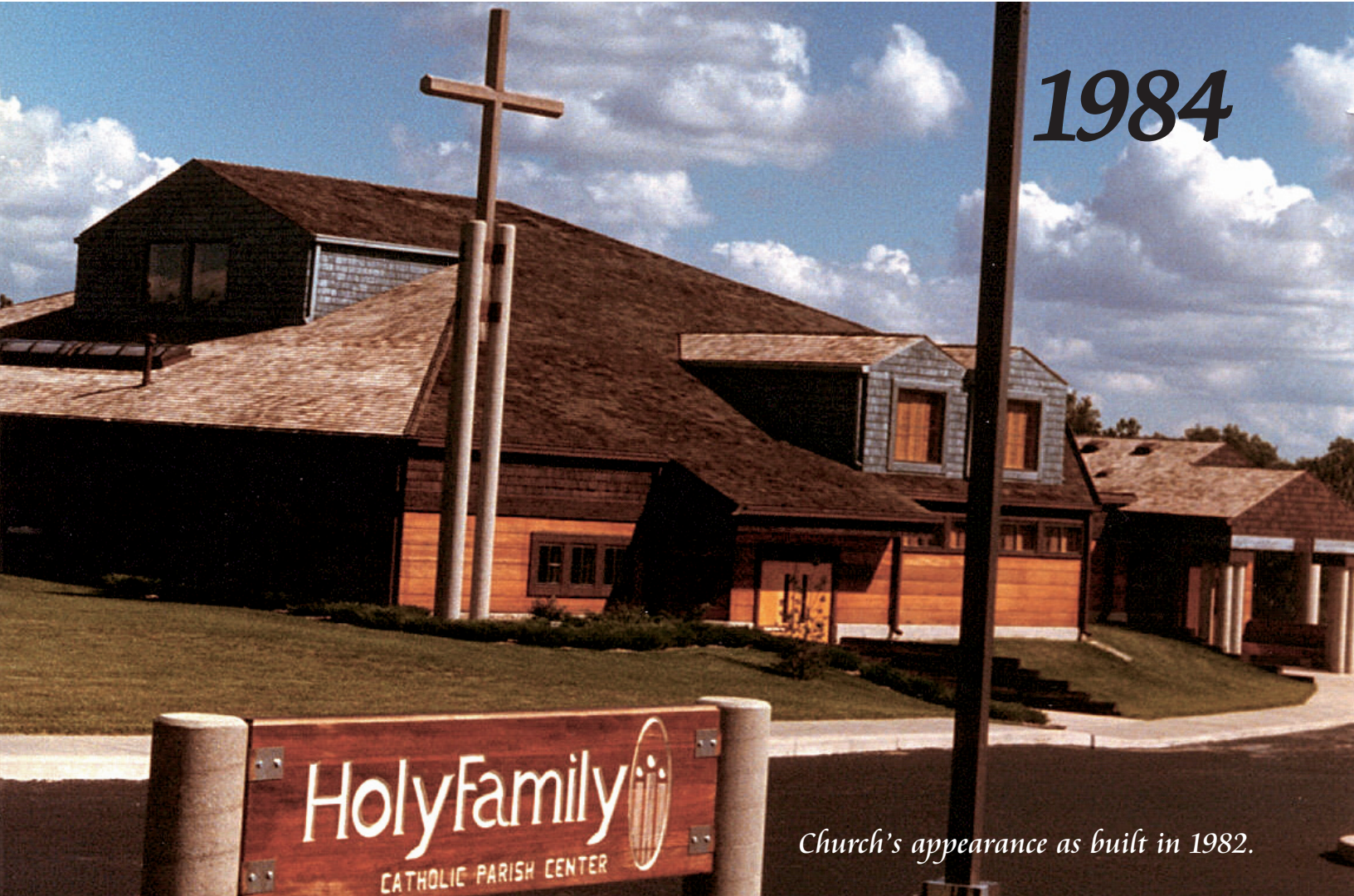


1984



Church's appearance as built in 1982.

History of a Holy Family 1980-2010



2010

History of a Holy Family *1980-2010*

Holy Family Parish
Kansas City, Missouri

By Suzanne M. Schwab Hill

2011

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919 NE 96th Street
Kansas City, Mo. 64115
www.holyfamily.com
www.facebook.com/HolyFamilyKCMO



DIocese OF KANSAS CITY-ST. JOSEPH
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
P. O. BOX 1037
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64141

D E C R E E

Considering the needs and convenience of the Faithful, in accordance with Canons 216 and 1427, and upon the advice of our Diocesan Consultors, we do now establish HOLY FAMILY PARISH in Kansas City North, Missouri.

Holy Family Parish is drawn from the territory of St. Charles Parish, Kansas City, Missouri, as follows:

Begins at the north side of 80th Street on the south, to the line of the proposed Interstate Highway 435 on the north, to the Clay/Platte County line on the west, and extends to Prospect Avenue on the east.

This Decree is effective as of January 30, 1980.

The publication of this Decree in the official Diocesan paper, THE CATHOLIC KEY, will be presumed as official notification of the boundaries of the Parish, HOLY FAMILY.

We have ordered a copy of this Decree, signed by our own hand, and bearing the seal of the Diocese, to be sent to the Reverend Pastor of Holy Family Parish.

+ John J. Sullivan

Most Reverend John J. Sullivan, D.D.
Bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph

+ George K. Fitzsimons

Most Reverend George K. Fitzsimons, V.G.
Auxiliary Bishop-Chancellor

Given at the Chancery Office
March 5, 1980

In the beginning. . . .

In the beginning, Catholics in the New Mark area had a dream. And that dream was to build a church and a parish family. And that parish family became a "Holy Family." And it was good.

In 1979, St. Charles Parish took in 64 square miles and had 1,700 families, according to former pastor Father William Bauman. The church "was quite full," even with seven weekend Masses. Two Masses were held at 10 a.m., one in the church and one in the basement.

Bishop John J. Sullivan attended a St. Charles parish council meeting in 1979. At the end of the meeting, a parishioner asked, "Have you thought of starting a new parish?" His reply: "Actually, I have."

From that, Holy Family had its genesis.

Father Bill gathered five people to look for land in 1979. The ten-acre site on 96th Street, formerly known as the Curran Farm, was purchased in January 1980, according to "This Far by Faith: A History of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph."

Holy Family was "canonically established" on January 30, 1980.

Father Pat Rush was named pastor. Not only would he pastor a new parish—he was a new pastor.

"My very first experience was to start a parish. . . . That was the most satisfying thing," Father Pat explained.

"They were a community of people who really wanted to get along with one another, and who really did get along with one another, and from my information that continues in this parish. A parish with a great spirit of community."

Timing Was Right

People seemed to be ready for their own parish.

Marge Gram said that even before they knew there'd be a new parish, women in New Mark started their own "circle" or women's group. Many had day jobs and driving to St. Charles was time-consuming. "We didn't like to go down there at night," she said.

Ruth Meyer echoed that sentiment. "Everyone was ready for a parish in the New Mark community where we could have a spiritual home with the people in our area. It was really an exciting time,"



Before Holy Family existed, Father William Bauman, then pastor of St. Charles, gathered a group to search for land. This land on 96th street, formerly known as the Curran Farm, was purchased for the parish site in January 1980.

she added. "There were so many Catholics up here; literally everybody in the neighborhood was Catholic."

New Mark had a high percentage of Catholics because residents moved there from Eastern cities for work.

Bob Meyer recalled that while the idea of a new parish was "sprung on us out of the blue, it really wasn't difficult to get people behind the project. The timing was right. The bishop made a decision and they were ready."

A Young Parish

Bernard and Marge Gram recalled that time.

"It was a young group of people. We had two in high school, but a lot of the people had kids in grade school," Marge said. "Kids. Kids. Kids."

Bob and Ruth were among those with grade school children.

"We have a strong affinity toward Holy Family," Bob said. "Our four children were all elementary school age when the parish started, so they had the opportunity to experience a close-knit community all the way through high school and until they went to college and left home."

Sister Eileen Hurley, SCL, served as pastoral associate from 1980 to 1989, overseeing liturgy, music and religious education for all ages.

"In early 1980 when the new parish was still in its infant stage, Father Pat called and invited me to consider coming to share with him in the development of this new faith community," she explained. "It was a wonderful surprise, and after discernment, I felt it was where the Holy Spirit was calling me. Indeed, it was a blessing. With enthusiasm I moved to Kansas City and began the adventure of being part (for the first time) of *literally* building God's church!"



Sister Eileen Hurley



Father Pat Rush was installed as Holy Family's first pastor.

"Before we could build the building, however, we needed to build the community. There was much excitement in building the church – the people of God, a family, a community! People were so willing to give generously of their time, talent and treasure."

Why Holy Family?

When parishioners selected a name, two paths led to "Holy Family." Mostly young families attended the new parish. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops designated 1980 as "The Year of the Family." Mary O'Reilly suggested the name.

Most parishioners transferred to the area to work for Farmland, TWA or other industry and had no roots here. Holy Family became their *family*, something "fairly unique in my experience," Father Pat noted.

Was starting a parish overwhelming?

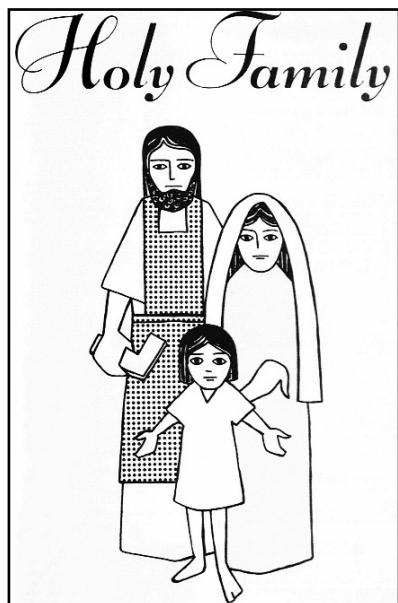
"All we had in the beginning was momentum," Father Pat said. "We were going somewhere. Didn't know where."

The Grams weren't overwhelmed. They felt confident with the capable Father Pat as pastor.

Father Pat and Father Bill were friends who worked together to make the separation benefit both parishes. They wanted the split to go smoothly so no hard feelings would develop. They made two important sets of decisions, Father Bill explained.

They pinpointed where Catholics lived to assure Holy Family had enough parishioners to succeed. At that time, St. Charles' mission at Smithville became Good Shepherd Parish.

The priests considered the feelings of people who lived in the last half mile of Holy Family's boundaries and those who lived in the last half mile of St. Charles' boundaries. They could decide which parish to attend. Some didn't want to be in a new parish, while an almost equal number did.



An early parish bulletin



Secondly, the school was St. Charles' prize. It was full with a waiting list. The two parishes would share the school. Holy Family's children would be accepted the same as St. Charles' children. Holy Family didn't have to build a school and St. Charles School continued to thrive.

Father Pat credits Father Bill with being "gracious and supportive" in Holy Family's early days. Father Bill allowed Holy Family to use "housekeeper

rooms" at St. Charles rectory for parish offices, Sister Eileen said. Father Pat lived in the rectory with Father Bill, and Sister Eileen lived in the St. Charles convent.

Getting to Know One Another

Dennis Johnson worked for the U.S. Census, so Father Pat enlisted his help to plan a parish census strategy.

Bernard and Jan Gately coordinated the census with Sister Perpetua McGrath. Parishioners went from door to door in June and July 1980 to learn who might be interested in joining Holy Family – Catholic or not. The census helped the fledgling parish determine services it needed to offer. Sisters Regina Mary and Sister Agnes Lobeck of area Catholic high schools also helped. By the end of the census, they found 50 additional Catholic families. The parish census listed 340 families.

Neighborhood Masses were a hallmark of the early parish. Eighteen neighborhood groups met for "New Beginnings" during Lent in 1980.

"At the home Masses, people got to know one another, talk to one another in ways they hadn't done before. The networking through small groups at various times was very important to the parish," Father

Pat explained.

The Grams look back at that time fondly. Many people they met then are still parishioners. Their group usually ate a meal in conjunction with the Mass.

"That was our first experience with home Masses," Bernard said.

"They talked about what we wanted," Marge explained. "I've never, ever been involved in anything where they let us feel it was our idea. . . . You felt like you were part of it."

First Mission Statement

During the parish's "New Beginnings" Lenten Mass program, more than 230 people participated, drawing up the following first mission statement:

We are the community of Holy Family Parish. We believe in Jesus Christ and the church who continues this mission and ministry. We realize that through our baptism, we, too, are called to live out the mission and ministry of Jesus.

**We seek to do that in these ways:
by caring for one another's needs,
by extending our hospitality to all,
by encouraging participation,
by supporting family life,
by handing on our faith to our children
and through participation in good liturgy where we seek to proclaim and nourish our faith.**

Larger meetings were held at St. Charles, in a bank building and at the New Mark Club House.

After the parishes separated May 18, 1980, Sunday Masses were held at New Mark Middle School. Weekday and holy day Masses were held at North Oak Christian Church. The two churches continue to worship together on Ash Wednesdays as they have since 1981.

When Mass had to be set up, and coffee and doughnuts served, parishioners did it. When land had to be mowed, parishioners did it, Father Pat said.

"It created a bond among them, too," he continued. "They had a lot of work to do together."

Marge Gram enjoyed working with other parishioners and becoming friends. While that feeling remains, times have changed, she explained.

"They need to get these young people to feel the same way we did. We really felt like it was our church and we'd fought for it. . . ."

Lay Ministry

St. Charles' tradition of a strong lay ministry served Holy Family parishioners well. Father Bill's predecessor, Father Jim Lyons, "did the best job of Vatican II education that a parish ever had."

Father Pat echoed that sentiment. Father Jim "really believed in the ministry of the laity and told people *they* were the church." The new Holy Family parishioners were "very much can-do people."

Anna Van Keirsbilck played the organ at St. Charles on Saturday nights. Father Pat asked her to play for Holy Family. She started organizing musicians in her basement prior to Sister Eileen's arrival, using old "Glory and Praise" hymnals from St. Charles. Erna Neville was another early accompanist. They led groups of two to four cantors.

Parishioners organized other ministries before Sister Eileen arrived. Ushers, musicians, Eucharistic ministers and others gathered in homes to determine how to perform those ministries and who would do them.

"Everyone was so willing to do things," Anna noted.

Sister Eileen devised "an intergenerational religious education program" with materials from various programs, calling it the "Total Parish Christians Education Program." A parishioner assisted her.

"Parishioners opened their homes to small peer groups of children and youth, and some small adult groups. The ideal was that participants went home and could continue to share in their families the content of the week. In some way this probably worked, and in others it was probably weak. But it was new and exciting . . . and a lot of work!"

Building a Home for a Holy Family

"We the Parish" neighborhood Masses and meetings began in October 1980 and continued through Lent 1981. This was a consultation and planning program.

Neighborhood groups discussed their "hopes and dreams" at the first Mass. They learned about the hopes and dreams of other parishioners at the second Mass.

The parish advisory planning committee was composed of representatives from each neighborhood group. When

the parish met with the architect, this committee came to comment.

Father Pat organized a building committee. Chairman Bernard Gram was a builder and JoAnn Schollars was an interior decorator. Others included Don Growney, Carl Schroer and Gary Zavadil.

Early on, it was decided to postpone purchasing a rectory to save money.

Parishioners started with some funds from St. Charles. On July 20, 1980, parishioners learned that St. Charles management would turn over 90 percent of its budget overage for 1979-80 to Holy Family or \$19,050 so the new parish could start paying the \$110,000 debt for the land.

Parishioners participated in "Walk Down Sunday" on April 21, 1980, to present their pledges to tithe. The goal was \$2,600 a week, but pledges were at \$2,175.92 a week.

As Father Pat approached his new tasks, he frequently "lucked out."

He was at a party discussing making the new church

energy efficient. A Kansas State graduate told him that was the university's architectural school's specialty. The priest contacted professors Bob Burnham and Frank Locker, asking if they would want to have classes use a "real-life" church design as a project.

The professors came to Holy Family in late September 1980 to talk with parishioners. The next month, 75 architecture students came to Mass to get a sense of community and make sketches at the site. Later they returned to a Mass at New Mark to show parishioners models and drawings

"We had a lot of participation from the parish at large in the design for the church," Father Pat noted.

People were pleased. Ethically, Holy Family couldn't use the drawings unless the professors affiliated with an architectural firm. The parish stipulated it would use the work if they associated with a Kansas City firm. Burnham and Locker affiliated with Devine, James, Labinski, Myers.

The parish name influenced the church architecture. Bishops had a document titled, "A House for the Church," so the church was designed to blend in with neighborhood houses, suggesting a house for a "holy family." It featured wood siding and cedar shingles, common in the neighborhood.

Sister Eileen noted that even the name "'Family Room' had a reason . . . for it was where we would gather as 'family.'"

A design advisory committee was formed, including Jim Meyer, chairman, Aaron Auman, Joe Bergen, Lisa Conaway, Helen Drees, Ann Halterman, Walli Kane, Doug King, John Maasen, Jim Olshefski, Chet Payne, Shirley Tusa, Virginia Vollman and Richard Ziegler.

By November 1980, parishioners learned the property wasn't as large as it had appeared.



Home Masses were a hallmark of Holy Family's early days. This one was held at Jim and Jean Dutton's home. The Grams are seated in the last row, near the wall.



Father Pat Rush, left, and Bishop John Sullivan, right, chat at the parish groundbreaking ceremony and picnic on Sunday, August 31, 1981.

"We thought we had lots of land. Actually, six acres of developable land isn't as much as we thought. A big task will be to develop adequate parking without ruining the setting."

Succeeding bulletins included building news. People learned that kneelers take up space and could cost up to \$30,000. Some parishes were no

longer installing kneelers. Parishioners seemed to prefer spending money on ministries or items such as a piano, organ or stained glass windows.

They wanted an energy-efficient church in a semi-circle or fan shape. They preferred a cross outside, rather than a bell tower. Members visited Good Shepherd Church in Shawnee Mission, Kan., to see a flexible church building.

Years later, Father Robert Stewart found the original building plans with an addition to be built to the east.

By February 8, 1981, building plans were \$300,000

over budget. "Parish has \$900,000 worth of ideas that will fit into only a \$500,000 to \$600,000 budget."

The parish had a 12 percent interest rate on its loan. "If it takes 20 years to pay off, the parish would pay \$1 million worth of interest." The cost was \$700,000 without a rectory, according to the February 22 bulletin.

"The only disappointing thing is the cost of \$720,000 is not including furniture for office, kitchen or elsewhere," the April 12 bulletin noted. By June 28, the cost of the building was listed as \$672,000, without carpet and furnishings.

On the young parish's first anniversary after separating, the following was in the bulletin:

"From the earliest times, the word, 'church' has not meant a building or parish activities or parish boundaries. Rather, it has referred to God's people who are called to gather around Eucharist."

Bishop Sullivan helped break ground for the new church on Sunday, August 30, 1981. Festivities included a parish picnic.

Twelve companies bid on the church in August 1981. Bids ranged from to \$747,000 to \$898,000 for several reasons:

The composite design of steel and wood required more safety factors than envisioned.

Mechanical systems and ductwork required additional labor because the church didn't have a full basement to house equipment. It had been planned with a small basement to cut costs.

Kansas City required \$19,000 in additional safety components. Better lighting was selected than originally planned.

Morton-Kahn was selected as contractor. Work was to begin October 1



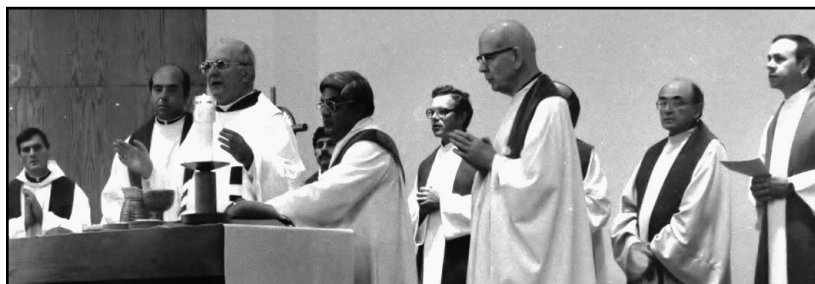
The pastor anoints a column (above) and proclaims the Gospel (below).



Bishop John Sullivan hands the keys to pastor Father Pat Rush, telling him to open the church.



Sister Eileen Hurley directs the parish choir. (above) Parishioners gather outside the new church. (below)



Bishop Sullivan celebrates the dedication Mass.

and would take 243 days . . . or so they thought.

By November 1, the parish learned that Kansas City required still more changes before issuing a building permit. The city wanted more restrooms. It wanted the entrance moved so it wouldn't create a cross intersection with Campbell Street. It required the parish to raise the pond's crown and seal a spillway to stop a leak.

The December 13 bulletin reported that the "building permit hassles with the city are over."

The parish spent "\$13,000 on earth and concrete work on the dam, breaking away most of the old spillway, rebuilding it, strengthening the downstream walls and filling it with new rock and raising the crown of the dam by one foot." Despite repairs, the pond would leak again a year later.

Committees met again to select colors, carpets and furnishings.

The church was dedicated Friday, September 17, 1982.

Sister Eileen recalled the procession from New Mark Middle School to the new Holy Family Church on September 18.

"The ritual of beginning at New Mark and driving down the 'back roads,' bringing the people and important symbols to our new worship space is forever etched in my mind."

Parish debt in November 1982 was \$778,841.92. Final costs were \$865,000, construction; \$110,000, land; furnishings, \$60,000, for a total of \$1,035,000, according to the April 10, 1983, bulletin.

The original building included the worship space with confessional, a small chapel to the west of the altar with an accordion divider that could be pulled closed. The Family Room was located to the south of the worship space. At the east wall of the Family Room was a sacristy, restrooms and a kitchen with a pass-through window for serving. The building had a small basement for offices, mechanical systems and a small parlor.

Sanctuary furnishings came from Noel Designs of Kansas City, Mo., at a cost of about \$10,000.

The parish purchased a five-foot, hand-carved relief of the Holy Family, made of lindenwood from Anthony A. Moroder Sr. of Milwaukee for \$4,500. (See photo above.)

First Formal Fund Drive

The parish met January 17, 1982, to discuss debt repayment. Building costs had risen to over \$900,000, including fees and furnishings. Parishioners decided to start a formal fund drive.

"It was generally thought that we should seek out someone within our own parish to design, organize, schedule and supervise our drive," Bob Meyer said. Bob and Jim O'Neil were co-chairs for the parish campaign.

Bob explained, "We had no outside consultants. We did all the planning and organization and enlisted a lot of help from an enthusiastic group of upstart parishioners. It was definitely not a very sophisticated campaign by today's



Relief of the Holy Family

standards, but the goal was met and strong bonding occurred in the process."

While the campaign raised money, it was about much more. "It was like we were guided by the Holy Spirit. Some look at the hard financial data, but it was something beyond that. More than beyond us as individuals," he said.

They called it the "Holy Family Providential Insurance Co.," with the explanation that the word "provident" means "provision for the future." Various plans were available with names such as "Seat Plan," "Sanctuary Plan," "Foundation Plan" and "Stock and Estate Plan."

Early in the campaign, leaders asked parishioners if someone could lend the parish an electric typewriter.

Parish Life Begins

Two parishioners served as volunteer staff. Virginia Vollman kept the parish books, coming into the little office at St. Charles once a week. Rose Brann typed the bulletins.

Holy Family's bulletins started in May 1980, when the parishes formally separated. Contributions started going to the parish, instead of St. Charles.

Soon thereafter, Father Pat wrote, "We do have call forwarding service. When you do phone, you may reach St. Charles or the chancery or my mom's or a wild party somewhere. Hang on. You probably do have the right number!"

Louis Michael Drackert, son of Louis and Helen Drackert, was the first baby baptized. His baptism was June 1, 1980.

A baby-sitting cooperative, where members exchanged services for one another, was established immediately after the parishes separated. It operated for many years, even into the new millennium.

The parish asked for volunteers to teach religion. They learned "Basic Methods in Religious Teaching" at home sessions.

Parishioners were welcome to bring plants or flowers for Sunday Masses at New Mark. They could place them where they wanted at Mass.

In August 1980, an announcement stated, "Muscles needed to clean up property for pig roast."

Bob and Ruth Meyer recalled, "Another favorite memory was the Mass and picnic we had when all we had was the land and no building had yet begun. All of it just kept building the community feeling and the excitement for a church of our own."

This was an important occasion in the life of the young parish. Father Pat recalled, "We mowed it (Holy Family's property) and had a picnic." The parish picnic became a Holy Family tradition. The first one was held September 28, 1980.

In September, 124 families were registered in Total



Virginia Vollman

Parish Christians Education Program with 38 adults serving as teachers, 122 adults in neighborhood discussion groups and 255 children, including high school.

The parish sent a letter inviting families to prepare for first Communion or first penance on September 3. Families interviewed with Father Pat and Sister Eileen to determine if children were prepared for first Communion. Children took their first sacraments individually and celebrated as a group later after Easter.

Cathy Auffert, daughter of Bill and Marie Auffert, was the first girl to serve at Mass in the Kansas City-St. Joseph Diocese. Father Pat asked her to serve and she did this for the first time when the parish was worshipping at New Mark.

Holy Family was mentioned in a January 24, 1981, article in the Kansas City Times, "Smaller Parishes Are Helping to Bring Catholics Together."



The first parish picnic and outdoor Mass was held September 28, 1980. The September parish picnic is a continuing tradition.

The Women of Holy Family

Women's groups known as "circles" were organized by neighborhoods and by meeting time. Early circles were St. Jude, evening, and St. Joseph, day. Most St. Jude's members lived in New Mark. Other circles included Mother Cabrini and St. Therese. In 1982, Mother Cabrini and St. Therese merged into one circle, St. Ann's.

One function was fund-raising for the church. St. Jude's and St. Joseph's women's circles participated in the community bazaar at Metro North Mall in fall 1980. They made \$336. Circles also participated in the annual New Mark garage sale. For several years, they asked parishioners to save Betty Crocker coupons to equip the kitchen, and cash register tapes from area grocers to raise money. They sponsored parish cook-books and sold coupon books.

They bought dinnerware, tableware, folding tables and a refrigerator for the first church kitchen, and helped purchase kitchen cabinets. In 1983 they raised funds for the Holy Family sign, erected in 1984. They also purchased church banners.

St. Jude's Circle began the relationship that the parish has today with the Holy Family Catholic Worker House in 1983.

After the church was built, women from the circles served refreshments for events such as confirmation and first Communion.

St. Jude's also began serving funeral dinners when Douglas Allen Popa (Bill and Eleanor Popa's son) was killed in an automobile accident. He died in August 1983. The women served the meal at the Popa home.

Later women from all circles volunteered at funeral dinners. Jackie Wilcox organized the meals for several years. When the church was built, meals were served there, with men setting up tables and chairs while people were at the cemetery.



A women's circle participated in a rummage sale at Metro North Mall, possibly in the 1980s.

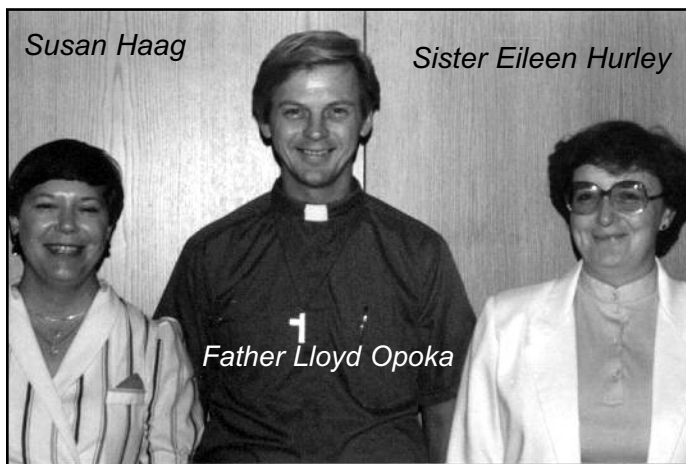
For at least as far back as 1987, the women sold nuts at holiday time. In the beginning, sales benefited the parish and the Cooperative Social Services of St. Stephen's Church.

Circle meetings served as social functions, too. Members gathered for meals and to listen to speakers, often meeting in area restaurants and the New Mark Club House.

In 1986, a day group and an evening group remained.

Over time, the women who belonged to St. Jude's Circle dwindled in number, likely due to working women's lives growing more complicated. Those with children were busy taking them to activities, including parish religion classes, which many women taught while their children attended.

Today, only the St. Joseph's Women's Group remains. The women enjoy friendship, fellowship and service. They coordinate funeral dinners, maintain parish linens and provide other services to the parish as needed. They continue to hold annual nut sales, which benefit youth programs and the Giving Tree.



Bishop John J. Sullivan pointed to Holy Family as the “pattern of the future,” noting that smaller parishes would be formed from larger ones.

He was quoted: “The ideal is a community in which not only are the faithful known by the staff, but they know one another in their faith commitment.”

The parish’s first funeral was for four-and-a half month old Jeffrey Ray Mendenhall. Karla Ziegler recalled Father Pat calling the baby “Holy Family’s first saint.”

Holy Family’s first new adult Catholics were brought into the church at Easter 1981. They included Kathy Colon, Michael Dodd, Sheila Kelly, Gail Hennessy and Theresa Minor.

Tom Zeeff Design of Grandview designed the parish logo. It appeared for the first time in the June 14, 1981, bulletin.



Parish Council

In October 1982, people met again in neighborhood Masses, called the “Church, Parish and Mission” program, sharing hopes and dreams to design a **parish council**. In early 1983, members processed results from the home Mass program and started planning the parish council. Five parishioners and two staff members would make decisions by consensus “to avoid elitism.”

For many years, it was called the “coordinating council.” First council members were Gary Evans, Hazel Couture, Bob Allman, Debbie Summers and Mike Hennessey. They represented different geographic areas of the parish.

On November 6, 1982, Kathy Hayes and Fred Stegal were the first couple to marry in the new church.

The parish had 402 households in November 1982.

In the early days, parishioners did much of the church maintenance, according to Barb Bloemker, a former long-time staff member. Bill Auffert was responsible for much of it. Other parishioners helped on large projects. When Father Lloyd Opoka was pastor, he did some, too.

“Heavenly Dusters” cleaned the church interior. Work crews gathered for annual cleanups, a practice that continues.

Gerry and Mary Grant were among those who did regular yard work at the church. The Grants mowed grass for seven to eight years. Gerry used a tractor to mow the bulk of the land, while Mary pushed a mower around the edges.

To help improve the grounds, parishioners purchased trees or shrubs in 1983 from the parish “arboretum.”

A Year of Firsts

Other firsts in 1983 included a parish directory, the

Another Holy Family. . .

In our parish’s early days, staff frequently answered phone calls for another Holy Family – the similarly named Catholic Worker House at 31st and Troost Streets in Kansas City, Mo.

Someone decided to investigate this “other” Holy Family and in the process, a 25-plus-year relationship began.

Sister Barbara Jennings of Holy Family House spoke to the parish July 11, 1982, about offering hospitality to the needy. Later that year, St. Jude’s Circle, a parish women’s organization, collected warm outerwear for men, as well as blankets and bedspreads before Christmas.

Parishioners visited Holy Family House for the first time on Sunday, January 16, 1983. St. Jude’s members, then-pastor Father Pat Rush and pastoral associate Sister Eileen Hurley went to Catholic Worker House, serving from 50 to 60 men and women.

Circle members prepared casseroles and cakes, serving them with bread and vegetables. Parishioners

returned on March 6 and various parish groups began sending people on an assigned schedule.

Bernard and Jean Mullins and Gerry and Mary Grant were faithful in their ministry to Holy Family House for several years, serving monthly. Mary called parishioners to prepare meatloaves and to help them to serve food.

Parishioners continue to visit Holy Family House to this day – on the third Sunday of each month. Some sign up to provide meatloaves, potato casseroles, large cans of green beans or dessert. Others sign up to bring the food, chop vegetables, set up the kitchen and serve the meal.

Brother Louis Rodemann, a Christian Brother who served as director for 28 years, noted that the two Holy Families have a unique relationship and it’s not only a shared name.

“You’re the only one of your kind,” Brother Louis said. “You’re the only church that brings all your food. . . . Nobody does it to the extent you do.”

Jordan Program, the catechumenate (RCIA) program, "Dinner for Eight" and the relationship with Holy Family Catholic Worker House.

The **Jordan Program**, a program for parents whose children would undergo baptism, began in February 1983. Lead couples were Jim and Marilyn Meyer, Dennis and Lynn Johnson, Tom and Nancy Ranieri and Dan and Kim Torpey.

Jan Gately Norton recalled that she and her first husband Bernie took on the **RCIA** program. They attended the New Wine program to prepare to lead RCIA and were in its first graduating class. They continued leading RCIA until Bernie was diagnosed with cancer in 1993.

Prior to that, both the Jordan and catechumenate programs were held at St. Charles.

Dolores Connelly organized **Dinner for Eight**. Host couples rotated and provided the main course and beverage. Guests provided the salad, vegetables or dessert. The first dinner was held October 15, 1983. It's a tradition that continues.

Holy Family parishioners began to serve food at **Catholic Worker House** on January 23, 1983. Parish organizations took turns serving. (*See article on page 11.*)

The parish continued struggling in 1983. Expenses were increasing more than income.

Despite these difficulties, parishioners considered forming an emergency assistance ministry and a vocation committee. They also considered outreach work with the poor, job assistance and exploring social justice issues.

The first **finance committee** was established that year with Rick Chern, Jim Olshelski, Jim O'Neil, Don O'Reilly and John Pickert as members. It was organized to advise the coordinating council.

Just as the new parish was getting started, Father Pat was transferred. His last Mass was Sunday, October 23. Father Lloyd Opoka started as second pastor on Sunday, October 30, 1983.

On April 22, 1984, the loan balance with the diocese was \$758,000 and on June 10, 1984, the parish had 427 registered households.

Discussions began on finding a rectory for Father Lloyd. The bulletin noted that a house across the street from the church was for sale for "big bucks."

Mary Cameron began typing the bulletin in 1983. In 1984, Barb Bloemker took her place.

Susan Haag joined the staff as a pastoral associate in 1984. Her duties as director of religious education included working with youth in confirmation preparation and the Christians Education Program. She also served as director of social concerns, developing outreach ministries for family crises, such as separation, divorce, single parenting, and for pastoral visitation. The



parish built an office for her from part of the storage area. A portion of a diocesan grant paid her salary.

The pre-confirmation program began in May 1985.

When the staff met in August 1985, members set parish goals for next two to three years to "enable the community to grow in commitment to God, to faith, to our world."

Staff knew the parish's character was changing. New parishioners were moving in and the "new was wearing off." The next goal was to encourage parishioners to take more ownership in their church and participate more in the church's life.

They felt it was important to continue "life-giving, quality Sunday liturgy celebrations." They wanted Holy Family to be a community that ministered to each other, helping one another grow spiritually.

The parish **Giving Tree** started in 1985. Judy Bosshardt brought the idea with her from her former parish in Pennsylvania. The focus was helping needy Northland families, but some people south of the river have received help, too, throughout the years. (*See article on page 14.*)

Holy Family's **prayer chain** began December 1, 1985. Pam Leiker started the prayer chain when Father Lloyd was pastor. She learned about prayer chains in Guideposts magazine. Chain members called each other. Later, members received prayer requests through e-mail. Mary Hurd has been leading the prayer chain for several years.

Though Father Pat had moved on to St. Thomas More Parish, he helped Holy Family find an organ in October 1986.

Darrell Leiker put out a call for men 18 and older to start a **Men's Club** in February 1987. The club met for the first time that March. Still active today, it provides opportunities for fellowship and service. (*See article on page 13.*)

In 1986, discussion began in earnest about building a rectory and a fund drive began. Construction on Father Lloyd's house began by March 1, 1987.

The house fund needed \$47,000. Father Lloyd moved into the house in September. In October, a rectory preview was offered as a fund-raiser. Forty tickets were available at \$100 a couple or \$50 a person.

In 1987, average Mass attendance



Erna Neville and Sister Eileen Hurley wrote the "Holy Family Song" in 1987.

Men's Club

In 1986, Darrell Leiker felt that Holy Family needed more "social adhesive."

"Our coffee and doughnuts function was great, but only lasted 15 minutes after each Mass on Sunday. . . . (It) was the only time we seemed to socialize as a parish except for the annual parish picnic. The women's groups had their little niche and assisted the parish as they could. We men weren't involved too much."

He felt a men's group would provide fellowship and a social outlet, while assisting the parish with monetary and physical needs.

Darrell approached Father Lloyd about beginning a Men's Club. Father Lloyd told Darrell to "go for it." He suspected the pastor thought they would take over parish upkeep and maintenance.

"On that point I feel we were only moderately successful. We liked fun – not work. The rest is history."

The club met for the first time in March 1987. Its first outing was to attend a Royals game in July 1987.

Henry Kaminski was the first charter member and the first president.

"He wrote the model for our bylaws, kept the meetings in order and was a tremendous force in the group's success," Darrell noted.

Henry gave Tom Koelling credit for helping to develop the club. "Tom kept us out of trouble."

The club gave men the opportunity for socialization not only with other men, but as couples. Some activities included outings with wives. The club built a dance floor and held parish dances on Valentine's Saturday and other occasions. Dances were held with approval in the worship area since it was designed as a multipurpose facility.

"Father Opoka and Sister Eileen attended and had a lot of fun, too," Darrell said.

At summer's end, the club invited members and wives to a grilled steak appreciation cookout.

The social committee planned Las Vegas nights, tailgate parties for Chiefs games and outings to Royals games. Members played impromptu golf games together.

Darrell believes that the club's "most fun annual event, biggest moneymaker and absolutely hardest work" was the club's corn dog booth at Gladstone's annual Gladfest. . . . The fun outweighed the work!"

Members were involved in a number of fund-raisers, including fish dinners, now a Holy Family tradition, coupon book sales and car washes. The fund-raisers supported the parish and charitable organizations. Before the parish hall was constructed, the club held dinners at New Mark and Oak Park schools. The club worked on credit in the beginning to hold the events.

Las Vegas nights held for a few years at St. Charles gymnasium were one of its most successful fund-raisers. One year the club was able to contribute to the parish almost \$2,000, Henry noted.

In 2005, the Men's Club started holding trivia nights as a fall fund-raiser.



Men's Club members sell tickets to fish dinners when they were held in a school. Pictured from left are Darrell Leiker, Henry Kaminski and Don Jacobsmeyer.



For many years the Holy Family Men's Club sold corn dogs at Gladfest.

was 700 people per weekend and the parish had 452 families. In October, the parish debt was \$636,000.

The parish took a survey that year to determine needs and concerns. A parish forum was held to discuss results. Council members made random calls to parishioners for comments. The parish council wanted to encourage greater involvement and more enthusiasm from parishioners. Neighborhood Masses were held again in late 1987.



Barb
Bloemker

Barb Bloemker formally became parish secretary in 1987 when the parish determined it could afford to hire her. In the beginning, she worked two days a week and later, four.

Lay leaders were trained on May 29, 1988, to lead communion services.

Sister Rosanne Maas, SCL, came to Holy Family to serve as pastoral associate in August 1988.

"The first five years I ran the parish school of religion and confirmation preparation. The last three years I ran the RCIA (program). During these years I also did general ministry such as visiting the sick, social outreach to the needy, annulment advocacy and being present to the parishioners at all liturgies," she explained.

"The most outstanding thing I remember about Holy Family Parish was the people. They had a very strong sense of community, a well-applied understanding of Vatican II and a generous commitment to service."

Ten neighborhood groups had been cleaning the church. By 1988, it was difficult for them to continue cleaning, so staff asked for volunteers. Eventually, the parish hired

cleaners.

In 1988 the parish council decided to initiate a "feasibility and needs study regarding facility expansion."

More Communion ministers were needed at North Kansas City Hospital, so Holy Family ministers started serving in December 1988.

Sister Eileen Hurley left in 1989. Sister Marilyn Berry, OSF, replaced her in July.

The parish bought its first computer in 1989.

In 1990, the religious education program increased by 150 participants to 247. Also in that year, the parish was able to double its monthly debt payments.

In March 1991, the parish held a forum on the pond's leakage problem and facility expansion. Parishioners reached a consensus that the pond would be repaired and a storage facility would be built near the rectory. The parish had a \$370,000 debt.

In 1991, Sister Marilyn resigned, Mary Baehr was named music director and Sister Mary Lapping, OSU, was hired as pastoral associate.

For a number of years, the parish held an annual cookie walk and craft sale. The first one was held November 24, 1991.

The parish's long-standing practice of writing personal prayer petitions and bringing them to the altar with gifts started in 1992. Parish debt was down to \$200,000.

In June 1993, Father Lloyd was transferred to St. Robert Bellarmine Parish in Blue Springs.

Father Lloyd later looked back at his time at Holy Family.

"It grew up to its name," he said. "It really had a 'family' sense. Everybody felt like they belonged. Very welcoming. I give a lot of credit to Father Pat Rush for initiating that kind of attitude. People took to it naturally. It started that way and kept it that way. Even when new people came, they felt like they were part of the family."

"People would actually volunteer to do things in a spirit of ownership," he added.

"It was mostly young families at the time. Father Pat Rush said that the average age of parishioners was seven or eight. I think he might have been right!"

Father Lloyd felt that succeeding priests have cooperated and promoted the family feeling, but he thinks it would have lasted anyway. Parishioners liked it and encouraged it.

Father Robert H. Stewart came as pastor on July 4, 1993. Sister Mary left. Josef Walker came to serve as director of religious education for youth. Judy Koster was named music director.

With 654 families at Holy Family in 1993, a task force to determine building and expansion needs was formed.

Father Robert started the liturgy committee. It first met July 20, 1994.

Holy Family purchased three additional acres to the west from Barth Brothers in 1994, according to Dean Prather, long-time facilities committee member. Barth Brothers had developed the Park Ridge Subdivision, which lies to the south and west of Holy Family. The stream feed-



The Giving Tree

Adults and children alike look forward to helping the poor through Holy Family's Giving Tree. It's been a parish tradition since 1985, when Judy Bosshardt brought the idea from her former parish. That first year, Holy Family provided gifts to 12 families at St. James Place.

Each year Holy Family works with Northland school counselors and social workers to identify local needy families. Families, friends or neighbors may request help. Giving Tree committee members contact each family to determine their greatest needs and to record clothing sizes and gift ideas.

Parish children create ornaments that include name and gift information. Parishioners take one, purchase the gift, wrap it and return it to church.

Each family member receives clothing and/or household items for adults and toys or games for children. Hundreds of parishioners buy gifts.

Prior to Christmas, parishioners sort and deliver gifts to the respective households.

Committee members may also learn of "extraordinary needs," such as bedding, kitchen items or furniture, which may be used, but usable.

ing the pond lies within this land, making it too expensive for development. The parish used the land to expand parking. It was to be used as a secondary exit to the parking lot.

The city notified the parish of its intention to widen 96th Street in 1994. The parish would be liable for \$200,000. By September 1995, the project was scaled back to the west end of the church parking lot. The parish's cost would be \$70,000. In 2010, neither had been done yet.

Shaughnessy Fickel and Scott Architects Inc. designed a master plan to meet parish needs for the next decade in 1994, resulting in "Holy Family Parish: A Vision for the Future."

Phase I was the basic configuration built in 1998-1999 with slight differences. Drawings showed a two-story building immediately south of and attached to the original facility. Primary functions included education and church meeting rooms on the first floor, and a parish hall and kitchen on the bottom floor. It also included office space and an enlarged Family Room.

The cost estimate for Phase I was \$1.8 million, with an additional estimate of \$50,000 to repair the original facility, including siding and a roof, and to join the two structures.

Phase II showed a new worship facility built to the west of the educational building. The former worship space would be converted into a church hall. The parish hall built in Phase I would be converted into educational space for a total of 14 classrooms. The master plan showed a 16,000-square-foot sanctuary with seating for 925, including a sacristy, gathering space, restrooms and mechanical storage.

In both phases, parking would be added.

A "guesstimate" of Phase II costs was from \$4 million to \$5 million.

Construction could start as early as spring 1996. The original parish debt had been paid. By June 1995, the parish had paid for the new land to the west.

Josef Walker left Holy Family in June 1995. Rob Kottenbrock, a seminarian, spent a year at Holy Family, serving as DRE.

In 1996, Rosie Maas left and Kirstie Ruffini, later Owsley, came to serve as youth director.

That year, the parish youth education program became known as PSR (Parish School of Religion), after being known for years as CEP (Christians or Catholic Education Program) because PSR was a "more commonly used name."

Growing pains became more obvious in 1996.

Notice in September 22, 1996, bulletin: "Last Sunday there were over 500 people in attendance at 11 a.m. Mass. Since there is only seating for 460, we would like to encourage some of you to attend to attend the 5 p.m. Mass on Saturday or 9 a.m. Mass on Sunday to ease some of the crowding inside the church and the parking lot."

By 1997, the parish census was 785.

Mike Shaughnessy of Shaughnessy Fickel and Scott presented a revised master plan at a joint meeting of leadership committees and the parish council in February 1997. It included a church with a 1,200-seat capacity, offices on the first level and classrooms on the lower level. Estimated cost was \$5 to \$6 million.

Before starting a capital campaign in 1997, Father

Loosey Gooseys!

Mabel and Marvin, the parish's first geese, came to roost when Sister Mary Lapping was pastoral associate.

The pair took turns nest-sitting. Sister Mary started feeding them. Many other geese soon joined them.

The geese are known for the messes they leave on the grounds and their bad behavior in nesting season. During that time, they often chase and peck at parishioners.

In the March 9, 2003, bulletin, an article entitled, "Geese, Geese and More Geese" showed Father Robert's frustration.

"Father Robert wants to remind everyone about the feathered 'friends' on our land! First and

foremost, stay away from the geese. They are entering their nesting season and are very testy. Please tell your children to stay away from them. We don't want anyone to be hurt. By all means, please don't feed them!

Thank you!"



Robert and the building committee met with Mike Shaughnessy to discuss cost and scope of the additions. They wanted to determine how much could be completed for \$3 million to \$3.5 million with total completion and furnishing of the educational project.

Shaughnessy told the group that to complete the entire project – including a 1,000-seat church, education building with 14 classrooms, parish offices and narthex – would cost \$5,281,000. It would be difficult to determine cost of a 1,200-seat church without a preliminary design.

Alternative I included building and completing the education space, offices/narthex and the church shell for \$3,963,000. Alternative II included completing only the education space, and building the church and office shells for \$3,756,600,

A completed survey showed less space between the church and pond than shown on original church drawings. Sanitary sewers were also in a slightly different location, so updated building plans were needed.

After meeting with the diocesan finance director in July, it was obvious the parish should scale back the project.

Pam Leiker was hired as campaign secretary. When the campaign was completed, Father Robert asked her to continue as parish secretary. Barb Bloemker was named administrative assistant.

Two computers were networked so that a database could be shared between them, according to parishioner Jim Gach of Gach Consulting Services.

According to the Capital Campaign 1997 brochure, the



Pam Leiker

parish sought five-year pledges to build a 16,071-square-foot educational building with a 4,640-square-foot parish hall with furnished kitchen, parlor (the present youth area), library (Heather's and youth offices now), expanded Family Room, elevator and 57 new parking places.

Why a Capital Campaign Now?

"The need for an educational and parish hall facility is not new. However, as each year goes by, the need is more critical. For three years our parish has discussed different options with the architect. . . . As we anticipate even more members in our parish and our community, we recognize that the time has come for an educational facility for the youth of the parish and for a facility that enables us to gather to celebrate special occasions in our parish life."

Commitment weekend was August 9-10, 1997. Costs for the new building and additional parking were estimated at \$2,245.50, not including fixtures, furniture and campaign expenses.

Campaign goal was \$1.5 million. The parish had \$300,000 on hand. The diocese would loan Holy Family \$445,000.

Several staff changes were announced in 1998. Renee Thompson became liturgist/music director in July and Kirstie Owsley left. Mary Hughes directed PSR and Peggy Petersen directed grades seven through 12.

Bids for the addition went out on July 21 and were due August 26.

The groundbreaking and annual picnic was held September 13, 1998. The Catholic Key reported September 20, 1998, the addition would cost \$2.4 million, differing slightly from the campaign brochure. Construction was expected to start within a month and end in June 1999.

The addition was somewhat different from plans in the brochure. The two-story, 18,000-square-foot addition was joined to the church. It included ten classrooms, a parish hall and kitchen, nursery, offices and parlor. The Family Room was expanded to the south. Restrooms were moved, leaving a sacristy, small kitchen, storage and library to the east of the Family Room.

Former pastor and vicar general Father Pat Rush represented Bishop Raymond J. Boland. Father Pat said that Holy Family's greatness did not lie in the past but in the present and future, in the "Christian vitality" that exists through changes in pastors and structures.

Father Robert noted, "As someone said in the dedication reflection, 'As your family grows, you add to the house.'"

The parish had 755 fami-

Groundbreaking for addition in 1998



lies with 260 children enrolled in PSR.

Bob DeGeorge and Associates built the addition, intended to be part of a two-phase project. A new church would be needed in the future, considering the area's growth.

Parish offices moved temporarily to Father Robert's house on June 25, 1999, until construction was completed. On October 3, volunteers packed the sacristy and kitchen.

A millennium garden project committee was formed to beautify the pond and grounds.

In 1999, the parish picnic was cancelled. Instead, a building dedication was held on Saturday, October 30. Father Robert and Bishop Boland concelebrated the 5 p.m. Mass. Dedication ceremonies and a dinner reception followed. The building was not yet completed, but due to the bishop's schedule, dedication ceremonies went on as planned. Over 600 parishioners attended.

During fall 1999, Jim Gach networked all computers in the new addition and set up a shared dial-up connection. In November 1999, he registered the domain name *holyfamily.com* and set up e-mail addresses using it.

Long-time employee Barb Bloemker, who had served as secretary and administrative assistant, announced she was leaving because her family was moving in January 2000. Megan Burdolski joined staff as parish manager January 31, 2000.

That year saw other staff changes. Renee Thompson left in June, replaced by Shari Reilly in August. Peggy Petersen was named pastoral associate. Beth McIntyre, religious

education coordinator, was to assist Mary Hughes. Heather Neds took over the youth ministry, grades seven through 12.

In early 2000, some work was yet to be completed in the parish hall. The parish set up a nursery in spring 2000.

That summer, the worship space was renovated, including wall repair, fresh paint, new carpeting and stained glass windows. (See article on page 17.) The former chapel at the

Building dedication in 1999



west front of the church was renovated as a choir area. (Later as the church was reconfigured, the choir moved to various locations.)

In 2000, the youth began participating in the Souper Bowl of Caring, collecting money after each Mass in soup pots for Catholic Worker House.

Later as an outgrowth of this project, Heather Neds started the Service Blitz, a parish-wide project, which includes a day of service to several agencies as well as the Souper Bowl of Caring collection.

The agencies have included Catholic Worker House, Harvesters, City Union Mission and Mission Thrift Store. The parish also collects food and medicine chest items for these agencies during the Service Blitz.

The parish had 845 families in 2000, but the census had been projected to be 600 that year.

Sandra Prothman became music director in 2001.

Eucharistic Adoration began March 1, 2001, after 8 a.m. Mass.

In December 2001, the chairs in church were replaced.

About 2002, a chapel was located where the library had been.

Parish Changes Direction

The next capital campaign was planned for 2002, but parish leadership decided to wait before starting another one, citing many national and local issues.

The diocese canceled plans to start a new Northland parish and began looking for ways to expand existing parishes. Parish leadership decided Holy Family should begin searching for larger property because growth at 96th Street would be limited and the parish would grow larger than originally anticipated. Earlier plans now seemed unrealistic.

Work began on revising the parish mission statement in June 2002. A new mission statement was adopted in September 2002. (See photo on page 18.)

Pam Leiker resigned and Patty Whelchel became secretary in January 2003.

The February 2, 2003, bulletin noted that long-range planning sessions were to begin, using a questionnaire as a starting point.

The parish had over 900 families in 2003.

In 2003, the parish purchased 60 acres at 106th and North Woodland Avenue for \$780,648, according to a 2005 Join the Journey campaign newsletter.

"Extensive research and professional guidance indicated

Stained Glass Windows



Holy Family installed stained glass windows in July 2000. Donna Havelka enjoyed making stained glass windows and planned to make them for the church. She became ill and was never able to make them, but her idea spurred action.

The windows were purchased in memory and in honor of Donna, Janell Griffin, and Mary Alice and Fred Duchardt. Members of those families and Father Robert met to decide on design.

Money donated to the parish in memory of other people also helped pay for some windows.

The four large windows on each side of the church represent the four evangelists and their symbols: Matthew – angel, Mark – lion, Luke – ox and John – eagle.

The small windows on the lower part of the walls depict scenes from the Old Testament on the west and the New Testament on the east.



Russell Joy of Joy Stained Glass Studio made the windows.

depict scenes from the Old Testament on the west and the New Testament on the east.

A rainbow from the great flood spans all four Old Testament windows, illustrating God's covenant.

The first window

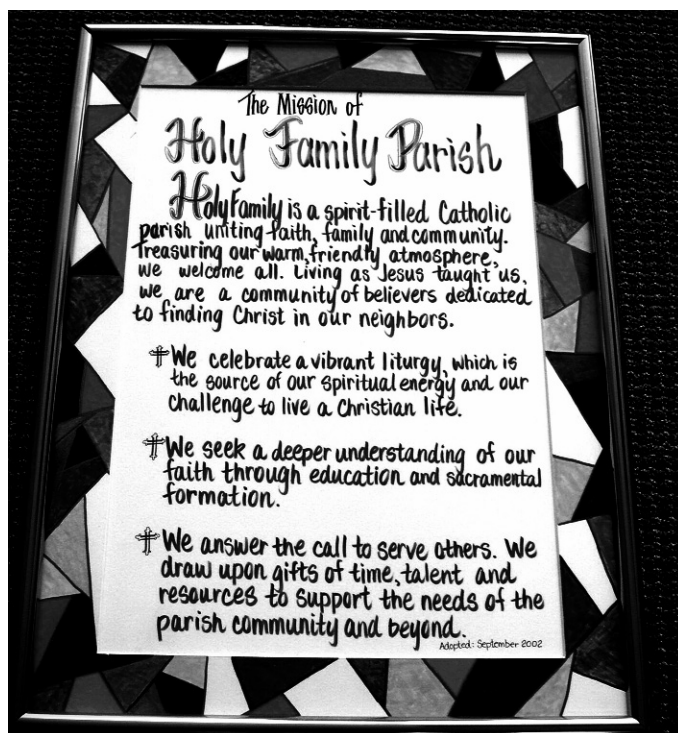
depicts the dove with an olive branch that Noah sent forth from the ark, representing new creation. The second depicts a heart in flames as passion for God. The third is the quail with manna that God provided the Israelites in the desert as foretelling the Eucharist and the fourth is a lamp, representing knowledge or wisdom lighting the path to salvation.

The flowing water of baptism connects all four New Testament panels. They depict various miracles associated with Jesus. The first is the abundant catch of fish, the second is the multiplication of the loaves, the third is the miracle at Cana and the fourth is the resurrection with Christ's grave topped by the three crosses.

The windows above the altar depict the Eucharist with the chalice and host, wheat and grapes.

The Duchardts loved the Bible and enjoyed reading it, so they were memorialized in the Eucharistic windows above the altar, as well as the four evangelists on the side windows.

The heart and dove windows were purchased in Janell Griffin's memory. The remaining two Old Testament windows were purchased in Donna Havelka's memory to complete the rainbow. Donna had wanted to use the rainbow when she was going to make the windows, so her family asked if it could be incorporated into the design.



that the price was extremely favorable and large tracts of land were not widely available in this area. Normally, 70 percent of the cost of capital must be acquired in cash and pledges before the diocese will approve a loan," according to the newsletter.

"However, in an unprecedented show of support, the diocese offered to loan us 100 percent of the cost of the land without requiring an immediate campaign. This decision was based on the rare investment opportunity presented and the difficulty of organizing a quality campaign in the time necessary to secure the property."

In July 2003, the parish began a second collection to reduce debt.

That year Jim Gach set up a shared DSL connection and shared file folders for the office staff.

In January 2004, Holy Family's building committee selected Shaughnessy Fickel and Scott Architects to produce a master plan and site program for the new location.

About 25 members representing a broad cross-section of the parish participated in a two-day workshop. The next day, a Sunday, a parish forum was held. The parish participated in a master planning process from January through May.

Holy Family experienced more staff changes in 2004. Lori Stark became religious education coordinator and Mary Hughes was in charge of sacramental preparation.

Holy Family entered the Internet age with its own Web site: www.holyfamily.com. The site was up and running by September 26, 2004.

Father Robert Stewart was reassigned to St. Margaret Parish in Lee's Summit in November 2004.



Looking back to his days as Holy Family's pastor, Father Robert said, "I love them" of the parishioners. He found them to be "honest, caring people. They lovingly corrected you with good advice." They steered him with "honest, respectful devotion."

He never felt like a stranger. Even before he came as pastor, he received a phone call from Bernie Gately, whom people called the "mayor of Holy Family." He felt welcomed before he set foot at the parish.

When he got to Holy Family, he found dedicated volunteers and staff members.

"Holy Family will always have a special place in my heart," he said. "They are a marvelous, caring community of faith. . . . People ministered to me as much as I ministered to them."

Prior to coming to Holy Family, he had closed a parish, an uncomfortable situation. Coming to a young, growing parish gave him a sense of rebirth. Rather than closing a

parish, he was able to help Holy Family build—literally with the additional of the education building. He saw the building as existing only to bring people to Christ.

"It wound up being a dream," he said of his Holy Family years.

Father Matthew Brumleve celebrated his first Masses at Holy Family the weekend of November 27/28, 2004.



Holy Family Council of the Knights of Columbus

The Holy Family Council of the Knights of Columbus began recruiting in November 2006. Previously, men who belonged to the organization affiliated with the Tri-County Council. The Supreme Council now prefers that parishes have their own councils and Holy Family had reached the size where this would be possible.

The Knights of Columbus held an informational meeting in January. Holy Family Council 14266 had its first meeting June 10, 2007, with 40 members.

The council's first officers were: grand knight, Jim Edwards; deputy grand knight, Stephen Cook; chancellor, Bill Ball; recorder, Norman Schmalz; treasurer,

Larry Boeshart; financial secretary, Bill Wewers; advocate, Chris Teel; warden, Tom Belisle; inside guard, Andrew Lester; outside guard, Harold Heilman; trustee, John McClendon; trustee, Tom Lussen; and trustee, Ricky Scola.



The council instituted an aluminum can collection and monthly Sunday breakfasts. They help fund youth activities with bingo nights and other functions. They cook for the parish picnic, welcoming and youth events, and bingo. They painted the parish hall in June 2010.

The parish celebrated its 25th anniversary with a potluck on Sunday, January 30, 2005, and a parish mission. Doug Brummel, a Catholic entertainer and inspirational speaker, presented the mission.

Holy Family began a three-year community campaign to retire the debt on February 10, 2005, entitled *Join the Journey: Faith, Family, Future*.

The children's money jar began as part of Join the Journey campaign on the weekend of July 2-3, 2005.

In 2005, the parish owed \$1.3 million on the 1998 addition and still more on the new property for approximately \$2.1 million. By June 20, 2005, the parish had commitments for \$1,758,702.

The service outreach committee, an outgrowth of the stewardship committee, began in 2005. While the parish already had the Giving Tree program, served people at Catholic Worker House and held the Service Blitz, it could do more with a committee directed toward helping others.

That spring Holy Family began a sister parish relationship with St. James Parish in midtown Kansas City. Holy Family began a school supply drive for inner city students from this relationship.

The worship space was reconfigured to allow more people to sit inside in October 2005. The choir returned to the west front of the church and 80 chairs were moved into the worship space. Glass was removed between worship space and family room. Before changing the sanctuary configuration, it seated 384.

In 2005 Dennis Altschul became music director. Mary Hughes became religious education coordinator, a position she had formerly shared.

The parish now included 960 families.

New Stations of the Cross were installed in April 2006.

Holy Family began a new ministry at St. James Place Kitchen in May 2006, which developed from its relationship with St. James Church. The first Tuesday of each month, Holy Family took responsibility for serving food. The parish began collecting for the St. James Place food pantry at that time.

The parish's first computer server was installed in June 2006.

John Winkels became director of liturgy and music in August 2006.

The holiday bazaar and bake shop replaced the cookie walk and craft show.

Jesse Manibusan, a singer-songwriter and speaker, presented the parish mission in January 2007.

Ember Riley replaced Mary Hughes in March 2007 as director of religious education. Ember was a founding member of the parish as a child.

Holy Family acquired a "new" Rodgers digital organ with the help of an anonymous

donor who matched donations by five. The organ was dedicated at a recital on June 10, 2007. Director of music and liturgy John Winkels and organists/pianists Cecilia Westhoven and Maureen Loehr participated in the program.

That year, the parish census was at 1,050 families.

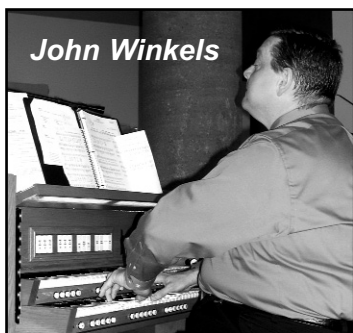
Marie Relic began serving as parish manager on January 2, 2008.

The *Our Family, Our Journey, Our Home* campaign was held to raise funds for both annual and capital appeals. The parish was operating in tight quarters with overflow crowds at Mass and in the parking lot. It was difficult to schedule meeting space for the many activities in the building.

SFS Architecture, formerly Shaughnessy Fickel and Scott, prepared a master plan for a 1,500-seat worship space with a chapel, narthex, offices, classrooms and a parish hall/gymnasium in Phase I. If the parish decided to add a school in the future, it could be added in Phase II.

When the parish learned that Phase I alone would cost at least \$22 million in March 2008, it was decided to build the church alone at a cost of \$10 million. The parish would have to "bi-locate," meaning that Mass and other services would be held at the new location, while offices and programs would remain at the old site.

Campaign goal was \$2.5 million. While the parish did not meet the goal, it received \$1.6 million in pledges. An economic recession began at the same time the campaign began, hindering campaign goals.



Our Holy Family Prayer

2008 Campaign: Our Family, Our Journey, Our Home

**Living as Jesus taught us,
we are a community of believers
dedicated to finding Christ
in our sacraments and our neighbors.**

**God of faith,
Help us embrace change, yet still hold dear
the family values that
make our community unique.
We answer the call to serve others.**

**God of hope,
Allow us to work in harmony,
united in appreciating the efforts of all.
Help us to be generous with our
time, talent and treasure.**

**God of love,
You challenge us to believe
in You and ourselves.
Give us the faith we need to build a house
on rock and not on sand.**

Lord, lead us as we are to go today.



The annual parish appreciation dinner held on January 30, 2010, was the same date the parish was established in 1980. Many founding members remain active in the parish and attended the dinner. They are pictured here from left.

Seated: JoAnn Schollars, Walli Kane, Julie Lemke, Anna Van Keirsbilck, Marie and Bill Auffert.

Standing: Richard Ziegler, Henry Kane, Karla Ziegler, Mike and Ann Halterman, Bernard and Marge Gram, Lisa Conaway, Ember Hebauf Riley, Kelley Payne Duer, Dan and Judy Zager, Chet Payne, Bob and Ruth Meyer, Esther and Phil Montalbano, Lezlie and Bob Allman.

With campaign donations, the parish reached a milestone, paying off the debt for the current buildings and the new land as of December 23, 2008. All campaign money from that point on would be deposited with the diocese for use in the new building.

The St. Brigid Needlework group began June 22, 2008. It is a prayer shawl ministry for those needing comfort and solace from sickness and other life problems. Members make the shawls which are presented to people who need comfort and support from the parish. Participants pray for the recipients as well.

In June and July of 2009, parish leaders and staff met to decide how to handle growth at 96th Street without spending much money.

Mike O'Toole gathered a group of parishioners to remove the partition at the back of church, adding 108 seats. Seating now flowed directly from the worship space into the Family Room. People seated in the former Family Room would now feel a part of the congregation. Total number of seats was 603 for the congregation with room to go to about 620.

The pre-confirmation program ended in 2009 to comply with new diocesan guidelines. Instead of spanning 18 months as it had since 1999, the confirmation program was changed to a four-month program. Holy Family would continue to confirm teens in their sophomore year. Teens were required to be active in religious education for one year prior to starting the confirmation program, as is required for other sacraments,

such as reconciliation and first Communion.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, a faith formation program using the Montessori Method, began in 2009 for children ages 3 to 6 in Level I, and for children ages 6 to 9 in Level II.

Holy Family ended 2009 with 881 registered, active families, with 2,515 total souls, including 958 children.

The parish's annual appreciation dinner coincided with its 30th anniversary on January 30, 2010. Founding members who attended the dinner were recognized.

Holy Family became a church partner with Love INC (In the Name of Christ) in January 2010 to provide emergency assistance to people in the community.

Father Lou Papes presented the parish mission, "Families of Faith: The Spiritual Dimension of Human Relationships" in February.

The Men's Club and Knights of Columbus provided funds to purchase an automated external defibrillator (AED) for use in cardiac emergencies. Parish staff participated in a training session for certification through the St. Luke's Health System, which also would monitor and administer the AED program.

The parish started holding welcoming events that encouraged all parishioners to attend and welcome new parishioners in 2010. A hospitality committee was formed as an adjunct to the stewardship committee to organize the events, to be held in winter, spring, summer and fall.

Recognizing the increasing importance of social media, Holy Family joined Facebook.

Mission Statement

The Holy Family parish council streamlined its mission statement on April 14, 2010.

Holy Family Catholic Church is a vibrant, spirit-filled faith community. Following the example of the Holy Family, we seek God by celebrating, growing and living our faith.



Pictured from left, Holy Family's staff in 2010 consisted of Patty Whelchel, secretary, and Father Matthew Brumleve, pastor, seated; Heather Neds, director of youth ministry, Peggy Petersen, pastoral associate, John Winkels, director of liturgy and music, Marie Relic, parish manager, and Ember Riley, director of religious education, standing.

In August, members of the Holy Family choir participated in a concert the St. Louis Jesuits presented.

The roof was replaced on the entire building complex in fall 2010.

During 2010, the staff, parish council, facilities, finance and stewardship committees met with a facilitator to decide how to plan for the future, including the next capital campaign and exploring options for additional parking.

The parish faced a conundrum (a problem with no satisfactory answer), needing to maintain facilities at 96th Street, while looking forward to eventually building and moving to 106th and Woodland.

Patty Whelchel was hired as director of stewardship and development in October, a newly created position. She had been serving on the stewardship committee and had attended regional and international conferences on stewardship.

Her duties were to plan and coordinate the annual stewardship program, including the annual ministry fair, serve as liaison to the stewardship committee, coordinate and oversee parish ministry activity, serve as resource to staff and parish groups as needed;

Participate in long-range planning with the pastor and parish advisory

bodies, direct major fund-raising programs, including the annual parish appeal, capital campaign, planned giving and memorials, direct acknowledgement and recognition activities for donors and ministers, seek foundation and corporate giving opportunities, maintain donor and prospective donor records, provide regular fund-raising progress reports to pastor, parish council, and stewardship and development committee;

Provide support to business manager to ensure proper internal controls, and separation of duties.

She also was to coordinate the completion of the Our Family, Our Journey, Our Home campaign.

The Stepping Stones newsletter was started in

November to keep parishioners informed about the progress the parish is making toward the move. It contained articles from Father Matthew, the parish council, finance and stewardship committees.

Because Patty Whelchel accepted the position of director of stewardship and development, the parish hired a new secretary. Mary Ludwig-Whipple was hired in November to begin work in January 2011. Until that point, Patty served as both secretary and director of stewardship and development.

Parish Census

1982: 402
1984: 427
1987: 475
1993: 654
1997: 785
1998: 755
2000: 845*
2003: 900
2005: 960
2007: 1,050
2009: 881**
2010: 903

*The parish had been projected to have only 600 households by the year 2000.

**The parish roster was culled to contain only registered, active families.

Bishop's Award Recipients

Bishop Charles Helmsing established the bishop's award in 1976 to recognize lay people who had a "display of faith over many years" by performing many "acts of love toward the church community."

Holy Family has been blessed with several parishioners who have done just that. The following parishioners were honored throughout the years as recipients of the bishop's award:

- 1984** Mary Rose Carolla
Virginia Vollman
- 1985** Ruth Spiegelhalter
Mark and Carol Halsted
- 1986** Bernie and Jan Gately
- 1987** Connie and Duane Pickert
Bill and Marie Auffert
- 1988** Jim and Peg Messick
Tom and Nancy Raniere
- 1989** Mary and Gerry Grant
Anna and Fritz Van Keirsbilck
- 1990** Darrell and Pam Leiker
Bernard and Marge Gram
- 1991** Dennis and Lynn Johnson
Dean and Rozanne Prather
- 1992** Julie Lemke
Pat Matthys
- 1993** Jim and Marilyn Meyer
Keith and Joan Anderberg
- 1994** Deb Davis
Chris Carlson
- 1997** Karen and Dean Merkel
- 1998** J.J. and Suzanne Greenwood
- 2000** Stella Garver
Joe Roetheli
- 2002** No nominees
- 2004** Marcy Johnson
Mary Kaminski
- 2006** Gerry Furrow
Marianne Prucha
- 2008** Diane Schroeder
Mindy Lehman
- 2010** Anna Van Keirsbilck
Marvin Norton

Afterthoughts

A few years ago, Father Matthew asked me to write a history of Holy Family – about the time the parish was undergoing the Our Family, Our Journey, Our Home campaign.

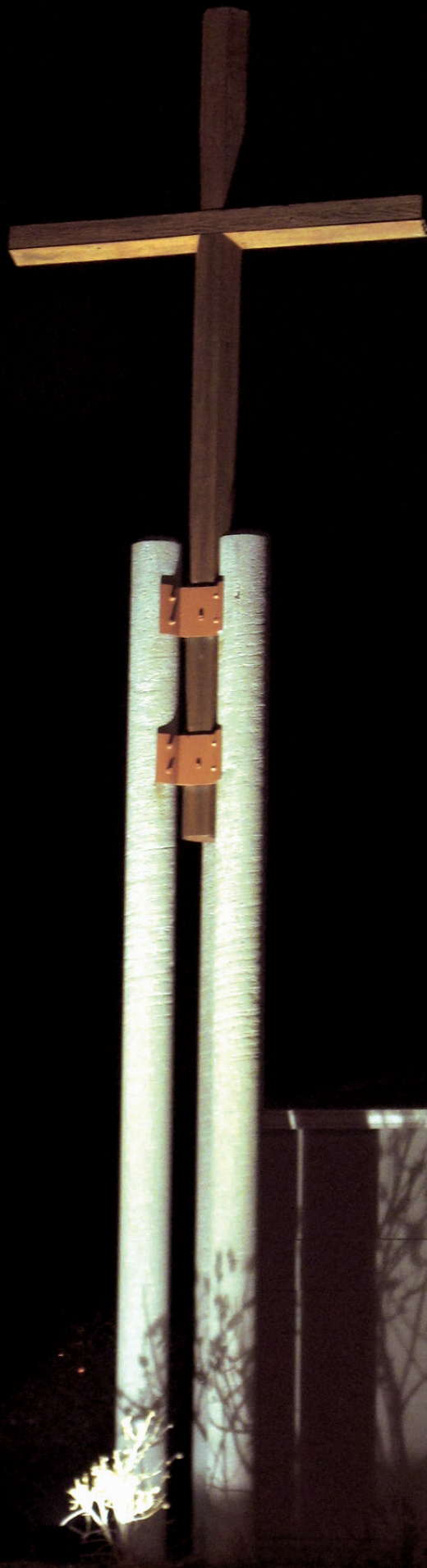
During that campaign, I spoke with several people who had been involved from the parish's beginning to get a taste of what it had been like in those early days. That piece was the "*genesis*" of this history project and is included at the beginning.

From there I scoured old bulletins, newspaper articles, old pamphlets, old newsletters, parish minutes, boxes of odds and ends in the basement. I spoke to or e-mailed a number of people, both past and present parishioners and staff members.

I thank everyone who helped me in any way.

This book contains only a fraction of Holy Family's essence. Our parish is more than bare facts. Holy Family is its people, those who struggled to put their time, talent and treasure into building a family, building a church, building programs, building additions and most importantly, building ways to lead people to God.

~~ Suzanne Hill



A Holy Family Publication
919 NE 96th Street
Kansas City, Mo. 64115
www.holyfamily.com
www.facebook.com/HolyFamilyKCMO