

# ST. JOSEPHAT'S

## Polish National Catholic

### Church



100 YEARS

Days Gone By . . . . . Organizations of  
St. Josephat's Polish National Catholic Church

On March 9, 1927 the Polish Eagle Club was founded. Its first members elected as officers on the Executive Committee were: President, Joseph Wojtesky; Vice-President, Martin Stanislawski; Financial Secretary, Thomas Bastasz; Recording Secretary, Joseph Thomas and Treasurer, Frank Galeski.

The object of the club was to further social activities among members, promote athletics and create funds for the club and church.

The first meeting was conducted in the Polish language and all subsequent meetings were in English. Twenty members were present at the original meeting.

A monthly periodical titled "The Polish Eagle" and edited by Dan Levenduski was published in 1941 by the club. It received special recognition in the diocesan weekly "Awakening".

St. Josephat's had an orchestra which was composed entirely of its own members and was well known throughout the city. They played at many weddings and social events gaining recognition as one of the finer Polish orchestras. Members included Dan, Bernard, and Conrad Levenduski, Frank and Walter Bussa and John Freischle.

Sports were enthusiastically developed by the club. In 1939 the baseball team won the Diamond Ball championship in the church league. The club also sponsored basketball and bowling. Some current members of St. Josephat's still enjoy bowling.



One of the highlights, always looked forward to by parishioners of days gone by at St. Josephat's, was the annual church picnic. The original picnic was held at the Normanna Inn on Jean Duluth road. In later years it was moved to Caribou Lake and many members remember the games children, as well as adults, participated in and all the hot dogs and beverages that were consumed. The highlight of the picnic was in the evening when the band came and played at the Polish dance. The members of the band also were members of St. Josephat's.

Organized on March 19, 1929 by Reverend Palszewski, who was pastor at the time, was the Ladies Aid Society. At the first meeting 19 women were present, the elected officers at the time were: President, Mrs. Thomas Gorkoski; Vice-President, Mrs. Frank Frankowiak; Recording Secretary, Mrs. Joseph Wojtesky; Financial Secretary, Mrs. Pelazia Frankowski and Treasurer, Mrs. Walter Ignatius.

The purpose of the organization was to promote the welfare, help the parish and work in cooperation with the parish committee. They were very active in sponsoring all church dinners, parties and social gatherings. The Ladies Aid held their meetings during the afternoon and years later the name of the organization was changed to the Womens Christian Association and meetings were held in the evening so many of the working women could participate.

The Womens Christian Association is still in existence today and are still sponsoring the bi-annual roast beef dinner with the help of head chef, Jerry Michelizzi, and all parishioners of St. Josephat's. This is our main fund raiser for the church.

For many years a mainstay in St. Josephat's has been the choir.

The Polish National Choir was the first society to be organized at St. Josephat's. Mr. J. Glowinski was the director, and Mr. Michael Bussa served as first organist.

In later years, St. Josephats' choir, besides singing during Mass and at special services, sponsored an annual radio broadcast during the Christmas season. Together with the junior choir they would also go Christmas caroling to the homes of many of the parishioners. The choir at this time was under the direction of Miss Marie Bastasz, who also was the organist.

The choir also sponsored the Fun Frolics which was a big part of socializing at St. Josephat's. Many hours went into putting on the Fun Frolics which included clowns, singing and sometimes plays were performed all in the Polish language. The Wotkowiak family, we are told, were quite the performers at the Frolics, as well as, many other talented parishioners. It was a fun time for everyone.

Always in good faith to serve St. Josephat's, other societies of days gone by were: The Ladies Rosary Society, Altar Boys' Society and Spojnia.

We hope this small history of some of the distant "Days Gone By" organizations at St. Josephat's will bring back some fond memories on this our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

1907-2007

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