



# THE CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Annunciation Catholic Church was the second Catholic Church established in Houston and was an outgrowth of the original St Vincent's established in 1839. It was the work of the Very Rev. Joseph Querat, a canon of the Cathedral in Lyons, France and a missionary to Texas from 1852-1878.

On April 25, 1869, the cornerstone was laid by dignitaries who marched to this site from old St Vincent's; the sacristy and steeple were added between 1881 and 1884.

Standing near the business center of Houston, Annunciation was the home of the city's early leaders and has continued to minister to the faithful of Houston and thousands of visitors each year. Although the founding pastor planned an edifice in a style worthy of a Cathedral, it never gained that status. The church is located at the corner of Texas Ave and Crawford and is the oldest existing church building in the city.

Nicholas J. Clayton was the man most responsible for the remarkable buildings found in Houston and Galveston. In addition to Annunciation Church, Clayton's work includes the Bishop's Palace, St. Patrick's, St. Mary's, Sacred Heart, St. Mary's University, St. Mary's Cathedral in Austin, and Ursuline Academy in Dallas and many others.



**DIOCESE CREATED BY ROME, JULY 1847**  
Bishop Odin celebrated Mass for the first time in the (old) church of St. Vincent de Paul on Franklin Avenue between Caroline and San Jacinto Streets.



BISHOP ODIN



**LAYING OF THE CORNERSTONE, APRIL 25, 1869**  
Bishop Dubuis, Bishop of Galveston, granted permission to Fr. Querat, the Pastor of the old St. Vincent church in Houston, to institute the Church of the Annunciation as its first Pastor. On the Feast of St. Mark, April 25, they conducted a solemn procession from the old St. Vincent church on the corner of Franklin Avenue and Caroline Street to Annunciation on the corner of Texas Avenue and Crawford Street which culminated in the blessing and laying of the Cornerstone.

March, 1855, Joseph Querat was ordained to the Priesthood by Bishop Odin

Bishop Claude Marie Dubuis succeeded Bishop Odin as the second Bishop of Galveston.



BISHOP DUBUIS



**CITY OF HOUSTON 1873, MAP DRAWN BY AUGUSTUS KOCH**  
September 10, 1871 - The Church of the Annunciation was dedicated for the city of Houston which at the time had a population 15,000 of which 1,200 were Catholics. The First Mass at The Church of the Annunciation was celebrated, and Emma Theresa Maria Annuncata Duverney was baptized, the first Baptism.

March, 1869 - Fr. Querat met with the Catholic men of Houston in the St. Vincent de Paul school building to update them on the progress of the new church. Together, they decided on the name of Annunciation.

Bishop Dubuis retired to France due to poor health in 1881. Auxiliary Bishop Nicholas Gallagher became the Apostolic Administrator and in 1892 the third Bishop of Galveston.



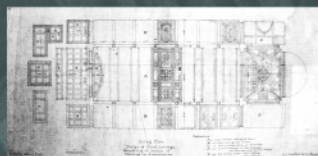
BISHOP GALLAGHER



1878: The Stations of the Cross were purchased from Pierre Vermorel of Lyon, France. The St. Anthony of Padua statue and the large Creche collection were acquired from Delin Freres, Paris, France, and The Crucifixion Scene in Annunciation's narthex is painted French Bronze and may have been the work of Delin Freres, Paris, France.



Interior remodel by Nicholas Clayton, 1904



**NICHOLAS CLAYTON, ARCHITECT**  
In 1881 Fr. Hennessy hired the well-known architect Nicholas Clayton to resolve structural problems in the church building. He designed the central bell tower and built two short towers which flanked the central bell tower (towers were completed in 1884). He added vestibules in the current narthex to the church as well. Among other things, he also raised the height of the side walls so that a single continuous roof with a central barrel ceiling could be constructed.



Fr. Hennessy hired Nicholas Clayton to enlarge Annunciation's sanctuary.

1895 - On May 21st Bishop Dubuis died at Vernaison, France and on August 9th Fr. Querat died at his brother's home in Chalmazel Loire, France.



Nicholas Clayton designed the beautiful Annunciation parochial school to replace the little school house.



Annunciation church was refinished with stucco on the outside because of the porousness of the homemade bricks used in the building's construction.



1910 U.S. CENSUS WITH FR. HENNESSY'S SIGNATURE



**WORLD WAR I 1914-1918**  
July 16, 1918 - Fr. Walsh, with a small group of Catholic ladies, organized the Catholic Women's Club of Houston, a home for Catholic working girls.

Fr. Walsh established the Third Order of St. Francis at Annunciation on October 1, 1915. The first group of Novices were admitted in November 1916

On January 21, 1918, Bishop Gallagher died. On November 25 of the same year, Bishop Christopher Byrne was installed as the fourth Bishop of Galveston



BISHOP BYRNE

1836



**CITY OF HOUSTON FOUNDED, AUGUST 1836**  
Founded by A. C. and John Allen.



POPE GREGORY XVI, 1831-1846



POPE PIUS XI, 1846-1878



LOURDES APPARITIONS 1858

1869

Bishop Odin was named the Archbishop of New Orleans.



**VERY REV. FATHER AUGUSTINE D'ASI, O.F.M.**  
PASTOR OLD ST. VINCENT'S CHURCH 1860-1866

March, 1852, Joseph Querat came to Texas from Lyon, France where he had been a Canon of the Cathedral of Lyon.

St. Vincent Cemetery, the oldest Catholic cemetery in Houston, was founded on Navigation Boulevard.

December, 1866, Fr. Querat was appointed Pastor of St. Vincent's.  
March, 1867, the half block at Texas Ave. and Crawford Street was conveyed to Bishop Dubuis, by Peter W. Gray for the sum of \$2000. In November, the old city courthouse was purchased and it's bricks used for a new larger church, the Church of the Annunciation.



AMERICAN CIVIL WAR, 1861 - 1865



1ST VATICAN COUNCIL, 1869-1870



**VERY REV. FATHER JOSEPH QUERAT, PASTOR 1869-1878**  
Our first beloved Pastor labored to build the Parish, collect money to pay off debts, and continued to work on the Church from April 4, 1869 until failing health and sight forced him to retire on May 5, 1878. Father Querat came to Texas in 1852 and in 1889 he returned to his native France in poor health and completely blind. He died on July 9, 1895.

August 15, 1871 the tower Bell was consecrated and dedicated to St. Gabriel. September of the same year saw the first wedding and first funeral at the new church.



MOTHER MARY GABRIEL (LALLON), N.J.  
SUPERIORESS, SISTERS OF THE INCARNATE WORD



**VERY REV. FATHER THOMAS HENNESSY, PASTOR 1879-1913**  
Fr. Thomas Hennessy was appointed the second Pastor of Annunciation by Bishop Dubuis. Born in Ireland in 1836, he immigrated to America in 1847 with his family. They moved to Lavaca County, TX in 1855. In 1857, he married, but was widowed within the year and Fr. Hennessy determined to become a priest. He studied under Fr. Gonnard at a parish founded by former black slaves in Washington County and was ordained a priest in 1863.

The first two parishes, St. Patrick and St. Joseph, were created from the territory of Annunciation parish.

The clerestory round mosaic stained-glass windows were installed by Belcher Mosaic Glass Company of Newark, New Jersey.



A group of men assembled next to the Church of the Annunciation - believed to be the Knights of Columbus. The church's original brick exterior can be seen, Fr. Hennessy is in the center of the group, and a sign reading "The House of God Enter for a Moments Prayer" can be seen near the side door.

1887 - The first Annunciation parochial school (The Little Schoolhouse) for boys was erected. Fr. Hennessy also helped establish the first Catholic school for the Post-Civil War freed slave children. This school would be remodeled to provide both classroom space and a church, St. Nicholas. Until these facilities were built, the black freed slaves and their families attended Holy Mass at Annunciation.

THE "GREAT 1900 STORM"



DESTRUCTION ON GALVESTON ISLAND, 1900

On September 8, 1900, the "Great 1900 Storm" hurricane hit Galveston and Houston which blew down the cross and bell tower and damaged the two short towers of Annunciation. The repair effort provided the opportunity to improve the beauty of the interior of the church. Imported Tennessee marble built by Ott Monument Works of Galveston replaced the wooden altars, beautiful stained-glass windows were added to the church, and new statues were added.

Fr. Hennessy founded Holy Cross Cemetery.



POPE PIUS X, 1903-1914



POPE BENEDICT XV, 1914-1922

Fr. Thomas Hennessy died peacefully, in the rectory, of heart disease, at the age of 77 after celebrating his 50th anniversary of priesthood. He was buried in Holy Cross Cemetery.

The first American-born Pastor (Washington D.C. 1873) and the first Houston Priest to be honored with the title of "Monsignor" - assigned to Annunciation as its third Pastor. Ordained to the Priesthood June 21, 1900, he then studied for a year at the Catholic University of America before coming to the Diocese of Galveston. He served as Assistant Pastor at St. Mary's Cathedral and St. Patrick's church in Galveston. He later founded All Saints parish in Houston Heights.

In Fr. Walsh's first year as Pastor, he decided that Annunciation school would become a co-educational school. The Sisters at Incarnate Word Academy discontinued the grammar grades at this time because of the increase in numbers of the high school students. He also proposed the establishment of the Incarnate Word Academy Alumnae Association. Fr. Walsh also installed a heating system in Annunciation church, and he oversaw Catholic cemeteries in Houston and founded the Garden of Gethsemane Cemetery on Market Street.

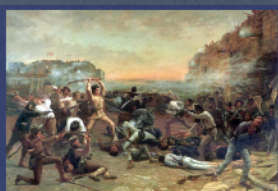


REV. MSGR. GEORGE T. WALSH, PASTOR 1914-1933



FATIMA APPARITIONS 1916-1917

1919



TEXAS WAR OF INDEPENDENCE, 1835-1836



HOUSTON IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY



HOUSTON IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

1910 - Panorama of Downtown Houston. The Church of the Annunciation's central bell tower can be seen on the right.



# CELEBRATING 150 YEARS



1924 - The marble communion rail was installed in Annunciation church. This was paid for with money raised with the goal of memorializing Fr. Hennessy during the Golden Jubilee celebration with a marble replica of him. This was not realized, and the money was used for the communion rail instead.



1924 - The Pilscher's Sons Symphonic Pipe Organ Opus #1206 was installed with 1,577 tin pipes.



1933 - Memorial stained-glass windows depicting the Mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary were manufactured by Emil Fret of St. Louis, Missouri.



**WORLD WAR II 1939-1945**  
Annunciation cooperated with the United Service Organizations (USO) in providing hospitality and shelter along with material and spiritual support to US soldiers travelling through Union Station train station across the street on Texas Avenue.



1925 - 1928: The Chapel of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was built - donated by Mrs. Bees Burkitt Crane and her brother, George Burkitt Crane in memory of their parents, George W. & Mary Hartley Burkitt, which includes a crowned and gem-studded, true copy of the icon Of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, touched to the original located in Rome and blessed by Pope Pius XI. As in Rome, the icon is situated between two stained-glass windows by Charles J. Connick of Boston - one, of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the other, of St. John the Evangelist.



May 25 - Anton J. Frank ordained a priest by Bishop Byrne in Annunciation church.



September 12, 1945: A new cross was erected to crown the steeple of Annunciation church. Fr. Frank was determined to make this cross impregnable to the elements. The base of the cross dissented 26 feet into the steeple so, "next time it topples, the steeple will undoubtedly have to collapse too."



Bishop Byrne died April 1, 1950. He is buried in Calvary Cemetery, Galveston. He was succeeded the same year by Bishop Wendelin J. Nold, the fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Galveston - Houston.

On the Feast of St. Francis, the house at the intersection of Irvine and Willis Streets was rented and formally blessed by the Very Rev. Frank. The house was named after the venerated Franciscan Fr. Augustine d'Assisi. It became the distribution center for the work of the Third Order, making goods available to the poor at the request of the Pastor or through the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.



The Diocese of Galveston was redesignated as the "Diocese of Galveston - Houston," and Sacred Heart church in Houston was named the Co-Cathedral. The Chancery offices were transferred to Houston in 1963.

In 1963 Bishop Nold loses his eyesight. On June 11 of the same year Bishop John L. Morkovsky, from the diocese of Amarillo, was installed as Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Galveston - Houston.



January 22, 1973: The US Supreme Court decision in Roe v. Wade fabricated a "right" to abortion under the United States Constitution. Annunciation assumed a leadership role for Pro-Life activities in Houston. Our pro-life work will continue as long as abortion is legal.



1869 - The Church of the Annunciation celebrated its Centennial and was recorded as a Texas Historic Landmark.



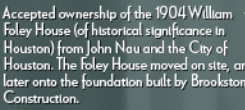
Union Station train station ceased to function as a public facility marking urban blight impacting Annunciation's parish boundaries.



The George R. Brown Convention Center opened, bringing an increase of activity in downtown Houston within the boundaries of Annunciation parish.



Houston Astros baseball team relocated to the newly constructed Minute Maid Park on Texas Avenue, directly across the street from Annunciation, bringing increased activity of local and out-of-town visitors to downtown Houston enhancing the visibility and mission of Annunciation in the greater community.



Accepted ownership of the 1904 William Foley House (of historical significance in Houston) from John Nau and the City of Houston. The Foley House moved on site, and later onto the foundation built by Brookstone Construction.



Hired Walsh and Associates to conduct a feasibility study and the subsequent capital campaign to raise \$2 million minimum goal and \$4 million challenge goal to fund the construction of Phase I of the Master Plan.



August 25, 2017: Catastrophic flooding caused by rains in the wake of Hurricane Harvey. Annunciation responds with a team of clergy, staff and volunteers to minister to the 10,000+ people taking shelter in the George R. Brown Convention Center. We provided daily Mass, Confessions, prayers and blessings, listening and spiritual counsel, bibles, rosaries and other literature and devotional resources for more than a month while the shelter is open.



Construction of Phase I of the Architectural Masterplan begins, which includes the new rectory, parish offices and a new bridal room annex with new men's and ladies' rooms.

Super Bowl 2017 football championship took place in Houston. Discovery Green Park, within blocks of Annunciation, was ground-zero for pre-game activities. Annunciation seized the opportunity for evangelization and fund raising.

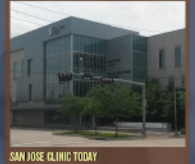
The Pilscher's Sons Symphonic Pipe Organ Opus #1206 was partially restored. It was funded by Mrs. Ann Glazier McStravick in memory of her late husband, Peter McStravick.

December 17, 1922: Annunciation observed its 50th anniversary Golden Jubilee. It had been postponed three years on account of world conditions. The same year, the Diocese of Galveston celebrated its 60th anniversary Diamond Jubilee.



Fr. Walsh was invested and made a domestic prelate with the title "Monsignor". He was the first Houston Priest to be honored with the title.

In 1924, Fr. Walsh, aided by the National Council of Catholic Women founded the "Mexican" clinic to serve poor Latin American laborers. In 1925 its mission was broadened to help all those in need regardless of race, color or creed. In 1946 its name was changed to the San Jose Clinic.



Downtown Houston, Church of the Annunciation and Union Station, 1925



Edmond A. Fretz, who founded the Fretz Construction company in Houston in 1922, oversaw the re-erection of the cross and steeple after they were blown down by a hurricane in 1943. The same company would make repairs to the steeple again almost 70 years later.



**VERY REV. FATHER THOMAS F. HOGAN, PASTOR 1934-1943**  
Rev. T. Hogan was appointed the fourth Pastor of Annunciation church on July 8, 1934. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio November 10, 1891. Ordained at our own diocesan St. Mary Seminary in LaPorte, Texas, May 29, 1919. After ordination he was assigned to Sacred Heart church in Houston as Assistant Pastor. Fr. Hogan taught at St. Mary Seminary and served as Assistant Pastor of Assumption church in Waco, Texas. He was partially paralyzed and somewhat fragile due to injuries sustained in an automobile accident.

The St. Vincent de Paul church bell was given to Fr. Frank by Fr. Sullivan of St. Joseph's.

During Fr. Hogan's tenure at Annunciation many improvements were made in the church including: paving of a new concrete floor; re-plastering of the exterior of the church; redecorating of the interior; installing air-conditioning in the church; adding the eighth grade classroom to Annunciation parochial school; installing a copper roof on the church.

Downtown Houston, 1951 (Photo: De Golyer Library, Southern Methodist University)



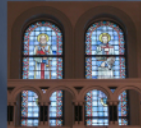
## 1944



April, 1947: The Diocese of Galveston celebrated its centennial anniversary.

February 25, 1948: Wendelin J. Nold was made Coadjutor Bishop of Galveston, with the right of succession.

1946-1947: The transept windows of St. John Vianney and St. Aloysius Gonzaga were installed during this time; the current altar windows of Moses and Elias were installed to replace windows damaged in schoolyard mishaps; additional windows were added to the choir stair into the South vestibule - all by the studio of Emil Fretz of St. Louis, Missouri.



The stained-glass window of The Woman at the Well, by Mayer of Munich and New York, was added to the Sister's Chapel on the right - side (epistle - side) transept of the sanctuary.



The Church of the Annunciation was the scene of the first Teachers Institute for the Diocese of Galveston, and the investiture of 37 laypersons into the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem, conducted by James Cardinal McIntyre, the first cardinal to officiate in Houston.



The stained-glass window of The Woman at the Well, by Mayer of Munich and New York, was added to the Sister's Chapel on the right - side (epistle - side) transept of the sanctuary.



June 4, 1964: The 98-year-old "Arthur B. Cohn house," which had once been the home of Mayor John T. Browne, at 1711 Rusk Street, was purchased for \$25,000 and became the property of the Annunciation Fraternity of the Third Order of St. Francis.

## 1969



December 1, 1965: Fr. Anton Frank was invested with the title Right Reverend Monsignor by Pope Paul VI in a ceremony at the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart on February 8, 1966.



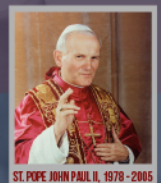
Bl. Pope Paul VI, 1963-1978



**REV. MSGR. TEODORO DE LA TORRE, PASTOR 1978-1989**  
Msgr. De la Torre was born in Camaguey, Cuba. He graduated from St. Basil's Seminary in El Cobre and was sent for further studies to the Gregorian University in Rome where he received (Summa Cum Laude) a doctorate degree of theology. He ordained a priest in 1944 at the Church of St. John Lateran in Rome.

Upon his return to Cuba his positions included that of Director of Studies for the diocesan seminary in Camaguey, coordinator of the Archdiocesan Office of Religious Education, Director of Continuous Education of Priests, and he was Professor of Systematic Theology at the graduate school of theology.

On June 13, 1954 he was named a Papal Chamberlain with the title of Monsignor. Being out of the country when Castro took power, and unable to return, de la Torre taught for several years at The Catholic University of Puerto Rico in Ponce. Before coming to Houston to teach philosophy, theology and Italian at Dominican College while also serving as Assistant Pastor at Annunciation.



St. Pope John Paul II, 1978-2005

Annunciation School closed.  
June 1, 1978: Msgr. Frank retired from his pastorate at Annunciation.

Repainting of the interior of the church.



**REV. MSGR. JAMES GOLASINSKI, PASTOR 1989-2013**  
Born and raised in Houston, Texas (August 17, 1933), he grew up near St. Joseph parish. He and his brother Donald both attended St. Mary's seminary and were ordained for the diocese of Galveston. Msgr. Golasinski was ordained a priest on May 24, 1958. After ordination, he studied at the Catholic University of America, Washington DC, and graduated with an M.S. in education. He returned to Houston to serve as Director of Education for the diocese before leaving in the 1960's to work as a missionary in Korea, where he served for more than 10 years. Health concerns forced him to return to Houston.

In 1977 he became the founding pastor of the Korean community's St. Andrew Kim parish. He was assigned to Annunciation as an Associate Pastor. He would fly to New Orleans to celebrate Mass in Korean, and then fly to San Antonio to celebrate Mass in Korean. He did this every Sunday until he became Pastor of Annunciation. Msgr. Golasinski would provide aid and comfort to Msgr. de la Torre until his death in 1989.

## 1994

The Annunciation parochial school was demolished.



Pope Benedict XVI 2005-2013

September 13, 2008: Hurricane Ike hit Galveston and Houston. The high winds blew the copper roof off of the nave area of Annunciation and caused considerable damage to the interior due to water getting in through the damaged roof.

His assignments included: Parochial Vicar at St. Vincent de Paul church, 1990-1993; St. Francis Cabrini church, 1993-1995; St. Edward the Confessor church, Spring, Texas, 1995-1997; Administrator then Pastor of Christ Our Light church, Navasota, Texas 1997-2003; Pastor of The Shrine of the True Cross, Dickinson, Texas 2003-2013.

Fr. Felix began to build a program seeking excellence in the celebration of the sacred liturgy in the Ordinary Form and the Extraordinary Form of the Mass. He continued Annunciation's leadership in promoting respect for the sanctity of life. And he gives quarterly retreats, alternating between English and Spanish respectively, for the healing and reconciliation of post-abortive women.

Old rectory demolished.  
Began offering Solemn Chanted Vespers on a periodic basis several times a year.



**FR. PAUL G. FELIX, PASTOR 2013-PRESENT**  
Born in Houston, Texas, August 25, 1958. The 4th of 6 children. He was raised in St. Michael parish, graduated high school in 1977 from Robert E. Lee, and entered seminary at St. Mary's Seminary in Houston in January 1983. On May 19, 1990 Fr. Felix was ordained to the Priesthood.

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**WORLD SERIES 2017**  
Houston Astros win the World Series Baseball Championship. During the 2017 regular season, as an effort to evangelize in the 100th year of the apparitions at Fatima, Annunciation promoted the encounter of faith and culture, and began offering sales of rosaries in the Astros' team colors to fans going to the stadium across the street on Texas Avenue.

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HOUSTON TODAY

HOUSTON IN THE MID 20TH CENTURY