

Gratitude to Religious and Priests

We'd like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the innumerable priests and religious who have served the people of St. Stanislaus Kostka in the course of these past 150 years.

In a previous letter I wrote about the priests and brothers of the *Congregation of the Resurrection* whose first apostolic endeavor here in Chicago began at St. Stanislaus Kostka within a very short time after the foundation of the parish in 1867. The Resurrectionists have been here ever since.

Notable among pastors was Fr. Vincent Barzynski who pastored the parish from 1874 until 1899. During his tenure, the parish became one of the largest in the world and Fr. Barzynski was not only recognized by many as the greatest leader among the Poles in Chicago during the end of the 19th century, but he was principally responsible for the foundation of many parishes formed from St. Stanislaus Kostka to serve the rapid growth of the Polish immigration coming to Chicago at that time.

While most of the parish's pastors have long ago passed away there are former pastors of St. Stanislaus Kostka still laboring to varying degrees in the ministry of the Church here in Chicago and the outlying areas of Chicago. Fr. Francis Rog, Fr. Richard Balazs, Fr. Joe Malczyk, and Fr. Joseph Glab continue to serve the faithful of the Archdiocese of Chicago. We thank them for the leadership and service they gave to the people of this parish.

I wish to thank as well the priests who have celebrated the Sacred Liturgy and have offered the sacraments during the time of my medical absence this past year. There are too many to mention, but the people of this parish along with myself are truly grateful for the help they've been to all of us.

As I mention the clergy, I'd be remiss not to mention Deacon Nicholas Flores who has faithfully served St. Stanislaus Kostka since 1978 and continues to do so with generosity and apostolic zeal. Our deacon, Miguel Garcia who served from 1995 until just recently when age and health issues compelled him into retirement continues to serve the parish through the *apostolate of prayer*. The deacons along with their wives, Nydia Flores and Raquel Garcia, have been right alongside their husbands in the ministry of service to the people of God and for this we are very grateful.

The School Sisters of Notre Dame governed the parish school and were its primary educators from 1874 until 2008. At the turn of the century from the 19th to the 20th, 70 Sisters taught in the school with an enrollment exceeding 4,000 students. Sister Susan Curtin who was the principal from 1990 until 2008 was the last of the School Sisters of Notre Dame to serve our students. She graces us with her presence from time to time and for this we are grateful. Miss

Marjorie Hill was the school's first lay principal, serving from 2008 until 2016 and Mrs. Michele Alday is currently in her first year as principal of St. Stanislaus Kostka School. Miss Hill and Mrs. Alday are building on the foundation and traditions laid by the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

Already now for thirty years the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence have been serving those in need after they established on the property of St. Stanislaus Kostka a *Soup Kitchen*. Sister Ann Schaffer until her retirement and now Sister Florine Licalvoli, assisted by volunteers from around the Archdiocese of Chicago, graciously serve, Monday thru Friday, nearly 200 people in need and they do so with quite more than a bowl of soup. We are grateful for their ministry and for all who prepare the meals and provide the food and other necessities for those who benefit from their generosity.

I've already written about the Venerable Mother Mary Theresa Dudzik and her Sisters, the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago. We wish as well to thank them along with the Sisters of the Resurrection and the Holy Family Sisters of Nazareth who have assisted the Resurrectionists to varying degrees and in various ministries over the course of these 150 years. Also we have been blessed over the past twenty years as the Missionaries of Charity join us so often for the Sacred Liturgies and special feasts of the Liturgical Year.

In the absence of the sheer numbers of *religious* and *priests* who had been visibly present and serving in and around St. Stanislaus Kostka in the first 100 years of the parish's life, the laity have generously taken lead in fulfilling the ministries of the parish and have maintained and sustained the spiritual and catechetical vibrancy of the parish's life and ministry. I am conscious of so many who serve today, but suffice to say Josefina Contreras, Barb Heyrman, and their catechists must be singled out for a special word of gratitude. Thank you to them and to all of you who serve the parish in a wide variety of ways.

Fr. Anthony Bus C.R., pastor