

Our Parish History

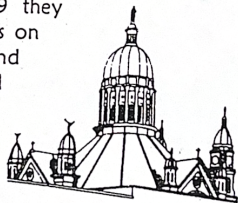
After crossing the Atlantic Ocean and following the route through New York and Saint Louis, the first two Polish immigrants and their families arrived in Winona in 1855. They settled in the east end of the village, building shelters on the open prairie. Despite poverty and hardships, the pioneers wrote such glowing descriptions of the area and its opportunities that within two years family and friends began to join them, initiating a great migration of Polish settlers which continued for more than thirty years.

The immigrants, firm in their faith and loyal to their heritage, were eager to have a church where they could worship, celebrate the sacraments, and have the word of God preached in their native tongue and they lost no time in planning for a parish of their own.

Establishment of the Parish

On April 2, 1871, the Polish community, now 100 families strong, decided to organize a parish under the name and patronage of Stanislaus Kostka, a popular young saint of Poland. Determined to build a church as soon as possible, they immediately began collecting money to finance the project. The response was so enthusiastic and generous that by May 9 they were able to purchase two lots on the corner of Fourth and Carimona Streets. A small wooden building, under the corporate title of Church of Saint Stanislaus Kostka, was completed in 1872, at a cost of \$950.

The little church was soon outgrown due to an influx of Poles from the Kashubian region who came here to escape economic, social and cultural persecution. The Saint Stanislaus congregation had to decide between forming a new parish on Winona's west side or remaining one parish and building a larger church. The pioneers decided to build a



The church dome, a Winona landmark, is crowned with a statue of Saint Stanislaus Kostka



Notes from the Past

- The Rev. James W. J. Pacholski came to the parish in 1894 and served as pastor for more than 38 years, until his sudden death in 1932. The church basement is named Pacholski Hall in his memory.
- On Thanksgiving Day, 1920, celebration of the silver anniversary of the dedication of the church included consecration of a marble altar with a baldachino supported by four pillars.
- A redecorating project was begun in August of 1947 in preparation for the diamond jubilee of the founding of the parish.
- On June 5, 1966, fire started by a lightning strike to the dome caused massive damage to the dome and to the church interior. Completion of repair work was celebrated with open house on December 11, 1966.
- The 100th year jubilee of the establishment of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish was observed with a two-day celebration, May 16 and 17, 1971.
- In 1994, refurbishing of the interior began in preparation for the 100th anniversary of the church building. The anniversary was celebrated October 8, 1995, with a Centennial Mass and rededication of the church.
- The marble Pieta was installed in early August of 1995.

structure large enough to meet not only their immediate needs but the needs of many succeeding generations.

In April of 1894, plans for the new church building were obtained from the architects, Maybury and Son of Winona, for \$400. The cornerstone of the pressed red brick and stone structure was laid on October 28, 1894. Just over a year later — Thanksgiving Day of 1895 — the beautiful and imposing church was dedicated. Evaluation of the building and its equipment in 1894 was \$86,000.

The structure is well maintained, respecting it as both historic building and house of worship. In 1991-92, extensive repair work was done on the outside of the church and the main dome and towers were covered with metal. The church has been modernized with the installation of an elevator and effective sound and air-conditioning systems, and the lighting has been improved.

The interior greatly differs from the original because of renovations and timely changes made to enrich the liturgical and sacramental life of a dynamic parish. Significant changes took place in both liturgy and church furnishings following the Vatican Council.

Diversity is another change: not all of today's parishioners are of Polish heritage. But we are one in being grateful to the immigrant founders and as we ask God's blessings on our parish, we pray too that we will be faithful stewards of their gifts to us. ■

Welcome!

*Saint Stanislaus Kostka
parish community
extends a
warm welcome to you.*

If you wish to join us



for worship,

please refer

*to the front page for
our Mass schedule.*

*Those interested in
membership*

may contact us

*at the Parish Center
adjacent to the church.*

The Church Windows

North Nave Wall Rose Window

This is the main rose window of the church and it contains medallions depicting the symbols of the four Evangelists. The center has a medallion depicting the crossed keys of Saint Peter.

Northwest Nave Wall Baptism of Christ

Depicts Christ's baptism by Saint John the Baptist in the River Jordan. Above Christ are the symbolic representations of God the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Northeast Nave Wall Annunciation

This window commemorates the Archangel Gabriel's announcement to Mary that God would become man through her. The Holy Spirit, symbolized by the dove, overshadows Mary. The traditional lily is the symbol of her purity and virginity.

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