



1939 – 1979

FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Founding of the Parish of

Saint Thomas The Apostle
Bloomfield, New Jersey

January 28, 1979

DEDICATION

We dedicate this day, January 28, 1979, and forty years of service to all of the Parish Priests, Sisters, and Parishioners who have devoted their energies and dedication to make this day possible... and a special thanks to those who currently serve St. Thomas the Apostle Parish.

Rev. Msgr. Vincent P. Coburn

Rev. Charles F. Noble
Rev. Eugene F. Marcone
Rev. Dennis J. Cohan
Rev. Vincent J. Doyle

Rev. James F. McManus, Weekends
Deacon Walter Kelly
Deacon Thomas Noone, Jr.
Deacon Albert H. Tizzano
Deacon John Walsh

Jesus Christ is the Light of the World. As the disciples of Jesus, we the Church, His Mystical Body, have been challenged by Him to be the Light in our Society. We seek to radiate that Light by proclaiming the Gospel to all people.

In celebrating the first 40 years of the founding of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, we reflect upon how Christ's injunction to be the Light of the world has been lived in the past, how it is currently being responded to, and how we confidently hope to carry that Light into the future. We accept the mission He has entrusted to us to spread the Good News by what we are and what we do for others, by our lives as Christians. "You are the light of the world," Jesus proclaimed. Let that light shine!

The Sisters of Charity, Lay Faculty and Catechists
The Parish Council and Trustees

PROGRAM

MASS OF THANKSGIVING - CHURCH

12:00 noon, Sunday, January 28, 1979

Concelebrated by Monsignor Coburn and the Associate Pastors
Homily--Reverend Joseph M. Doyle

CELEBRATION IN HERRON HALL

Grace Before Dinner

Reverend Monsignor Charles B. Murphy

Toastmaster

Mr. Anthony Joyce

PARISH HISTORY

Slide/Film Presentation

Sister Elizabeth Cahill

Musical Selections

Role of The Parish Council

Mr. J. Martin Comey

Pastor's Perspective

Monsignor Vincent P. Coburn

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE PARISH HISTORY

The parish of St. Thomas the Apostle was canonically established by Archbishop Thomas J. Walsh on the 26th of January 1939 to administer to the needs of the Spring Garden section of Nutley, Brookdale section of Bloomfield and the North End of Glen Ridge. When Father Thomas J. Herron was appointed first pastor on June 17, 1939, the parish consisted of some three hundred families.

On Sunday, June 25, 1939 the first parish Mass was celebrated by Father Herron in a tent 60 by 100 feet which had been rented and set up in a corner of the church property. This was used as a temporary church until the basement of the proposed church-school combination building was erected. Father Herron was assisted in these early days by Father Charles B. Murphy as his weekend curate.

Ground was broken on August 6, 1939 for construction of the church-school building and the formal cornerstone laying was held October 15, 1939. Archbishop Walsh officiated at the dedication and presided at the Mass held on March 31, 1940 to celebrate completion of the church-school building. At the time of the dedication, Archbishop Walsh told the parishioners that he had named the parish after his own patron, St. Thomas the Apostle. He told them of his interest and how he had selected the property himself out of three or four possible sites and had gone over the plans personally.

The problems of opening a new school had not been overlooked, and plans for the convent had been approved in November 1939. The school opened the following September with Sister Alice Dolores as principal assisted by seven other Sisters of Charity. First year enrollment was 393 pupils. The convent was completed in October 1940.

Throughout the years 1939 and 1940 various parish societies were organized including a Women's Guild, Rosary and Holy Name Societies, as well as youth activities, Scouts, CYO, etc.

In June 1940 Father Joseph M. Doyle was assigned as the first resident curate and was joined in June of 1943 by Father James J. Driscoll who remained until he entered the armed forces as a chaplain in 1952.

The parish celebrated Father Herron's thirtieth anniversary with a solemn Mass and Night of Stars in his honor on March 19, 1944. Early in 1946, Father Herron died of a heart attack and a funeral Mass was presided over by Archbishop Walsh on February 16, 1946. The pastorate was vacant for thirteen months until Father James F. Flanagan was appointed.

One of Father Flanagan's first projects was the erection of a Memorial Shrine to Our Lady of Victories that was planned as a tribute to the war dead of the parish. Father Flanagan also made it a memorial to the founding pastor as well. The shrine stands between the school and the convent facing Day Street.

The area continued to grow and in 1950 Archbishop Walsh gave Father Flanagan permission to add eight classrooms by building a third floor on the school building. The new addition helped the parish accommodate the needs of the growing community.

Father Flanagan's health began to decline and he died in January 1953. The following June, Reverend Michael A. Magnier, Pastor of St. Mary's Church, Rahway, was named to succeed Father Flanagan. Father Magnier realized the need for a new church and immediately began a campaign to reduce the debt so the parish could consider the building of a church. A one-day fund raising campaign drive was performed with a committee of some four hundred men who succeeded in obtaining pledges amounting to \$450,000. In September of 1956, Father Magnier broke ground for the new church and the first Mass was offered February 21, 1960.

Father Magnier was elevated to the rank of Domestic Prelate by Pope John XXIII in January 1963 and retired in August 1968 after a highly successful career. He remained as Pastor Emeritus until his death in May 1976 when he was interred on the church grounds.

Upon Monsignor Magnier's retirement in August 1968, Reverend Monsignor Vincent P. Coburn, Pastor of St. Bridget's, Newark, was appointed Pastor. Monsignor Coburn recognized an urgent need to renovate and modernize the school facilities in order to accommodate the 750 pupils as well as 1,500 students who attended Confraternity of Christian Doctrine classes. A \$200,000 school renovation project was started and ultimately completed in November 1969. A new library, cafeteria, meeting rooms and extensive lighting and other enhancements were made available to school students and adult parish groups.

In October 1970, Monsignor Coburn saw the need for a senior citizens group and formed the September Club. The group, restricted to parishioners who are fifty-four years of age or older, started with seven members but grew rapidly so that there are currently over two hundred members. Also, in 1970, a Parish Council was formed through the efforts of a Steering Committee headed by Walter Kelly. Various council subcommittees, such as Buildings and Maintenance, Finance, Liturgy, CCD and Home and School were formed and began functioning as viable advisory groups.

With the initiation of the Permanent Diaconate Program of the Archdiocese of Newark, St. Thomas was fortunate in having a number of parishioners enter the program. The first deacon assigned to the parish, Jose Barrios, was ordained in 1975 followed by:

Roland Scarlatelli	1976
Albert H. Tizzano	1976
John Walsh	1977
Walter Kelly	1977
Thomas Noone, Jr.	1978

June 15, 1976 was the occasion for a special Mass and reception to celebrate Monsignor Coburn's thirty-fifth anniversary of ordination to the priesthood.

In Gratitude

Sunday, January 28, 1979, a Mass will be offered for all those religious and lay parishioners who have in any way helped the parish over the past forty years. May they receive from Almighty God the eternal reward for the good they have done.

Special thanks are extended to all the clergy who have served us so well:

Rev. Thomas J. Herron	Rev. John P. O'Connor
Rev. Msgr. Charles B. Murphy	Rev. Msgr. Vincent P. Coburn
Rev. James F. Flanagan	Rev. Gerald Matusiak
Rev. Joseph M. Doyle	Rev. Anthony Ciorra
Rev. James J. Driscoll	Rev. Charles Noble
Rev. Martin F. O'Brien	Rev. Eugene Marccone
Rev. Msgr. Michael A. Magnier	Rev. Dennis Cohan
Rev. Daniel A. Danik	Rev. Vincent J. Doyle
Rev. Salvatore A. Busichio	Rev. James F. McManus
Rev. Edward J. McGrath	

Also we are pleased to list the present parishioners who were members of the group who attended Mass in the "tent" while the church-school building was under construction in 1939.

Ambrunn, Doris
 Ambrunn, William Mr. and Mrs.
 Andolino, Rita Mrs.
 Ballantyne, Mary Lou Stevens
 Barry, Margaret (Mrs. Joseph Sr.)
 Begley, Hugh H.
 Bezio, Rose Mrs.
 Brady, Helen
 Brady, James E.
 Brady, John and Mary
 Buckley, Eugene C.
 Buckley, Josephine T.
 Busch, William L.
 Carlos, Jim and Edna
 Carty, Dr. George J. and Mrs. M. Coleman Carty
 Colatrella, Ralph
 Coyle, Matthew Mrs. (Ann)
 Davey, George Mrs. (Joanne Stack)
 Deering, Joseph Mr. and Mrs.
 DeMattia, Henry Mr. and Mrs.
 DePisaco, Helen Klein Mrs.
 Dotterweich, Norman Mr. and Mrs.
 Eager, W. Tallis Mr. and Mrs.
 Fales, Charles Mrs.
 Flanagan, Joseph A. Mr. and Mrs.
 Flanagan, Peggy (Gillen)
 Fleckenstein, Conrad A.
 Flower, Marie Mrs.
 Forstenhauseler, LaVerne (Mrs. George)
 Fortunato, Mary Mrs.
 Gasparini, Evelyn Mrs.
 Gentles, Margaret (Jevnik)
 Gillman, Katherine
 Gough, Joseph J. Mr. and Mrs.
 Graf, Mary Mrs.
 Gregg, Catherine
 Hannon, (Sr. James Marie)
 Hannon, Julia
 Henkel, Bill Jr.
 Henkel, William Mr. and Mrs.
 Hessen, James A. Mrs.
 Hingel, Jack
 Hodgkiss, Florence
 Hoffmann, Edna S.
 Hughes, Leo Mr. and Mrs.
 Jager Family
 Jago, William Mrs.
 Jennings, R. Eleanor
 Johnson, Mary
 Joyce, Helen K. Mrs. (Anthony Sr.)
 Joyce, Anthony W. Jr.
 Joyce, Mary E.
 Karins, Thomas Mr. and Mrs.
 Kays, Robert Mrs.
 Kearney, Christine
 Keating, T. J. Mr. and Mrs.
 Keck, Carlton F. Mrs. (Agnes J.)
 Kelly, Katherine Mary
 Klenk, Marie E.
 Kuhn, George Mrs. (Christine Graf)
 Lang, Lois (Tregurtha)
 Leary, James Mr. and Mrs. (Frances Faulk)
 Lynskey, Michael and Helen
 McDermott, Mary E.
 McIntyre, Frances and Elizabeth (Misses)
 McLaughlin, Frank J. Mr. and Mrs.
 Millen, Mary C. Mrs.
 Moore, Grace
 Morrow, Joseph A. Mr. and Mrs.
 Obremski, Martha Mrs.
 Obremski, Dolores Miss
 O'Sullivan, Francis X. Jr.
 O'Sullivan, Julia
 Paxton, Bertram Mr. and Mrs.
 Picciano, Nicholas C. Mrs.
 Purcell, Lorraine (Verstraete)
 Quinby, Charles Mrs.
 Rafter, L.J. Mrs. (Mollie)
 Remington, R.S. Mr. and Mrs.
 Richard, Henry C. Mr. and Mrs.
 Rustia, John Mrs. (Agnes Trebour)
 Schaefer, John Mr. and Mrs.
 Schedler, Matthew Mr. and Mrs.
 Smyth, John Mr. and Mrs.
 Stack, T.M. Mr. and Mrs.
 Stark, Mary C. (Kearney)
 Strang, Elizabeth
 Sullivan, William L. Mrs. (Louise Q.)
 Sullivan, Marjorie G.
 Svete, Mary Miss
 Tomasulo, Pat Mrs.
 Tortorello, Dominick Mr. and Mrs.
 Tunison, H.L. Mr. and Mrs.
 Wagner, Anne Miss
 Walstedt, Evelyn (Van Orden)
 Ward, Helen Mrs.
 Wayda, Catherine Mrs. (Dotterweich)
 Whelan, John Mrs.
 Wiech, Raymond E. Mr. and Mrs.
 Winters, Catherine Mrs.