returned the parish to the diocese in 1927. The first priest to be ordained from this parish was Father Frank Kosakiewicz OMI in 1931. The Rosary Sodality was formed in 1933. After 1945, with the wave of new immigrants from Poland, a new and larger church was needed. The first Mass was celebrated in the new parish hall on May 15, 1955. The old church was sold. The Men’s Club was formed to financially support the church. Father Joseph Leszczyński, from this parish, was ordained in 1957. Construction was finished in 1959. The church tower was added at a later date.

In 1961 the Oblate Fathers returned to the parish which, due to lack of personnel, they had left in 1927 in the hands of the diocesan priests. In 1962, the rectory was built to celebrate the parish’s Golden Jubilee. Stained glass windows from Poland were installed in 1963. A monument was built for the 100th birthday of Canada and the 1000th anniversary of Polish Christianity in 1966. Also stained glass windows were installed in the choir. Cardinal Karol Wojtyła visited the parish in 1969. The Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate arrived in Edmonton in 1972. Major renovations to
the church were begun in 1995, with the addition of an elevator. The parish’s 90th anniversary was celebrated in 2003.

**Pastors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pawel Kulawy OMI</td>
<td>1915 - 1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antoni Sylla OMI</td>
<td>1921 - 1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jozef Miksa</td>
<td>1926 - 1933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mieczyslaw Rosiecki</td>
<td>1933 - 1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michal Kaluzny</td>
<td>1945 - 1955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam Przysiezniak</td>
<td>1955 - 1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanley Wachowicz OMI</td>
<td>1961 - 1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piotr Klita OMI</td>
<td>1971 - 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franciszek Frazik OMI</td>
<td>1977 - 1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Klimuszko OMI</td>
<td>1979 - 1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teofil Szendzielarz OMI</td>
<td>1985 - 1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanislaw Bijak OMI (Admin)</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wladyslaw Karcz OMI</td>
<td>1987 - 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanislaw Kowal OMI</td>
<td>1995 - 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Majek OMI</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MARY QUEEN OF ALL HEARTS CHURCH - LESTOCK

Box 35, Lestock, Saskatchewan S0A 2G0
Tel: 306-274-2091
Fax: 306-274-2017
Pastor:
Fr. Wojciech Wojtkowiak OMI

Masses
Monday to Saturday
Masses are celebrated at 9:00 a.m.
Sunday Mass is celebrated at 10:00 in Lestock.
In the reserves according to a planned schedule.

Parish History

Before the Lestock parish was established, the local Catholics attended Mass at the Indian Mission founded by the Oblates. Fr. J.P. Magnan OMI visited the mission in 1884. In 1922 the Oblates advised the white community to form their own parish and build their own church, since the Department of Indian Affairs considered the mission to be for Indians only. The first church, St. Gertrude’s, was built in 1924. Lestock
was made a mission of Jasmin in 1925. Rev. R. Lussier was the first resident priest in Lestock in 1928. From his personal funds he built a rectory in 1929.

In 1946, Jasmin became a mission of Lestock. In 1949 a new church was built and the pastor, Fr. Poulette OMI, asked Archbishop O’Neill if the new church could be named after his home parish. The Archbishop agreed to have the name changed. The church was dedicated to Mary Queen of All Hearts. In August 1955, speaking at a pilgrimage in Lestock, Archbishop O’Neill emphasized: “I want an outdoor shrine built at Lestock where people will come from all around and pay homage and honour to God and His Blessed Mother”. A shrine and a new rectory were built in 1957. Still today, on the last Sunday in July, pilgrims make their way to the grotto for a wonderful celebration.

Fr. Wojciech Wojtkowiak, OMI served the parish from 1993 to 1994 while residing in Ituna. In 1994, he moved to the rectory in Lestock. At the same time, he assumed pastoral care over 13 native people reserves, which have 6 churches: Muskowekwan, Our Lady of Hope; Standing Buffalo, Our Lady of Light; Piapot, St. Pius X; Peepeekisis, Mary Immaculate; Pasqua, St. Eugene de Mazenod; and Sakimay, St. Paul. These 13 Reserves are referred to as the “Qu’Appelle Val-
ley Missions” and they operate in conjunction with “Valley Native Ministries” located in Lebret, SK. with Sister Bernadette Feist OSU as its coordinator since 1979. Native Ministries presently include the activities of a monthly “Circle of Elders” gathering and publication of a monthly newsletter “Gathering the Four Winds” along with pastoral, sacramental, liturgical, educational and parish duties.

**Priests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prisque Magnan OMI</td>
<td>1884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. A. Poulette OMI</td>
<td>1922-1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herve Peran OMI</td>
<td>1925-1927 (from Jasmin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Lussier</td>
<td>1928 (1st resident priest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Menard</td>
<td>1929-1946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald Reilly</td>
<td>1946-1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Butter</td>
<td>1964-1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adelbert Kines</td>
<td>1968-1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Grohs</td>
<td>1981-1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eugene Warnke OMI</td>
<td>1985-1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Halbauer OMI</td>
<td>1986-1987 (last resident priest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Doll OMI</td>
<td>1987-1989 (from Ituna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Len Albers</td>
<td>1989-1993 (from Ituna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wojciech Wojtkowiak OMI</td>
<td>1993-(took up residence in Lestock in 1994)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vancouver,
British Columbia

ST. CASIMIR’S PARISH - VANCOUVER

1187 East 27th Ave.
Vancouver, BC V5V 2L7
Tel: 604-876-3194
Fax: 604-872-8171
www.stcasimirs.bc.ca
stcasimirs@telus.net
Pastor: Fr. Wladyslaw Karcierz OMI
Pastoral Assistant: Fr. Marek Czyzycki OMI
Chaplain of Copernicus Lodge: Fr. Marian Mroz OMI

General Information:
The parish membership consists of 1,163 families.

Masses
Weekday Masses: Monday & Wednesday: 8:00 AM; Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays: 7:00 PM; Saturday: 8:00 AM (English); first Friday of the month: 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM (Polish).
Sunday Masses: Saturday: 5:30 PM; Sunday: 8:30 AM (English), 10:00 AM; 12:00 PM (Polish).

Devotions:
Lenten Lamentations on Sundays during Lent at 5:00 PM; Way of the Cross on Fridays at 6:30 PM.
Eucharistic Adoration on the first Friday of each month from 10:30 AM to 6:30 PM.
Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus at 6:30 PM.

Parish History:
In 1928, a small group of Poles in Vancouver began efforts to build a church of their own. The first Polish community organization, Zgoda, was formed in 1926 and served as the meeting place for a growing community – a promising trend boding well for the future parish. In 1928 Fr. Antoni Gorka wrote a special letter to Zgoda, suggesting that the group consider the task of building a church. This only became possible once there was a rapid increase in the size of the Polish community. Archbishop Duke noticed this and in 1944 turned to the Oblates with the request
that they take Vancouver’s Polish community under their care and head the assignment of building a new Polish parish for them. On June 20th of that year, Fr. Frank Kosakiewicz OMI came to Vancouver and set up residence in the rectory near the Cathedral. Very shortly thereafter, he organized the first Mass and devotions. After numerous inquiries, Fr. Kosakiewicz found a house with a large square on East 27th Avenue in Vancouver. On December 23, 1944, Archbishop Duke officially entrusted the parish into the hands of the Oblates. In 1948 the church was built, and it exists to this day.

In 1960, a school was built next to the parish. The school afforded everyone the chance of intellectual and faith formation in the Polish tradition. The Polish seniors were not overlooked: in 1970, construction began on Kopernik Lodge, which opened on April 29, 1973.

On October 7, 1986 the parish welcomed the Sisters Servants of Mary from Poland. The Sisters
aimed to rejuvenate and expand the religious and social life not only in the parish but in the entire Polish community.

Over the 60-year history of the parish, the Fathers and Sisters of both religious congregations worked for the spiritual formation of all. The proof of it lies in the great number of volunteers, who gave their talents, time, energy and enthusiasm for the development and achievements attributed to St. Casimir’s parish in Vancouver.

**Pastors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Franciszek Kosakiewicz OMI</td>
<td>1944-1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanislaw Wachowicz OMI</td>
<td>1957-1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wojciech Golus OMI</td>
<td>1961-1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakub Szwarc OMI</td>
<td>1974-1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zygmunst Musielski OMI</td>
<td>1981-1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazimierz Sulej OMI</td>
<td>1984-1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazimierz Krystkowiak OMI</td>
<td>1989-1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Majek OMI</td>
<td>1993-1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wladyslaw Karciarz OMI</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sturgis, Saskatchewan

ST. PATRICK’S CHURCH - STURGIS

St. Patrick’s Church
112 - 1st Avenue NW
P.O. Box 629
Sturgis, SK  S0A 4A0
Tel: 306-548-2042
Fax: 306-548-2914

Parishes:
St. Patrick’s, St. Anthony’s,
St. Anne’s, St. Thomas, St. Leo’s

Parish Details

ST. PATRICK’S - STURGIS

Membership numbers 80 families;
Sunday Mass is attended by 95 to 122 worshippers.

ST. THOMAS - NORQUAY

Membership numbers 23 families;
Saturday evening Mass is attended by 20.

Fr. Antoni Degutis
OMI, Pastor
ST. LEO’S - ROCKFORD

Membership numbers 15 families;
Saturday Mass is attended by 10-15.

ST. ANNE’S - BUCHANAN

Membership numbers 33 families;
Sunday Mass is attended by 30 worshippers.

ST. ANTHONY’S - RAMA

Membership numbers 63 families;
Sunday Mass is attended by 100.

Masses

Daily Mass schedule:
- Sturgis: Tuesday & Friday at 9:00 AM
- Buchanan: Wednesday at 9:00 AM
- Rama: Wednesday at 11:00 AM
- Norquay: Thursday at 10:00 AM

Sunday Liturgy

Saturday:
- Rockford: 4:30 PM (once a month).
- Norquay: 7:00 PM

Sunday:
- Sturgis 9:00 AM.
- Buchanan & Rama alternate 11:00 AM and 12:30 PM.

Nursing Homes:

Invermay Health Centre & Norquay Health Centre once a month at 1:00 PM.

Devotions

Sturgis

First Friday: exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 6:15 PM
Devotions to the Sacred Heart at 6:45 PM
During Lent: The Way of the Cross at 7:00 PM
May & October: special devotions after scheduled Masses

Norquay

During Lent: The Way of the Cross after Thursday Mass
May & October: Special Marian Devotions after scheduled Masses

Buchanan

Lent: Lenten meditations on Mondays; rosary on Tuesdays and The Way of the Cross on Thursdays. In May: Marian Devotions after scheduled
Masses and rosary on Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays. In October: the rosary on Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays.

**Rama**

Lent: Way of the Cross after Mass  
May & October: Special Marian Devotions after scheduled Masses.

**Parish organizations and groups**

**Sturgis**

- Parish Pastoral Council  
- Eucharistic ministers and lectors  
- Catechists  
- The Church choir  
- The Knights of Columbus  
- two Catholic Women’s League of Canada Councils  
- Norquay Rosary Sodality  
- Altar Society

**Buchanan**

- The Knights of Columbus (Canora)  
- The Church choir

**Rama**

- Parish Pastoral Council  
- Eucharistic ministers and lectors  
- Catechists  
- The Church choir  
- Knights of Columbus  
- Parish Ladies’ Club

**Parish History:**

**St. Patrick’s, Sturgis**

Pastoral care was provided during the early years by Rev. Jules Decorby, OMI from St. Philip’s and from 1904 to 1933 by the Redemptorist Fathers from Yorkton. In 1913 work began on a church. The Oblate Fathers were assigned to the mission Church at Sturgis in 1933 with Fr. John Bednarz OMI as the first Oblate priest. In 1934, Sturgis was given the status of a parish with Fr. Thomas Nowak OMI as the first resident priest of St. Patrick’s Church and the Oblates have continued to serve to this day. The rectory was built in 1941. As the number of families in the parish increased, a bigger church was constructed and opened in December 1962.

**Parish History:**

**St. Thomas, Norquay**

In the early years, Catholics from the Norquay area attended church at St. Anne’s, seven miles southwest of Norquay, which was built in 1923. Difficulties attending Mass at this place, especially in the winter, were the main reasons for building the present St. Thomas Church. The parish was established on March 19, 1939 and from that time, under the leadership of Fr. Thomas Nowak OMI, lumber had been cut and hauled for use in the construction. The church was completed in 1940. Both churches served the needs of the people until 1968, when St. Anne’s Parish amalgamated with St. Thomas Parish.
Pastoral care was provided in this area by the same pastoral team which served in Sturgis (the Redemptorists) and since 1933 by the Oblates, with Fr. John Bednarz OMI. He was succeeded by Fr. Thomas Nowak OMI, the first pastor, founder of the parish and builder of St. Thomas Church.

Parish History:
St. Leo’s, Rockford

In 104 the needs of Rockford Catholics were served by the same Redemptorist priests who went to Sturgis. They were followed by the first Oblates, Fr. John Bednarz OMI in 133 and Fr. Thomas Nowak OMI in 134, who was pastor at St. Patrick’s, Sturgis. The history of the present St. Leo’s Church started in 126 and was completed in 138 with the building of the current church structure. The cemetery is also located on the church grounds.

Parish History:
St. Anne’s, Buchanan

In 1928, the old Kowalowka (Tiny) Church built in 1904 was dismantled. The reusable lumber was hauled to Buchanan, where the local Catholics built a modest frame-church. The first Mass was celebrated on July 26, 1929. In 1946 Fr. Joseph Kucharczyk OMI became Buchanan’s first resident priest. In 1980, it was decided that a new church would be built. On August 4, 1980, the old church was dismantled and replaced by a new one measuring 80 x 32 feet. The first Mass in the new church was on December 21, 1980 with the official opening having taken place on July 19, 1981.
Parish History:
St. Anthony’s, Rama

The first parish for settlers in the Rama district from 1904 to 1910 was the rural church at Dobrowody. In 1920, Fr. Stephan Mayer CSSR established a new parish: St. Anthony’s in Rama. The church was completed in 1922. Diocesan priests served the needs of the parish. The first Oblate priest was Fr. Anthony Sylla OMI, who built Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto in 1941. The rectory was also built in 1941.

Priests Serving at St. Patrick’s Church and the missions of St. Thomas, Norquay and St. Leo’s, Rockford

**Pastors:**

- Thomas Nowak OMI  1934 - 1958
- Joe Kucharczyk OMI  1958 - 1963
- Jerry Talarski OMI  1963 - 1986
- John Szkodzinski OMI  1986 - 1990
- Frank Frazik OMI  1990 - 1992
- Adam Filas OMI  1992 - 1996
- Casimir Krystkowiak OMI  1996 - 1999
- Andrzej Sowa OMI  1999 - 2005
- Antoni Degutis OMI  2005
The parish community comprises 1,295 families. Over 900 people attend Masses each Sunday.

**Weekday Masses:**

Advent & Lent:
Monday-Wednesday 10:00 AM; Thursday & Friday 7:00 PM.

May & October: 7:00 PM.

June: Fridays 7:00 PM.

Rest of the liturgical year:
Monday & Tuesday 8:00 AM; Wednesday 10:00 AM; Thursday & Friday 7:00 PM.
First Fridays of the month: multiple-intention Mass 7:00 PM.
Sunday Liturgy:
Sunday Masses: Saturday at 5:30 PM; Sunday at 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM, 12:30 PM (English)

Devotions
First Fridays of the month at 6:00 PM
Our Lady of Perpetual Help on the first Saturday of each month at 5:00 PM.
Marian Devotions during the month of May: Monday-Friday 6:30 PM; Saturdays 5:00 PM; Sundays 9:00 AM & 1:30 PM.
The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus: Thursdays in June at 6:30 PM.
Lent: Lenten Lamentations on Sundays at 9:00 AM; The Way of the Cross on Fridays at 6:30 PM.

Educational Services
Religious instruction: Saturdays from 9:30 AM to 11:00 AM in Polish and English for children in Grades 1-8 inclusive. Polish school: Saturdays from 11:00 AM to 1:30 PM.

Parish Groups & Organizations
Parish Council; Finance Committee; Holy Rosary Society; Holy Name of Jesus Society; Marian Sodality; St. Francis – Third Order; parish choir; lectors; altar servers; Seniors’ Club; Knights of Columbus; youth group; teen group; Polish school; the “Stokrotki” Song and Dance Ensemble.

Parish History
Since the Polish community did not have their own parish church, Canadian philanthropist Eugene O’Keefe decided to help this community which had been gathering to celebrate Mass at St. Michael’s Cathedral. In April 1911, O’Keefe purchased a series of buildings and gave them to the Polish community. Included was a church building which had up to then belonged to a Presbyterian congregation. The church, now a Catholic parish, was blessed on September 3, 1911 with Bishop Joseph Weber of Kitchener conducting the blessing and delivering the homily in Polish. At the request of Cardinal McGuigan, on June 29, 1935, the parish was
transferred to the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Fr. Stanislaw Puchniak OMI was named the first pastor. The Felician Sisters arrived from Buffalo in 1937 to help in the parish. In August 1945, the St. Stanislaus Credit Union opened its first branch which to this day is located above the parish hall. On November 19, 1961, the parish celebrated its Golden Anniversary.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the parish laid claim to the largest youth group in the entire diocese, as well as a dance ensemble, Gorale (Highlanders). In 1969, the parish welcomed Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, the future Pope, as a guest. In 1986, St. Stanislaus parish celebrated its 75th anniversary and Cardinal Jozef Glemp, the Primate of Poland, celebrated the jubilee Mass. On September 16, 2001, the parish commemorated its 90th anniversary with Bishop Matthew Ustrzycki (Diocese of Hamilton) celebrating the Mass. In 2002, the parish hosted catecheses for youth that had arrived from Poland to celebrate the World Youth Days in Toronto.

The parish has produced seven priests, four of whom entered the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate: Fr. Edward Świątek, Fr. John Mazur, Fr. Richard Wolak and Fr. Stanislaw Bak. Six female parishioners also entered religious life as Felician Sisters.

**Pastors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jozef Hinzman</td>
<td>1911-1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Barron</td>
<td>1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leo Blum</td>
<td>1919-1922</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jozef Dekowski</td>
<td>1922-1935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanisław Puchniak OMI</td>
<td>1935-1946</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Klita OMI</td>
<td>1946-1952</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wincenty Ferdynus OMI</td>
<td>1952-1953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanisław Prokop OMI</td>
<td>1953-1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antoni Murawski OMI</td>
<td>1958-1967</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mieczysław Węcki OMI</td>
<td>1967-1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Klimuszko OMI</td>
<td>1973-1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edward Świątek OMI</td>
<td>1979-1986</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marian Sukienik OMI</td>
<td>1986-1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakub Szwarc OMI</td>
<td>1994-2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Wądołowski OMI</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ST. MARY’S PARISH - TORONTO

1996 Davenport Church
Toronto, ON   M6N 1C4
Tel: 416-656-3130
Fax: 416-656-6251
stmarypolish@rogers.com
Pastor: Fr. Antoni Mendrela OMI

Parish Details:
The parish numbers about 700 families

Sunday Liturgy:
9:00 AM & 11:30 AM (Pol), 10:15 AM (Eng)
The history of St. Mary’s Parish reaches back to the beginning of the Twentieth Century. Ever increasing numbers of Poles began to immigrate to Canada from Poland, which was being torn by conquests. Among the areas where the new immigrants settled was West Toronto. Naturally, they desired to have their own parish where they could gather to worship in their native language. Toronto Archbishop Neil McNeil looked with understanding on the needs of the new Polish community, allowing use to be made of St. John’s Chapel on Church Street for the celebration of Mass in Polish. This required Polish-speaking priests, and the Archbishop did his best to find them. In 1911, the Archbishop oversaw the arrival of Polish priests to the first parish donated to the community by philanthropist Eugene O’Keefe – today’s St. Stanislaus Parish.

At that time, Poles living in West Toronto gathered for Sunday Mass in the basement of the Ukrainian church of St. Josaphat on Franklin Avenue. Finally, in 1914, Archbishop Neil McNeil turned over the mission of building a new church to Fr. Marian Wachowiak, who was temporarily serving St. Stanislaus Parish.

Fr. Wachowiak called together a parish committee and charged it with the task of raising funds to build the new church. The first parish community com-
prised about 250 families. Despite serious difficulties in raising the necessary funds, construction did get under way and on the last Sunday in October of 1915, Archbishop McNeil blessed the new church, which initially was referred to as the parish of the Birth of the Virgin Mary. This was the first ethnic Polish parish in Toronto that was built entirely by the Polish community.

The original architectural plans called for a school – for this reason the building was short and had a flat roof. The actual church was to be built elsewhere, at a later time. Unfortunately, the tough financial situation that the Polish community faced at the time prevented the plan from going through. The building was later modified so as to appear more church-like. The first parish organization formed was the Society of the Holy Name of Jesus, a men’s group. It became very active and played a key role in the spiritual and organizational life of the parish. A women’s organization soon followed: The Rosary Sodality.

Soon after the consecration of the church, the pastor’s term ended and he returned to the United States. In the years that followed, right up to 1920, many pastors came and went. Finally, when Fr. Jozef Dekowski took over the parish in 1920, it was in a state of near-bankruptcy. Archbishop McNeil once again offered assistance by assuming the parish’s debt and taking over a piece of its property, including the old rectory. Thus, the parish was freed of its debt load.

In 1938, Archbishop James C. McGuigan offered back to the parish the earlier-assumed property and provided $500 to raise the church building. The walls were raised and the roof and tower that we see today were all added at that time. Then-pastor, Fr. Władysław Gulczynski, planned to expand Polish school and catechism classes, and arranged for two Felician Sisters to join the parish from Buffalo: Srs. Eustachia and Bonifilia Rozmach. The work of Fr. Gulczynski was tragically cut short by his untimely death in a car accident in 1940. At that time, Archbishop McGuigan turned to the Oblates with the request that they take over the parish. The Oblates put Fr. Peter Klita OMI in charge of the church, and thus began the Oblate involvement in the life of St. Mary’s Parish that continues to this day.

In addition to the other mentioned parish groups, the Polonia Relief Group and Polish Army Veterans’ Group Squadron 133
(assisted later by the Women’s Corp) were active at the parish. A Polish school is also active, as is the choir established by Fr. Jozef Dekowski in the 1920’s. St. Mary’s celebrated its 90th anniversary in 2005. Today, it no longer plays the role it once did in the early days of its history. In its early years, St. Mary’s was a centre of faith and Polish culture for a number of generations of Toronto’s Polish community.

**Pastors:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marian Wachowiak</td>
<td>1915 – 1916</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bolesław Sperski</td>
<td>1916 – 1917</td>
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<tr>
<td>Józef Chodkiewicz</td>
<td>1918</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leopold Blum</td>
<td>1919</td>
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<tr>
<td>Józef Dekowski</td>
<td>1920 – 1924</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. J. Kulczyk</td>
<td>1924 – 1926</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stefan Mayer CSSR</td>
<td>1926 – 1931</td>
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<tr>
<td>Władysław Gulczyński</td>
<td>1931 – 1940</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piotr Klita OMI</td>
<td>1940 - 1946</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stanisław Puchniak OMI</td>
<td>1946 - 1947</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feliks Kwiatkowski OMI</td>
<td>1947 - 1949</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stanisław Baderski OMI</td>
<td>1949 - 1969</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stanisław Prokop OMI</td>
<td>1969 - 1971</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antoni Bagsik OMI</td>
<td>1971 - 1981</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antoni Mendrela OMI</td>
<td>1981 - 1984</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casimir Krystkowiak OMI</td>
<td>1984 - 1988</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edward Klimusko OMI</td>
<td>1988 - 1990</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tadeusz Nowak OMI</td>
<td>1990 - 1991</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stanisław Bijak OMI</td>
<td>1991 - 1999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antoni Mendrela OMI</td>
<td>1999</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
History:

ST. STANISLAUS PARISH – EAST SELKIRK

Every ethnic Polish parish in Canada has a similar history behind it, yet each one is different in some way. St. Stanislaus’ parish dates back to 1897, when Polish immigrants began to settle in East Selkirk. Occasionally missionaries would visit them and the community would gather in private homes to celebrate Sunday Mass. Their faith was strong and they believed that nothing could be done without God. Thus, in 1910, a few families decided to band together and build a chapel in East Selkirk. Two years later, the chapel was ready for divine services. In 1937 Antoine d’Eschambault led the construction of the new church, as the chapel proved to be too small. The
year 1940 was significant, as Archbishop Yelle P.S.S. of St. Boniface entrusted the new church and pastoral care over the inhabitants of the area to the Oblates. The number of parishioners grew and in 1953, 70 families belonged to the parish. Again, the need arose to enlarge the parish facilities. On May 19, 1973 the parish saw the ordination of Fr. Karol J. Tarnopolski, whose family belonged to the parish since 1948. The 75th anniversary of the parish was festively observed in 1987 with the walls being renovated and new carpets installed. A few years later, a new rectory and parish office were added.

CORPUS CHRISTI PARISH – NAROL

The history of Corpus Christi parish began with the arrival of eight Polish families in Narol (MB) in the year 1900. Seven years after settling, the families decided to build a church, no matter what it would take. By 1907, a small church was erected – yet it soon became clear that this church was simply not adequate in size due to the increasing size of the community. In 1940, the church dating back to 1912 had to be completely razed to the ground to make way for the new church building which would house a much needed parish hall in its basement. In 1992, the parish council was formed which together with 105 families began to plan the construction of the next church complex and hall. The cornerstone and ground were blessed on June 1, 1997 and that same year, on All Saints’ Day, Archbishop Antoine Hacault blessed the new building. The parish community looks forward to
the 10th anniversary of the consecration of the new church and the 100th anniversary of the community’s profession of faith, which can truly be compared to Christ’s parable of the mustard seed. From a tiny group of eight families, a parish arose and set roots in the community. Over the past century, many generations have been nourished by it.
**Well and, Ontario**

STS. PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES PARISH - WELLAND

300 Chaffey Street  
Welland, Ontario L3B 2Y8  
Tel: 905-734-4824  
Fax: 905-734-9546  
www.iaw.on.ca  
E-mail: ppchurch@iaw.on.ca  
Pastor: Fr. Stanislaw Bijak OMI

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**General Information**

Parish membership numbers 285 registered families and individuals, with approximately half of these being Polish in origin. About 210 people participate in the Sunday Masses each week.

**Weekday Masses:**

Masses during the week: As announced in the bulletin for each week.

**Sunday Liturgy:**

Sunday Masses: Saturdays 5:00 PM (English); Sundays 9:00 AM (English), 11:00 AM (Polish)
Devotions

May: Marian devotion each Saturday, plus every day following Mass.
June: Devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus at 7:00 PM following Mass on the first Friday of the month.
October: Rosary before Mass each day of the week and on Sundays.
Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on the first Friday of the month at 6:00 PM.
Lenten Lamentations during Lent on Sundays at 10:30 AM; the Way of the Cross on Fridays before the evening Masses at 7:00 PM; also during both the Polish and English Lenten retreats.

Parish Groups & Organizations

The Parish Council, Eucharistic ministers, lectors, Polish parish choir, The Holy Rosary Society, St. Peter and Paul Seniors’ Club, the Polish-Canadian Society of Welland.

Parish History

The parish was founded in 1913. The first Oblate missionaries arrived in Welland in 1947. The parish underwent a rapid expansion in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Felician Sisters came to Welland during that time to run the Catholic school. On December 26, 1996, a fire destroyed the previously restored church edifice. Soon afterwards, Fr. Jan Wadolowski OMI together with the parishioners built the current, modern, beautiful church which was blessed by Bishop John O’Meara on December 13, 1999.
Pastors

Kenneth Morrow  1913 - 1914
Boleslaw Sperski  1914 - 1916
Ignacy Ostaszewski  1916 - 1920
Stanley Jendruszczak OSM  1921 - 1922
Charles Barron  1922 - 1930
Charles Mioduszewski  1930 - 1932
William M. Kennedy  1932 - 1936
M. F. Pogan  1936 - 1939
Henry Basil Doyle  1939 - 1942
Stanley L. Cassin  1942 - 1947
Stanley Puchniak OMI  1947 - 1958
Peter J. Klita OMI  1958 - 1964
Vincent Ferdynus OMI  1964 - 1983
Wojciech Wojtkowiak OMI  1983 - 1990
Roman Majek OMI  1990 - 1993
Zygmunt Musielski OMI  1993 - 1996
Jan Wądołowski OMI  1996 - 1999
Stanislaw Bijak OMI  1999
St. Casimir’s Church - Toronto

156 Roncesvalles Avenue
Toronto, ON M6R 2L5
Tel: 416-532-2822
Fax: 416-532-7598
www.kazimierz.org
e-mail: parafia@kazimierz.org
Pastor: Fr. Alfred Grzempa OMI
Associates: Fr. Roman Nisiewicz OMI, Fr. Jan Sadowski OMI
In Residence: Brother Roman Zapadka OMI

Parish Details
Membership numbers over 3,000 families; Sunday Masses are regularly attended by some 2,500 worshippers.

Weekday Masses:
Monday – Friday: 7:00 AM, 8:00 AM, 7:00 PM. Saturday 8:00 AM

Sunday Liturgy:
Saturday 7:00 PM
Sunday 8:00 AM, 9:45 (English Mass in the church; Polish mass in the hall), 11:15 AM, 1:00 PM, 7:00 PM.

Devotions
- First Thursday and Saturday of the month at 6:30 PM.
- First Friday of the month at 7:30 PM – liturgy to the Sacred Heart of
Educational Programs

The Parish offers catechism classes to children who attend public schools. Over 100 children are enrolled in any given school year. The classes take place Saturdays from 9:30 AM to 11:00 AM.

Polish language classes also takes place at the parish on Saturdays at 11:15 AM and 2:00 PM. Enrollment is over 150 students.

Parish organizations and groups

Parish Pastoral Council; Finance Committee; Eucharistic ministers and lectors; Catechists and the youth; The “Melodia” parish choir; The parish Committee; The Rosary Sodality; The AA group; The Holy Name of Jesus Society; The Sodality of Mary; The Divine Mercy Society; The St. Vincent de Paul Society; The Knights of Columbus; The “St. Casimir’s” Seniors’ Club; The “Polonia” Seniors’ Club; Polish School; Children’s Group; The Prayer Group; Children’s Rosary Circle; The Nazareth Family Prayer Group; The John Paul Judo Club; English lectors; The White Eagle song and dance ensemble.

Parish History

Already in 1944, the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate began to see the need to build a new, third Polish parish to serve Toronto’s growing Polish immigrant community. At the time, the Oblates were working at St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish on Denison Avenue. In 1948, Fr. Stanislaw Puchniak OMI blessed the ground where the new parish was to be built.
Fr. Michael Smith OMI was given the responsibility of organizing the new parish community. In 1949, the three-story parish hall was constructed which served as the place where Masses were celebrated, where people gathered and where children were taught. The decision to build the new church was made on January 21, 1951. Three years later, the new church was a reality.

This is the day that the Lord has made … The new church was blessed on May 23, 1954. It was an historic moment for all those gathered inside the walls of the new sanctuary. The first Mass was celebrated by Fr. Michael Smith OMI, with Fr. S. Wachowicz OMI, Provincial at the time, delivering the homily. That same afternoon, in the presence of the thousands who had gathered, his Eminence James Cardinal McGuigan conducted the blessing of the new church. Sixty-six children received First Holy Communion on that same day.

In the ensuing years, stained-glass windows, confessionals, an organ and Stations of the Cross were added to the church.

St. Casimir’s Church has throughout its history been faithful to God, preserving at the same time the many religious traditions of the Polish people. Many Polish Bishops and Cardinals have visited the church. The Primate of Poland, Cardinal Jozef Glemp, has visited four times, while Cardinal Henryk Gulbinowicz has visited twice. During the World Youth Days in Toronto in 2002, St. Casimir’s Church served as the Polish office for World Youth Day. St. Casimir’s Church blossomed in the 1980s and 1990s, and remains to this day a prestigious parish in the City of Toronto.

**Pastors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michael Smith OMI</td>
<td>1948 - 1958</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan Sajewicz OMI</td>
<td>1958 - 1965</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antoni Rabiega OMI</td>
<td>1965</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edward Świațtek OMI</td>
<td>1965 - 1971</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feliks Kwiatkowski OMI</td>
<td>1971 - 1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryszard Kosian OMI</td>
<td>1976 - 1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazimierz Sulej OMI</td>
<td>1981 - 1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zygmunt Musielski OMI</td>
<td>1984 - 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antoni Mendrela OMI</td>
<td>1991 - 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janusz Błażejak OMI</td>
<td>1999 - 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfred Grzempa OMI</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
St. Catharines, Ontario

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP CHURCH - ST. CATHARINES

5 Oblate St.
St. Catharines, ON L2M 5C5
Tel: 905-937-4230
Fax: 905-937-8922
e-mail: olphchurch@hotmail.com
Pastor: Fr. Richard Kosian OMI
Assistant: Fr. Kazimierz Kozicki OMI

Parish Details:
Membership numbers over 1,000 families; Sunday Masses are regularly attended by 700 worshipers

Weekday Masses:
9:00 AM and 7:00 PM (6:30 PM during daylight savings time).

Sunday Liturgy:
Saturday – 5:30 PM
Sunday – 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, 11:30 AM. (English Mass)

Devotions:
- Every Wednesday - to Our Lady of Perpetual Help at 6:30 PM. Mass at 7:00 PM.
- First Friday of the month – to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at 6:30 PM
- Lent: Lenten lamentations on Sunday at 5:00 PM; Stations of the Cross on Fridays at 6:30 PM
- Good Friday - Solemn Stations of the Cross (by youth) at 7:00 PM

Religious and Educational Programs
Boy scouts meetings: Tuesdays at 7:00 PM in the parish hall
Parish Youth meetings: every second Friday of the month at 7:30 PM in the parish hall
Parish organizations and groups
Parish Pastoral Council; Finance Committee; Eucharistic ministers; lectors and collectors; Holy Rosary Sodality; St. Cecilia parish choir; Parish Youth choir; Youth Ministry; Children Ministry; Boys and Girls scouts; Polish School

Parish History
Pastoral ministry among the Polish Roman Catholics living in St. Catharines began at the end of the 19th Century. Polish priests sporadically celebrated Masses and Devotions using the Irish Church of St. Catharines in downtown St. Catharines. The priests’ names and the timing of their visits are not recorded.

In 1914 Fr. Boleslaw Sperski initiates a continuous Polish ministry at St. Mary’s Church located at the crossroads of Niagara, Garnet and Currie streets. St. Mary’s Church also served the Italian Community. The year 1914 is recorded as the beginning of Polish ministry in St. Catharines. Fr. B. Sperski is followed by nine diocesan priests up to the year of 1949. In 1937 St. Mary’s Church passes officially under the patronage of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church.

In 1946 the first wave of Polish demobilized soldiers arrives in St. Catharines. In 1949 Archbishop James McGuigan of the Archdiocese of Toronto charged the Oblate Fathers of Mary Immaculate to undertake the Pastoral ministry of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church. In 1950 the core Polish membership reaches 70 families. On January 17, 1951 by decree of His Eminence Cardinal McGuigan, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Community becomes a
new independent ethnic Parish. The same year a sod breaking ceremony blesses the ground for the parish church to be built. Two priests are involved in building it: Fr. Władysław Golecki OMI and Fr. Wojciech Golus OMI. In 1953 the membership of the Parish totals 150 families and is growing dramatically. In 1954 a beautiful grotto is built. From 1968 to 1979 the parish reaches 1250 families.

The weakening local economy since 1980 (closure of a GM engine plant and other support factories), results in workers leaving St. Catharines. Despite a slight decrease in the number of parishioners, their religious way of life and Polish awareness are very much alive.

**Pastors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bolesław Sperski</td>
<td>1914 – 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignacy Ostaszewski</td>
<td>1919 – 1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanisław Jędruszczak</td>
<td>1921 – 1923</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan Kulczyk</td>
<td>1923 – 1929</td>
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<tr>
<td>Władysław Gulczyński</td>
<td>1929 – 1931</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karol Mioduszewski</td>
<td>1931 – 1933</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edward Olszewicz</td>
<td>1933 – 1935</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emmet Lacey</td>
<td>1935 – 1937</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan Dekowski</td>
<td>1937 – 1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leon Calinski OMI</td>
<td>1949 – 1949</td>
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<tr>
<td>Władysław Golecki OMI</td>
<td>1949 – 1954</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wojciech Golus OMI</td>
<td>1954 – 1961</td>
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<tr>
<td>Władysław Panek OMI</td>
<td>1961 – 1965</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piotr Klita OMI</td>
<td>1965 – 1971</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stanisław Prokop OMI</td>
<td>1971 – 1976</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan Szkodziński OMI</td>
<td>1976 – 1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jakub Szwarc OMI</td>
<td>1985 – 1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryszard Kosian OMI</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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ST. HYACINTH PARISH - OTTAWA

201 LeBreton Street North
Ottawa, ON K1R 7H9
Tel: 613-230-0804
Fax: 613-230-0125
www.swjacek.ca
E-mail: swjacek@swjacek.ca
Pastor: Fr. Stan Kowal OMI

Parish Details
The parish membership consists of 1,200 families; about 900 people participate each week in Sunday Masses.

Weekday Masses:
Monday 8:00 AM; Wednesday-Friday 7:00 PM

Sunday Masses:
Saturday 6:00 PM; Sunday 8:30 AM, 9:45 AM (English), 11:00 AM, 12:30 PM, 7:00 PM
Devotions
- Sacred Heart of Jesus: first Friday of every month at 7:00 PM, together with devotion to the Divine Mercy;
- Our Lady of Perpetual Help: every third Friday of the month at 7:00 PM;
- Lenten Lamentations during Lent on Sundays at 6:30 PM; Way of the Cross on Fridays during Lent at 7:00 PM

Education
The parish organizes Saturday catechism and Polish classes for approximately 300 children.

Parish Groups and Organizations
Parish Pastoral Council; Finance Committee; Eucharistic ministers and lectors; Rosary Circle; Eucharistic Youth Movement; altar servers; catechism and youth; Domestic Church; Knights of the Blessed Virgin; St. Pio prayer group; ministry to shut-ins; Catholic Action; Liturgy of the Word for Children; aid to Polish missions.

Parish History
In 1948 there arose the need to build a Polish parish in Ottawa. However, it was only in 1954 that the archdiocese decided to form a parish for the Polish-speaking population, and a parcel of land was bought at the corner of LeBreton and Louisa Streets. Two years later, the Vicar General of the Archdiocese, Msgr. H. Chartrand, acting on behalf of Archbishop J. M. Lemieux, sym-
bolically began the construction of the church in which the Polish community and parishioners would worship. Such were the beginnings of the Polish parish which was entrusted to the Oblates and whose first pastor was Fr. Jan Sajewicz OMI.

St. Hyacinth’s parish was built in accordance with the plans of architect, Roman Stankiewicz. The interior of the parish bespeaks a quiet atmosphere, which is ideal for prayer and reflection. Above the altar is located a wide stained glass window designed by Waclaw Czerwinski depicting St. Hyacinth. The colours used are varied and give differing impressions depending on the angle of sunlight. In 1962, the church was decorated with the Stations of the Cross.

Fr. Richard Kosian OMI oversaw significant changes to the interior structure of the church and left behind many wooden sculptures such as the baptism of the Polish nation, the baptism of Jesus, a panorama of the seminary in Czestochowa and a picture of Our Lady of Czestochowa.

Fr. Janusz Blazejak OMI added two large triangular stained glass panels in the windows – the one on the west side showing Pope John Paul II, and the one on the east side showing the resurrected Christ.

The wave of post-Solidarity immigrants added new life to the parish. Thanks to this, a great many young people belong to the parish and make up a large part of spiritual life at the parish.

**Pastors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sajewicz OMI</td>
<td>1951 - 1958</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stanislaw Prokop OMI</td>
<td>1958 - 1969</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antoni Rabiega OMI</td>
<td>1969 - 1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ryszard Kosian OMI</td>
<td>1982 - 1994</td>
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<td>Stanislaw Bak OMI</td>
<td>1994 - 1995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marian Gil OMI (admin)</td>
<td>1995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Janusz Blazejak OMI</td>
<td>1995 - 1999</td>
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<td>Jan Wadolowski OMI</td>
<td>1999 - 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stanislaw Kowal OMI</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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HOLY ANGELS PARISH - TORONTO

61 Jutland Road
Toronto, ON M8Z 2G6
Tel: 416-255-1691
Fax: 416-255-1274
Pastor: Fr. Giovanni Gioppato OMI
Associate: Fr. Vincenzo Guercini OMI

Parish Details:
Membership over 1,000 families: Sunday Masses are regularly attended by some 600 worshippers.

Masses:
Monday - Friday 8:00 AM, 7:00 PM

Sunday Liturgy:
Saturday: 7:00 PM
Sunday 7:30 AM (Italian), 9:00 AM (English), 10:15 AM (Italian), 11:45 AM (English) 7:00 PM (English)
Devotions:
- Every Friday exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 8:00 AM until 11:00 PM
- May & October Devotions to the Blessed Virgin - Immaculate Conception Novena
- During Lent the Way of the Cross at 7:00 PM
- Christmas Novena
- Novena to Saint Anthony: “Tredicina” 13 days of prayer and confession in preparation for the Feast of St. Anthony
- Novena to Our Lady of Mount Carmel: 9 days of prayer and confession in preparation for the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Educational Programs:
The Parish offers catechism classes to children who attend public schools. The classes for catechism are offered every Sunday from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM. Classes for Confirmation for public school children take place on Monday evenings from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM.

Children's Liturgy:
Children 4 to 8 years old are enrolled in this class. They are held every Sunday during the 9:00 AM Mass.

Parish organizations and groups:
Finance Committee; Eucharistic ministers and lectors; Catechists; two parish choirs - CWA - Donne Azione Cattolica; Ministry for the shut-ins; Prayer Group; Holy Angels Seniors’ Club; HARA: Holy Angels Recreational Association / social and religious activities; St. Anthony Committee; Our Lady of Mount Carmel Committee; Bingo Committee; Volunteers who collect and deliver food, clothing etc. to the Dr. Simone Centre for the Poor; aerobics and yoga classes offered twice a week.
During the latter half of the 1950’s, there was a considerable increase in the Roman Catholic population in the area served by St. Mark’s, St. Leo’s and Our Lady of Sorrows’ parishes. Polish and Italian immigrants joined Canadians to comprise this population. Through the hard work of a group of parents, Holy Angels’ School was opened in the fall of 1960. At the same time, Father Michael J. Smith OMI saw the need for another Catholic parish in the area. He petitioned Cardinal McGuigan to establish a new parish to be called Holy Angels. Permission was granted, and the first Mass was celebrated in Holy Angels’ School on November 20, 1960 with Father Smith.

Early in 1961, Sunday Mass attendance increased from 500 to almost 700 persons. Father Smith then requested and obtained permission to build a rectory and a hall for the growing parish. Later that year, Father S. Misiag OMI became pastor and led the campaign to raise money for the hall and rectory. However, Father Misiag’s health failed and Father S. Puchniak OMI became pastor in the summer of 1961. By Christmas, construction of the hall was completed and Midnight Mass 1961 was the first Mass celebrated there.

In August 1963, Father Frank Kosakiewicz OMI was appointed pastor. He established the first parish council with Harold J. Fromm as chairperson. During the 1960’s the number of Italian parishioners increased and festas in honour of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St. Anthony became an important part of parish life. The large growth of the Italian community led to the appointment of the first Italian speaking pastor, Father Carmelo Iuculano OMI in October 1967.

Planning for a new church building proceeded under Father Carmelo. Bruno Apollonio was the architect and Conason Construction built the church for a cost of $268,454.00. The cornerstone was laid in 1969 and the first Mass in the new church was held on Palm Sunday, 1970. However, due to the tragic death of Father John Di Berardino OMI, in an auto accident, the consecration of the church was delayed until early 1971.

Father Benito Framarin OMI became pastor in July 1971. Between 1971 and 1976 when he left to work on CORRIERE CANADESE, the three stained glass windows, begun under Father Carmelo, were completed. Stephen Taylor of Toronto designed these windows - (The Angels Window - The Madonna Window...
- The Integration Window). The tabernacle mosaic and the Stations of the Cross were also installed in these years.

Father Peter Gioppato OMI became pastor in 1976 and stayed until 1983. Under Father Peter, the present organ and the wood carving of the Risen Christ were installed. Father Benito returned as pastor in the fall of 1983 and stayed until 1986. On February 17, 1987 Fr. Edward Świątek was appointed pastor of Holy Angels, where he stayed until his death, September 6, 2004. Fr. Peter Reginato had been his assistant for all of his term. During these years the parking lot was repaved, the flooring in the church replaced, air conditioning has been installed in the church and the hall has been re-decorated and air conditioning installed.

The church has been beautified with the installation of marble throughout the church and two wooden statues, hand-carved in Zambia, representing Angels/Apostles, were hung beside the Risen Christ. Three new stained glass windows, by Stefano Simonette, and four wall paintings by a Russian artist Dimitry Korman and a Mexican artist Marisella have been added. In addition a bocce court was built next to the parish hall.

**Pastors:**

Stanisław Misiąg OMI 1961
Stanisław Puchniak OMI 1961 - 1963
Frank Kosakiewicz OMI 1963 - 1967
Carmelo Iuculano OMI 1967 - 1971
Benito Framarin OMI 1971 - 1976
Peter Gioppato OMI 1976 - 1983
Benito Framarin OMI 1983 - 1986
Edward Świątek OMI 1987 - 2004
Peter Reginato OMI (adm) 2004 - 2005
Giovanni Gioppato OMI 2005
Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre is the fulfillment of a dream. Father Michael Smith OMI had a dream that he would become involved in retreat ministry for married couples. For several years he formulated plans for this type of ministry and for the Centre itself. Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre came alive in April 1963, when it was blessed and officially opened by Archbishop Philip Pocock of Toronto.

In their search for property on which to build a retreat house, the Fathers came upon a beautiful and peaceful setting of thirteen acres overlooking the Credit River valley. The site was out of the way, within a short distance from Toronto, and hence, ideally situated to serve the needs of many families.

Wooded grounds form a perfect setting for a larger than life size wooden crucifix which has become an area for quiet prayer and contemplation. Indoors, the innovative design of the chapel is highlighted by a figure of the resurrected Christ. In this beautiful chapel, it is easy to spend many, many moments in silent prayer. The celebration of the Eucharist takes on special meaning.

A few years ago, we put in proper stairs that lead down to the lower level by the river. All 157 steps! Along the ridge, we have constructed a scenic lookout of the river below. Another renovation has been the addition of four more bedrooms as well as two larger meeting rooms in order to accommodate larger or more groups to the Centre. A fish pond situated in front of the main entrance greatly enhances the beauty of our grounds.
Retreats offered at the Centre have many formats and are of varying durations. Some last only a single day, while others might last a few days or a full week. People on private retreat follow their own program. Some retreats are delivered or preached, while others are private and silent, except for sessions with a director who sojourns with the retreatant each day. This is akin to spiritual direction on a short term basis. For many, this serves as a first experience of the prayer known as meditation.

Although they are not a retreat, the Marriage Encounter
(171) and Engaged Encounter (176) weekends are core programs at Queen of Apostles. They have been given many times over the years. A Marriage Encounter program is an enrichment program which makes good marriages better. The couples do a lot of spousal sharing, dialoguing and communicating. These programs are given in English, Polish, Spanish and Korean.

Engaged Encounter programs are recognized marriage preparation weekends. Following guidelines from married team presenters, the engaged couples prepare for marriage by learning to share, to dialogue and to communicate effectively.

Student retreats vary in length and format. One day retreats are usually very short in duration because it depends on the time of student arrival and eventual departure. An overnight retreat for senior students affords more time to work at a more leisurely pace to be still, to reflect and to pray.

Seminary groups have held study sessions over the years. Priests and religious communities make their annual retreats here or hold their community Chapters.
Almost from the very outset, members of the Anglican, Presbyterian, Lutheran and the United churches have made retreats at Queen of Apostles. A truly memorable occasion was when we hosted the week long meeting of the Primates of the Anglican Church from around the world. Present at a May 2000 meeting of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Bishops were His Eminence Edward Cardinal Cassidy, President of The Pontifical Council For Promoting Christian Unity and The Most Reverend Honourable George L. Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre has been blessed with a number of noteworthy guests visiting the Centre including the visit of His Eminence Karol Cardinal Wojtyla (later Pope John Paul II), Jean Vanier and Mother Teresa, to mention just a few.

Throughout our 43 years, the Centre has been under the direction of great leaders. In order, they were Fr. Felix Kwiatkowski, Fr. Michael Smith, Fr. Stan Bak, Fr. Janusz Blazejak, Fr. Rocky Grimard, Fr. Casimir Krystkowiak, Fr. Ted Nowak and Fr. Rudy Nowakowski. Associate Directors during the years included: Fr. Leo LaFreniere, Fr. Ed Klimuszko, Fr. Larry Nowakowski, Fr. Zbigniew Zapasek, Fr. John Mazur and Fr. Slawomir Oblak. For a few years, Brother Roman Zapadka helped out at the Centre.

Sister Jean Deluca, CSJ was the first woman to join the preaching team at the Centre. She was followed by two Felician
Sisters MaryAnne Olekszyk and Maria Goretti. With their departure, Sister Frances McLaughlin, SC and Sister Susan Smolinsky, SC joined the preaching team. Along with the Sisters, two married women, Louise Wilson and Anne Hales were also invited to preach with the Oblates. Other staff members were of Portuguese and Italian descent; today, several of the workers are of Polish background.
ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE PARISH
- MISSISSAUGA

4260 Cawthra Rd.
Mississauga, ON L4Z 1V8
Tel: 905-848-2420
Fax: 905-279-4274
www.kolbe.ca
kolbe@kolbe.ca
Pastor: Fr. Andrzej Sowa OMI
Pastoral: Fr. Mieczyslaw Burdzy OMI
Assistants: Fr. Marcin Mironiuk OMI; Fr. Wojciech Kurzydlo OMI
In residence: Fr. Marian Gil OMI; Fr. Wilhelm Rozmyslowski OMI
General Information

The parish membership numbers 11,000 (eleven thousand) families. Over 8,000 faithful take part in Sunday Masses every week.

Weekday Masses:

Monday-Friday 8:00 AM, 7:00 PM; Saturday 9:00 AM, 5:00 PM (English), 7:00 PM (Polish); Tuesday 7:00 PM (English).

Sunday Liturgy:

Saturday 5:00 PM (English), 7:00 PM (Polish); Sunday 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM (English), 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM (children), 2:30 PM (Baptisms), 7:00 PM (youth). Sunday Mass is rebroadcast on the radio AM 530 at 8:00 PM.

Devotions

- Sundays: 7:30 AM – Liturgy of the Hours
- Our Lady of Perpetual Help – every Wednesday following the 7:00 PM Mass
- The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus – every first Friday of the month after the 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM Masses
- Marian devotion – every first Saturday of the month after the 9:00 AM Mass
- Perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Catechesis:

Good Shepherd Program; religious instruction; religious film showings.

Parish Groups & Organizations

AL–Anon; AA; the Harfa choir; the Peace choir; the Agnus Dei parish choir; Domestic Church; lay Franciscans; Padre Pio prayer group; dance group; Radosc-Joy vocal ensemble; scouts; adult catechism; Kolbe Klub; seniors; Tourist Club; Circle of Hope; Church Commission; lectors; Eucharistic ministers; altar servers; youth; Circle of Our Lady; Polish-Canadian children's aid; Polonia Brass Band; charitable aid; Renew program; Pro-Life; Nazareth Families movement; Knights of Columbus; Knights
Parish History

Large-scale Polish settlement in Mississauga is, in an historic perspective, a relatively recent phenomenon. When increasing numbers of Poles began to live in the city, the need was seen by the Oblates of Assumption Province to build a church where the community could gather and worship in its native language. On November 15, 1979 permission was granted to form Blessed Maximilian Kolbe parish and on December 2, 1979 Bishop Philip Pocock celebrated the inaugural Mass at the Felician Sisters’ Holy Name of Mary High School. Fr. Stan Bak OMI was named the first pastor of the new parish community. On April 15, 1981 Fr. Bak announced to the community the happy news that land had been purchased on which the new church would be built. On April 27, Bishop Jan Wieczorek blessed the square; earth from Auschwitz was brought and sprinkled over the site to symbolize the martyrdom of the patron of the parish. In March 1983, construction of the new parish began. On
May 22, 1983, Cardinal Władysław Rubin blessed the cornerstone of the new church building.

The Festival of Religious Song began taking place at the parish in 1991. The annual festival is now known as the International Festival of Religious Song and has grown greatly in popularity over the years. Fr. Tadeusz Nowak OMI replaced Fr. Stan Bak OMI as pastor on September 1, 1991. Eventually a family aid organization was formed, providing material assistance to those in need. The cultivation of faith life in the Polish community has always been of great importance at the parish. Through small “Renew” groups, the Gospel was brought to private homes. Next to the parish, the John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre was opened, symbolizing the great hope of the Polish community that its culture and values could be cultivated in the city where so many of its members lived. On Good Friday 1995, the Divine Mercy Chapel was opened which continues to offer perpetual adoration to the Blessed Sacrament.

Fr. Adam Filas OMI became pastor of St. Maximilian Kolbe parish in 1996. In 1999, Fr. Stan Kowal OMI was named pastor. The parish continued to grow this entire time. The biggest event in the history of not only the parish but perhaps of all of Toronto and Canada was the World Youth Days and the meeting with Pope John Paul II in 2002. The parish at this time hosted over 1,000 young pilgrims.

## Pastors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pastor</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stan Bak OMI</td>
<td>1979 - 1991</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tadeusz Nowak OMI</td>
<td>1991 - 1996</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adam Filas OMI</td>
<td>1996 - 1999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stan Kowal OMI</td>
<td>1999 - 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrzej Sowa OMI</td>
<td>2005</td>
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</tbody>
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Edmonton, Alberta

OUR LADY QUEEN OF POLAND PARISH - EDMONTON

9906-83 Avenue
Edmonton, AB: T6E 2C1
Tel: 780-439-8800
Fax: 780-439-8902
www.mbpk.com
e-mail: office@mbkp.com
Pastor: Fr. Janusz Jajesniak OMI

Parish Details:
Membership numbers about 950 families; Sunday Masses are regularly attended by approximately 850 worshippers

Weekday Masses:
Tuesday - Friday: 7:00 PM

Sunday Liturgy:
Saturday: 5:00 PM (Eng)
Sunday: 9:00 AM; 11:00 AM; 6:00 PM

Fr. Janusz Jajesniak OMI,
Pastor
Devotions:
- 1st Friday of the month: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 7:30 PM ending with devotions to the Sacred heart at 9:00PM
- Every Wednesday of the month: devotion to Our Lady of Perpetual Help at 6:30 PM
- Season of Lent: Lenten Lamentations on Sunday at 5:30 PM and the Way of the Cross on Fridays at 6:30 PM

Educational Programs:
Catechetical instructions for children take place every Friday from 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM. 128 children are registered.

Parish Organizations and Groups:
Parish pastoral Council; parish Club; Finance Committee; Eucharistic Ministers & Lectors; Catechesis & Youth; Choirs: “Salve Regina” & “Gloria”; Rosary Sodality; Little Knight of the Loving Heart of Jesus; Mission Club; Nazareth Family Movement.

The Sisters of the Holy Name of Jesus also work in the parish.

Parish History:
Although the Polish Community of Edmonton saw a fairly regular increase of Polish immigrants throughout the 60’s and 70’s, the 1980’s saw a considerable influx of Polish immigrants. These were the post-Solidarity immigrants: young, educated, vocal and spiritually connected.

At the same time, Father Teofil Szendzielarz OMI pastor of Holy Rosary Parish understood this new group of Polish immigrants in the community. And it was Father Szendzielarz who first planted the seed of establishing a community of faithful in the south side of the city, where the majority of these immigrants settled.

In the spring of 1987, J.H. Picard School on the south side of Edmonton was secured to have Mass celebrated on certain Sundays for the south side community. This arrangement did not last long, for in the Fall of the same year, St. Michael’s
Church was rented and regularly scheduled Sunday Masses were celebrated. Here the community grew and thrived. It didn’t take long before they began to look for a permanent place of worship that they could call their own.

Soon a search began for a permanent and suitable place to establish a second parish on the south side of Edmonton. In the Fall of 1989, a church was purchased from the Southside Pentecostal Assembly for $780,000.00. The initial funds came from Holy Rosary Church, and soon after fundraising was organized among the Polish Community of Edmonton which was well received and supported by all. The first Mass was celebrated on the first Sunday in November of 1989.

In March of 1990, Archbishop Joseph MacNeil appointed Father Mieczysław Fidyka OMI as the administrator of this community of faithful and in 1991 Father Fidyka became pastor of the parish of Our Lady Queen of Poland.

A house was purchased for the priest’s residence. Many new groups were established to serve the community. Catechism classes started, which include preparations for First Communion and Confirmation.

September 1996 brought changes in the leadership of the parish. Father Mieczysław Fidyka accepted a new assignment in Bashaw, Alberta and Father Slawomir Trzasko OMI was appointed the new pastor of the parish. He promptly proceeded to build a new rectory on the site of the existing house.

In 2002, Father Trzasko was reassigned and Father Janusz Jajeśniak OMI came to minister to the faithful and is at the present time the pastor of the parish.

**Pastors:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mieczysław Fidyka</td>
<td>1990 – 1996</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slawomir Trzasko OMI</td>
<td>1996 – 2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Janusz Jajeśniak OMI</td>
<td>2002</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Catholic Youth Studio, formed in 1994, is a charitable organization with the mission of spreading the Good News through the media. The board of directors consists of clergy and lay individuals. The organization’s roots go back to the World Youth Day event held in Denver, Colorado, in 1993 and grew out of the pastoral service of the Missionary Oblates to the youth of Mississauga, Canada.

Catholic Youth Studio’s evangelizing mission is realized through:

1) **Catholic Youth Studio Radio Program**

A daily radio program broadcast in Polish on CIAO AM 530 every day from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. with audience
reach throughout Toronto and the GTA, as well as worldwide on the internet at: 
www.ksmradio.com, and in English as Catholic Radio Toronto, broadcasting 24/7, at www.catholicradio.ca. The goal of the radio programs is to strengthen the faith of Catholics and to awaken it in those who have yet to experience their “springtime of faith”.

2) “Rodzina” Magazine

It is the only monthly Catholic magazine published in the Polish language in Canada. The goal of the magazine is to promote Christian family values in a secularized society and to build “a civilization of love”.

3) Cultural Events

The International Festival of Religious Song - Each year, over 100 amateur and professional performers take part in the festival, which is attended by thousands of people. Over the years, the Festival has seen the performances of guest artists such as: Tony Melendez, Fr. Stan Fortuna (“The Rappin’ Priest”), Sal Solo, Eleni, and Mietek Szczesniak. Information is available online at: http://www.catholicradio.ca/festival

The 25th Anniversary of JP II’s Papacy concert took place on October 12, 2003 at the Air Canada Centre in Toronto. Approximately 8,000 people attended the concert, which featured over 200 performers from all across the world. Performing alongside the 150-voice World Youth Day Choir and Silver Symphony Orchestra, directed by Michael Newnham, were Helmut Lotti of Belgium, Tony Melendez of the USA, Anna Shafajinskaja of Russia, Georghe Zamfir of Romania, Malgorzata Walewska of Poland, as well as, Franco Tenelli, Kinga Mitrowska, Adrian Anantawan and Lisa Di Maria of Canada.

The John Paul II Legacy Concert - The Legacy Concert took place on October 22, 2005 at the Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto. The concert was conceived as a gesture of thanksgiving for the
pontificate of John Paul II. An Oratorio was delivered focusing on God’s Divine Mercy. The Oratorio was composed by Zbigniew Malkowicz and was based on the diaries of St. Faustyna Kowalska.

The presentation of films - One of the greatest successes was the showing of Quo Vadis (directed by Jerzy Kawalerowicz) in 2001. The film was shown in all major cities across Canada.

Community events - Over an eleven-year time period, Catholic Youth Studio organized many community events for the benefit of its listeners. Among the guests invited during that period were: Fr. Jozef Augustyn SJ, Fr. Waldemar Chrostowski, Fr. Andrzej Baczynski, film director Jerzy Ridan and historian Jan Maria Jankowski.

Other events include: an annual New Year’s banquet in which the tradition of passing around Christmas wafers and other Polish cultural traditions is upheld; the KSM Summer Picnic, which takes place yearly in the second half of July and draws not only listeners and readers of Rodzina magazine, but also people of good will who wish to make a contribution towards the ministry of Catholic Youth Studio.

Our History:

The history of Catholic Youth Studio reaches back to the 1993 World Youth Day event in Denver, Colorado. A few months later - on Epiphany Sunday, January 2, 1994 - a 30-minute radio program was aired, directed mainly towards the youth.

Over the ensuing years, the weekly half-hour program turned into a daily broadcast. In 2001, a four-day-per-week English-
language program was added, which became known as Catholic Radio Toronto.

In 2002, KSM approached the CRTC and applied for a radio broadcasting license that would have seen the development of a Catholic radio station in Toronto. Unfortunately, after a year of hard work by the production staff, consultants and legal personnel, the CRTC came back with a negative answer. It is important to note that the proposed station would have served over two-million Catholics, who account for nearly 50% of the population in the area.

Catholic Youth Studio actively collaborates with the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) in forming guidelines for Catholic radio in Canada.

In 2004, Catholic Youth Studio celebrated its 10th anniversary. The celebrations began on January 10th of that year with a Mass and banquet. The legendary Polish ensemble Skaldowie performed a show entitled “Moje Betlejem” (My Bethlehem).

A pilgrimage to Rome took place from May 15-30th, 2004 as a gesture of thanksgiving during our 10th-anniversary year. The pilgrimage also featured visits to a number of Italian shrines and a private audience with Pope John Paul II.


Catholic Youth Studio is continuing to look for ways to obtain a broadcasting license so that the Good News can reach as many people as possible. Anyone who would like to help make this vision a reality is invited to contact our production studio.
Dedicated volunteers:


Some 200 volunteers, consisting in a large part of high-school and post-secondary students, give their time to KSM in various capacities.
ST. EUGENE DE MAZENOD PARISH - BRAMPTON

1206 Steeles Ave. W.
Brampton, ON L6V 3N2
Tel: 905-451-1422
Fax: 905-451-0226
Website: www.sw-eugeniusz.org
e-mail: parafia@sw-eugeniusz.org
Pastor: Fr. Adam Filas OMI
Associate: Fr. Marcin Rosinski OMI
Resident: Fr. Casimir Krystkowiak OMI

Parish background
Some 2500 families belong to the St. Eugene de Mazenod parish; over 3,000 people attend Mass on Sundays.

Masses
Monday, Wednesday, Friday - 7:00 PM
Thursday - 9:00 AM
Saturday - 6:00 PM
Sunday - 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM (children's Mass), 11:30 AM (English), 1:00 PM, 6:00 PM.

Devotions
- Every Wednesday at 7:00 PM to Our Lady of Ludzmierz followed by Mass.
- Every first Friday of the month at 7:00 PM to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus followed by Eucharistic Adoration to 10:00 PM.
- Every first Saturday of the month: Mass and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary at 9:30 AM.
- Every first Sunday of the month: devotion & praying the Mysteries of the Living Rosary after Mass at 8:30 AM.
- Every second Friday of the
month at 7:00 PM: devotion to the Divine Mercy in the intention of peace on Earth, for Christ’s Church and especially for new vocations.

- Sundays during Lent: Lenten Lamentations at 5:30 PM; Way of the Cross on Tuesdays with children’s participation and on Fridays (general participation) at 7:00 PM.

**Parish Celebrations**

- Last Sunday in May: Parish feast day in honour of St. Eugene de Mazenod
- Second Sunday in September: Marian feast in honour of Our Lady of Ludzmierz

**Religious Instruction:**

The parish offers religion instructions for children at all levels.

The OAZA DZIECI BOZYCH is a strong group counting over 100 children; there is also the altar servers’ group consisting of 200 children. Saturday Polish classes see the attendance of over 300 Polish children. A youth group has also been formed at the parish; it meets every Monday at 7:00 PM.

**Parish Organizations & Groups**

Church Building Foundation; Building Fund Committee; Finance Committee; Parish Committee; Altar Servers; Banquet Committee; Social-Func-
tions Committee; Rosary Sodality; the Our Lady of Ludzmierz Com-
mittee; the Youth Group; the “Quo Vadis” Parish Choir; the “Hosanna”
altar servers’ musical ensemble; the OAZA DZIECI BOZYCH; lectors;
Eucharistic ministers; the Missions Guild; catechists; Knights of Colum-
bus; Regional “Cracovia” ensemble; Regional “Zrodlo” ensemble; the
Domestic Church.

**Polish Community Groups at the Parish**

Fundacja “Z Nadzieja w Przyszlose”, “Klub 1000” im. Jana Pawła II,
Stowarzyszenie Polaków w Brampton, Zespół Góralski „Swarni“ im.
Stanisława Dziwisza.

**Parish History**

The roots of St. Eugene de Mazenod parish go back to 1990
when it became clear that St. Maximilian Kolbe parish,
serving 40,000 faithful at the time, could not accommodate
the needs of the large Polish Roman Catholic community living in
Mississauga. This fact, coupled with the desire of Brampton’s Pol-
ish community to build an additional church, convinced Fr. Stani-
slaw Bak and members of the lay community that the project was
a necessity. Bishop Terrence Prendergast concurred with these
observations during his 1996 pastoral visit. Soon after, Fr. Adam
Filas OMI was named pastor of St. Maximilian Kolbe parish and
he took on the task of planning the new parish in Brampton as
quickly as possible.
Following discussions with Bishop Prendergast and Fr. Tadeusz Nowak OMI who was Provincial at the time, Cardinal Aloysius Ambrozic issued a decree on July 31, 1998 allowing the new parish to be formed. On November 7, 1999, Fr. Christopher Pulchny OMI, the new Provincial, officially put Fr. Adam Filas OMI in charge of forming the new parish and building the church in Brampton under the name of St. Eugene de Mazenod.

It is difficult to summarize in just a few words the breadth of all that goes on in the St. Eugene de Mazenod parish community, or to describe the speed with which this youngest of Oblate parishes has evolved.
Grayson, Saskatchewan

ST. MARY’S CHURCH - GRAYSTON

P.O. Box 278
Grayson, SK    S0A 1E0
Tel: 306-794-4834
Fax: 306-794-2236

Missions:
St. Elizabeth Church, Killaly;
St. Michael’s Church, Lemberg;
Sacred Heart of Mary Church, Marieval.

Pastor: Fr. Heinrich Sicking OMI

History:

The first Catholic settlers came to the farms in Grayson in 1880. Three years after the building of the railroad and station in 1905, Fr. P. Magnan OMI, Oblate vicar of the mission, proposed the idea of building a centre, from which the missionaries would serve the people to the north of the Qu’Appelle Valley. In 1907 Fr. M.J. Kasper OMI became the first resident and superior of the house. Later in the same year Archbishop Langevin of Winnipeg blessed the new church under the title of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Fr. Joseph Riedinger OMI, in 1915 invited the Ursuline Sisters of Winnipeg to come and take over the administration of the school.

In 1928, the church became too small to accommodate the quickly growing number of parishioners. So a building committee to
raise funds was organized. The campaign went well so that by 1931 Archbishop McGuigan blessed the new church. That same year was also the silver jubilee of the foundation of the parish and its wonderful growth both spiritually and materially.

In 1931 the old church which the pioneers had built was converted into a parish hall. The joy of having a new hall did not last long, because for some unknown reason, the building burned to the ground in 1933. It was a few years later (1942) that a new parish hall, called Cecilia, was built. In 1944, the Ursuline Sisters purchased the old rectory and turned it into a convent. As the school population increased, additions were added in 1947 and again in 1953. Over the span of several years, there were many improvements and needed repairs to the church interior.

**Pastors:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pastors</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frank Woodcutter</td>
<td>1896 – 1900</td>
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<td>J. De Bresson</td>
<td>1900 – 1901</td>
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<td>Paul Kulawy OMI</td>
<td>1901 – 1902</td>
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<td>Augustine Suffia OMI</td>
<td>1902 – 1905</td>
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<td>Michael Kasper, OMI</td>
<td>1905 – 1911</td>
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<td>Edward Hess OMI</td>
<td>1911 – 1913</td>
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<td>Theodor Joerissen OMI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Reidinger OMI</td>
<td>1915 – 1919</td>
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<td>F. X. Rapp OMI</td>
<td>1919</td>
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<td>F. Plischke OMI</td>
<td>1919 – 1920</td>
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<td>F.X. Rapp OMI</td>
<td>1920 – 1925</td>
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<td>J. Schnerch OMI</td>
<td>1925 – 1926</td>
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<td>Julius Sultmann OMI</td>
<td>1926 – 1936</td>
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<td>Joseph Schulte OMI</td>
<td>1936 – 1941</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Ueberberg OMI</td>
<td>1950 – 1965</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noel Warnke OMI</td>
<td>1965 – 1967</td>
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<td>August J. Hanus OMI</td>
<td>1967 – 1974</td>
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<td>John Fetsch OMI</td>
<td>1974 – 1978</td>
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<tr>
<td>John A. Peters OMI</td>
<td>1978 - 1983</td>
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Wilno, Ontario

OUR LADY OF CZESTOCHOWA PARISH - WILNO

17329 Highway 60
Wilno, ON  K0J 2N0
Tel: 613-756-2344
Fax: 613-753-0987
Administrator: Fr. Miroslaw Olszewski OMI

Parish Details:
210 families belong to the parish

Masses:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday: 8:30 AM
Wednesday & Friday: 7:00 PM
All Masses are in English

Sunday Liturgy:
Saturday: 7:00 PM, Sunday: 8:00 AM (Eng); 10:00 AM (Pol)
Devotions:
- Wednesdays 6:30 PM: rosary and novena to Our Lady of Czestochowa
- Thursdays 9:00 AM – 9:00 PM: Eucharistic Adoration
- Fridays at 7:00 PM: Divine Mercy Chaplet
- Saturdays 8:30 AM: Rosary and novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Parish History:

Polish immigrants began to settle the area around Hagarty, Ontario around the middle of the 19th Century. It is noted that by 1860 there were already 30 families from the Kaszuby region of Poland who had settled in the area. In 1875 the first Polish priest arrived and in 1876 he began to build a small chapel under the patronage of St. Stanislaus Kostka. This area eventually came to be known as Wilno, named after the home-town of the first pastor, Fr. Wladyslaw Dembski (1880-1892). The first church burned to the ground on February 2nd, 1936 and in the Spring of the same year the parishioners set about to build a new church which still exists to this day. Six Fathers came from the parish, including one Oblate – Fr. Stanislaw Baderski OMI. There were also 15 Sisters associated with the parish.

The region of Ontario between Combermere, Wilno and Barry’s Bay (comprising the Wadsworth, Kuiack, Long, Dam, Franks and Gun Lakes) came to be known as the Kaszuby region. It was discovered by a Franciscan priest, Fr. Rafal Jan Grzondziela, who saw this region of numerous lakes and pine forests as resembling the Kaszuby region of Poland. Today the few local inhabitants consist mainly of small farmers, businesses and retired people, however, in the Summer months, partly due to the Polish Scouting Association in Ontario which has its summer camp located in this area, the region blossoms with tourists and vacationers seeking rest and relaxation among the abundant forests and lakes.

From its beginnings until 1996, the parish was under the care of diocesan clergy at which time the Chrystusowscy (Society of Christ) assumed responsibility of the parish. Today, the parish is under the care of the Oblate Fathers of Assumption Province.
Not far from the juncture of King Street, Queen Street and the Queensway, stands a beautiful building, eleven stories tall known as “The John Paul II Centre of Copernicus Lodge”. From this vantage point, there is a magnificent view of Lake Ontario. The idea behind this great and needed undertaking first came to light in the mind and heart of Fr. Michael Smith OMI, a man well known in the Polish Canadian community. Besides the grace of a calling to the priesthood and religious life, he was blessed with a very practical mind. He was keen to discover the needs of the people whom he served. One of these was the loneliness of old age of many Poles in Canada. The thoughts of building a home for seniors’ retirement were met with great enthusiasm and support. In 1979, the first phase of Copernicus Lodge was built. However, soon after, it was found to be inadequate for the needs of the people. In a few years, the building was enlarged. Currently, almost 500 people enjoy residence at the lodge.

Upon entering the lodge, one is struck by the interior beauty of the building and the warm courtesy of the workers. A totally Polish atmosphere and Polish culture thrive here, as all the memorable anniversaries of national history are observed and celebrated.
At the entrance, we find a wide corridor that leads to the chapel, where Masses are celebrated daily. The first chaplains were themselves residents at the lodge: Fr. Edmund Rygusiak OMI, Vincent Ferdynus OMI and Fr. John Chwist OMI. Father John Szkodzinski OMI, the present chaplain, has been ministering to the people since 1999.
Saint Paul University is a Catholic and bilingual institution entrusted for more than a century to the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Saint Paul University is endowed with civil (1866) and pontifical (1889) charters. Saint Paul University has been federated with the University of Ottawa since 1965.

As a Catholic institution, Saint Paul University is dedicated primarily to an understanding and integration of Christian faith and life. It intends to pursue this task in a spirit of ecumenical openness and with a critical awareness of the forms of Christian life already existing or now emerging within modern cultures and societies.
As a bilingual institution, Saint Paul University wishes to contribute to the mutual understanding and enrichment of the English and French speaking communities, while remaining attentive to the cultural diversity of the country.

As a centre of higher learning, Saint Paul University intends, within the local, national and international academic community, to promote excellence in teaching, research, and professional formation. It endeavours as well to serve diverse Christian communities and socio-cultural organizations and, in collaboration with them, to try to meet the challenges presently confronting Church and society. Thus, by participating in the evangelizing mission of Christ, Saint Paul University hopes to contribute creatively to the humanization of society (from the mission statement of St. Paul University).

Fr. Wojciech Kowal OMI

Fr. Wojciech Kowal OMI, obtained his doctorate in canon law from Saint Paul University in Ottawa, in 1997 (title of the dissertation: Understanding Ecclesiastical Laws: Canon 17 in Light of Contemporary Hermeneutics).

After spending a year as chancellor of the curia in the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas, MB, he began to teach at Saint Paul University as a lecturer. In the year 2000, Fr. Wojciech became an assistant professor. His teaching duties include such subjects as the methodology of canon law, public ecclesiastical law, special marriage cases and administrative recourse to particular churches and bishops as well as to parishes and pastors.

Fr. Kowal’s special area of research and interest are problems related to the interpretation of canon law in favour of the faith procedures. His involvement at the university includes: membership in the Senate, the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Canon Law, the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philosophy and the Board of Directors of the Ethics Centre. He was also secretary (ad interim) of the Faculty of Philosophy and vice-dean (ad interim) of the Faculty of Canon Law. Since 1998, Fr. Kowal is also a judge in the Canadian Appeal Tribunal in Ottawa.
Fr. Alessandro Costa OMI has been working the Diocese of London for many years. In 2003, since the Scalabrini Fathers who had ministered to Italian immigrants left the Diocese, the Bishop turned to the Oblates of Assumption Province and requested that Fr. Costa be allowed to assume responsibility for the 500 families of Italian origin living with the boundaries of the diocese.
Annunciation Parish in Prince Rupert and Christ the King Parish in Kitimat are but two examples of the help members of Assumption Province give to Anglophone parishes even though they do not have a tradition of having Polish roots and ministry. Fr. Slawomir Trzasko OMI began in Prince Rupert in 2004. Recently Fr. Jacek Nosowicz OMI has been asked to continue this ministry.
Chapter 3

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate Assumption Province in Canada

Oblate Formation
OBLATE FORMATION

The road to religious life within the context of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate usually, but not always, begins within the quiet of the Catholic family and certainly within the depth of the human heart – the place where all authentic vocations are discovered. An Oblate vocation, after it is discovered, must be nurtured and shaped. At every stage of the journey to perpetual commitment in the Oblate Congregation, the candidate is accompanied by mentors – priests and brothers – who have already walked along this road after professing their final vows. The first stage of Oblate formation involves a preparation for the novitiate year, during which a candidate is introduced to Oblate life. The length of this pre-novitiate stage will depend on the candidate and the Oblate mentors who are accompanying him. The novitiate year prepares the candidate to profess simple, year-long vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and perseverance. The next stage takes a candidate to a house of formation for a period of at least three years. Candidates who have discerned a vocation to religious life and to the ministerial priesthood are sent to scholasticate where they undergo studies in philosophy, theology and pastoral ministry. Candidates who discern a vocation to religious life, but do not feel called to priestly ministry, share in community life and enroll in programs of studies for a given trade in which the candidate has a particular aptitude or interest. After a number of years of preparation for religious life, the candidate is invited to make a life-long commitment to God within the Oblate Congregation.
Candidates who enter the Oblate Congregation as members of the Assumption Province in Canada make their novitiate year in the United States or Poland. Fr. Rocky Grimard, OMI, a member of Assumption Province, is assistant novice master at the Oblate novitiate in Godfrey, Illinois, in the United States. The following are a few thoughts he relates about his ministry:

“My main ministry here is to guide our young novices and journey with them during the year. I help them understand community life, introduce them to prayer and help them develop a spiritual life. I also introduce them to the Founder of the Oblates and give them a history of our congregation. I journey with the young men for one year taking them through a desert experience where we ask them to come to know their God and themselves in a more deep and intimate way. This is a very special and enriching spiritual year for the novice who prepares himself to enter vowed life in our community, the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. This year we have seven novices from different parts of the world. One from Haiti, one from Mexico, one from the United States, one from Canada and three from Zambia. The youngest is 22 and the oldest is 27”.

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY NOVITIATE

Assistant Novice Master: Fr. Rocky Grimard OMI
After completing his novitiate year and professing the evangelical councils for one year, a candidate who has also discerned a vocation to priestly service, is sent for academic and spiritual formation to a scholasticate where he shares in Oblate life with other Oblate Seminarians and completes studies in Philosophy, Theology and Pastoral Ministry. His studies are supplemented with a year of pastoral engagement within the context of a missionary setting. Near the end of his scholastic formation, the candidate is invited to make his perpetual vows, before being ordained to the diaconate and then to the Ministerial Priesthood. The Superior of the Oblate Seminary in Ottawa is Fr. Tadeusz Nowak, OMI. The following are a few thoughts he shares about his ministry:

“The ministry of superior of a major oblate seminary - scholasticate - involves the mentoring of candidates, by personally bearing witness to the charism of St. Eugene de Mazenod, accompanying the candidate in his journey towards perpetual profession of the evangelical councils and ordination to the priesthood. The superior of the scholasticate, along with his formation assistants, prepare the program for the scholasticate community - its prayer and meeting schedule - and is responsible for implementing the essential features of oblate formation as outlined in the Formation Directory. The superior meets regularly with the candidates, prepares evaluations and reports, leads regular retreats, and formation sessions, and preaches regularly at daily celebrations of the Eucharist. The Superior is responsible for assuring the oblate community, and the Church, that each candidate is well prepared for living out an authentic religious life, and that he is well prepared for the service of God’s people”.
POLISH PILGRIMAGE TO MIDLAND

The Canadian Martyrs’ Shrine in Midland is a focal point for many pilgrimages. The history of the shrine dates back to the first Jesuit missions in what was the homeland of the Hurons and which currently forms part of Ontario. The Jesuit St. Mary’s mission became the maternal mission for many other Catholic missions that followed. The Jesuit mission was also intended to act as a fortress to protect those living in the area against the Iroquois, who were hostile towards the Hurons. The Iroquois, in attacking the Hurons, also killed missionaries working among them. In the 1649, five Jesuit missionaries were killed by the Iroquois in the vicinity of Midland. In 1925, Pope Pius XI beatified them and five years later, they were canonized. These were the first martyrs on Canadian soil elevated to sainthood by the Church. Soon afterwards, the Canadian Martyrs’ Shrine was formed and to this day continues to be run by the Jesuits. Pilgrimages to the new shrine began to take place.

The first mention of Polish participation in the pilgrimages goes back to 1938. The first official Polish pilgrimage from Toronto set out for Midland on August 17, 1947. The Oblates from Toronto organized it and attending were, Fr. Peter Klita OMI and Fr. Feliks Kwiatkowski OMI. After this, the Polish pilgrimage became a yearly event. Fr. Michael Smith OMI, the first Provincial of Assumption Province, was a great proponent of this pilgrimage.
On Fr. Smith’s initiative, the Polish Priests’ Conference for Eastern Canada was called together in 1957 and thereafter, the Conference took charge of the yearly pilgrimage to Midland.

The Polish pilgrimages to Midland can be divided into three periods. The first ones (up to 1956) were organized by parishes operated by the Missionary Oblates and the Resurrectionist priests. Later ones (up to 1982) saw much increased participation and were organized by the Polish Priests’ Association of Eastern Canada. The influx of new immigrants from Poland in the early to mid 1980’s helped infuse new life and enthusiasm into the latest phase (from 1983 to the present). It was during this time that a walking pilgrimage was introduced and which continues to this day. The visit of Pope John Paul II to Midland on September 15, 1984 was no doubt an added momentum which keeps bringing back pilgrims to Midland every year.
The walking pilgrimages which left from Toronto typically set out the weekend before the Feast of the Assumption (August 15th). From the very start, the Oblates of Assumption Province played a major role in these pilgrimages. Nowadays, hundreds of people take part each year in this walking pilgrimage to Midland. The Feast of the Assumption still sees over 10,000 Poles from all across the Province of Ontario participating in this yearly event.

POLISH PRIESTS’ ASSOCIATIONS IN CANADA

In 1956, Fr. Michael Smith OMI and Fr. Jozef Capiga CR together with Monsignor Franciszek Pluta of London began to organize pastoral get-togethers for Polish priests working throughout Ontario. Soon, the Polish Priests’ Conference for Eastern Canada was formed, being modeled after the Polish Priests’ Association of Manitoba which was created in 1957 by Fr. Frank Kosakiewicz OMI. Its goal was to coordinate the pastoral work of priests ministering to the Polish-Canadian community.
Chapter 4

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate Assumption Province in Canada

Priests