

# All Saints Cathedral Parish

## 9201 West Higgins Road – Chicago, Illinois 60631

All Saints Cathedral Parish is the oldest parish within the Polish National Catholic Church. For over one hundred years she has represented the faith, hopes and dreams of the Polish-Americans who organized her and the commitment of the many generations of faithful who have been a part of her.

The first organizational meeting of All Saints Parish took place on April 29, 1895. This meeting was called after a period of much confusion and upheaval in St. Hedwig's Roman Catholic Church on Chicago's northwest side. The crisis, which led to the formation of All Saints Parish, stemmed from the pastoral and fiscal ineptness of the founding pastor of St. Hedwig's, the Reverend Joseph Barzynski, C.R., and the clashes of personality between Fr. Barzynski and the affable and capable assistant priest, the Reverend Anthony Stanislaus Kozlowski. The faithful took their grievances concerning Fr. Barzynski to the Most Reverend Patrick Feehan, Archbishop of Chicago, and to the Most Reverend Francesco Satolli, Apostolic Delegate to the United States. Disappointed and disillusioned with the dismissal of their concerns by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, over one thousand parishioners of St. Hedwig's Parish turned to Father Kozlowski, who had been suspended from his priestly functions as a result of the crisis. They approached him to be the pastor of a new parish that they were organizing in which the people would have ownership of church property, the responsibility for the financial management of the parish, and a voice and vote on the policies and decisions which affected their lives. After trying unsuccessfully for over a year to receive a fair hearing from either Archbishop Feehan or Archbishop Satolli, and in response to the request of the people, Fr. Kozlowski agreed to serve as their pastor. The acceptance of the pastorate of the parish led to his eventual excommunication from the Roman Catholic Church on September 17, 1895.

On the Feast of Corpus Christi, June 16, 1895, Fr. Anthony Kozlowski dedicated the new "All Saints Polish Independent Church." The name "All Saints" was suggested by Fr. Kozlowski because obtaining relics of the saints was much easier than obtaining those of the Holy Cross, which was the name originally proposed for the parish. At the dedication of the "Kaplica" ("Chapel") were two other priests, the Reverend Francis Kolaszewski of Cleveland, Ohio and the Reverend Stephen Kaminski of Buffalo, New York, both of whom had established independent churches in their respective cities amid violent disturbances.

Plans began taking shape for a larger church and school complex to be built adjacent to the chapel. In July 1895 seven lots were purchased. The following month the parishioners decided that the land should be acquired for a cemetery. In September 1895 thirty acres of beautiful land was purchased on Higgins Road at the Des Plaines River. On October 13, 1895 the new All Saints Polish Cemetery was blessed by Fr. Kozlowski.

The new church complex was dedicated on November 10, 1895 by the Reverend Anthony Kozlowski with the assistance of all the parishioners. In a mere six months time and with the generosity and sacrifices of the dedicated and committed organizers and parishioners, All Saints Parish had built and dedicated a chapel and then a church, bought land for a cemetery and opened her own parochial school!

In the early spring of 1897 Fr. Kozlowski called a synod of seven independent parishes to adopt a constitution of what he referred to as the "Polish Catholic Church." On May 7, 1897 he was elected bishop. Because of his ties to the Old Catholic Churches of Europe, he journeyed to Bonn, Germany, where a congress of Old Catholics was in progress. The bishops of the Old Catholic Churches studied

the request of the Synod that Fr. Kozlowski should be consecrated to serve as bishop of the Polish Catholic Church. On November 21, 1897 in Bern Switzerland, with Bishop Edward Herzog of the Old Catholic Church (Christ Catholic Church) of Switzerland acting as consecrator, Archbishop Gerardus Gul of Utrecht, Holland and Bishop Theodore Weber of the Old Catholic Church of Germany acting as co-consecrators, the Reverend Anthony Stanislaus Kozlowski was consecrated a bishop in the apostolic succession and thus became the first Old Catholic bishop in North America as "Bishop of the Polish Catholic Church."

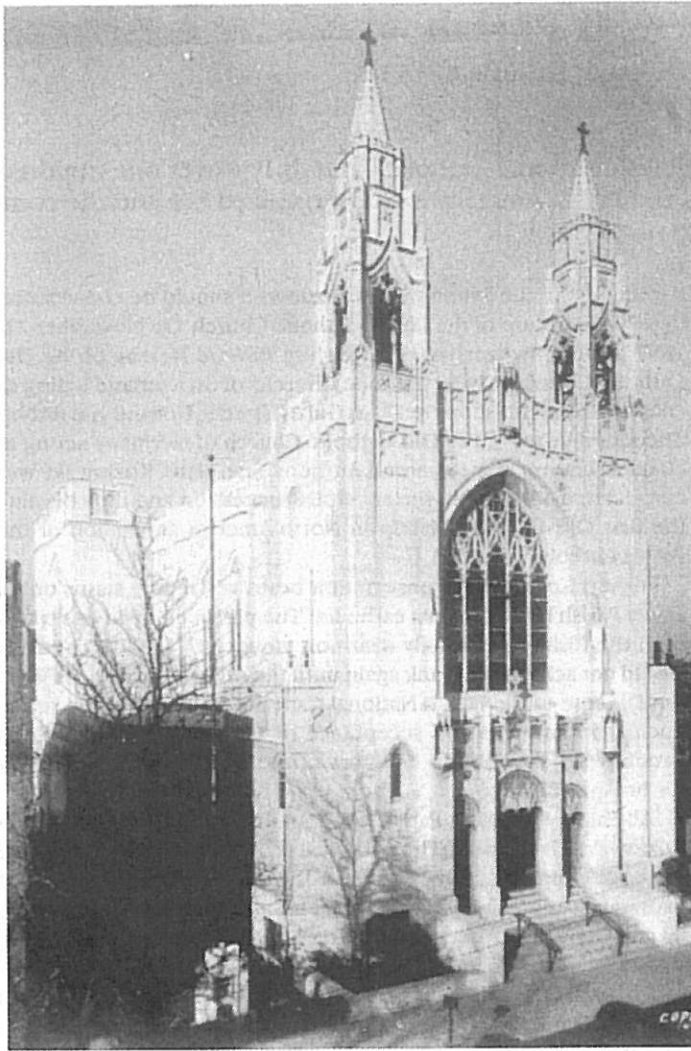
Bishop Kozlowski's consecration bestowed a new status on All Saints Parish by making it a cathedral. The parish enjoyed this status until the bishop's untimely death on January 14, 1907. The parish would not achieve this rank again until the organization of the Western Diocese of the Polish National Catholic Church and the subsequent appointment and acceptance of the Right Reverend Leon Grochowski, first Bishop Ordinary of the Western Diocese, as pastor on April 22, 1926.

All Saints Cathedral Parish continued to prosper under Bishop Kozlowski's leadership. The parochial school continued to educate the young in their faith, the Polish language and culture, and the usual courses of studies. The parish established St. Anthony's Hospital and Orphanage on Frankfort Street, as well as a loan association, which today is known as the "Liberty Bank for Savings."

In December of 1906, because of the failing health of Bishop Kozlowski, the Reverend John Tomaszewski was elected pastor of All Saints Cathedral Parish. After Bishop Kozlowski passed away on January 14, 1907, the Chicago Polish Catholic Church invited Bishop-elect Hodur of Scranton to Bishop Kozlowski's funeral. At a meeting held in New York on August 7, 1907, the Chicago group agreed to accept Fr. Hodur as their bishop-elect. That same year Bishop-elect Hodur traveled to Utrecht, Holland where on September 29, 1907 he was consecrated a bishop in the Old Catholic Cathedral of St. Gertrude by Archbishop Gerardus Gul, assisted by Bishop James J. Van Theil of Harlem and Bishop Nicholas B. Spit of Deventer as co-consecrators. At a parish meeting on March 24, 1909, All Saints Parish formally affiliated with the Polish National Catholic Church.

In 1895, when the over one thousand parishioners left St. Hedwig Roman Catholic Church and formed All Saints, they brought several organizations with them. The Ladies' Rosary Sodality, the St. Cecilia's Women's Choir and the St. Stanislaus Kostka Young Men's Society became the original organizations of All Saints Parish. The St. Cecilia's Men's Choir was organized in 1898. A great number of parish organizations were formed in the over one hundred year history of the parish. Today the parish is served by the Ladies' Rosary Sodality, the St. Cecilia Choir, the Parent Teacher Organization, the School of Christian Living, All Saints Youth Organization, and Polish National Union of America, Branch #37. It should be noted that it was under Bishop Grochowski's leadership that the School of Christian Living was introduced at All Saints and was later extended to the entire Polish National Catholic Church through the decision of the General Synod in 1954.

At the historic meeting of April 29, 1895 the first parish committee of All Saints parish was elected. Teofil L. Petta was elected as President; Joseph Kowaczek as Vice-President; Peter Bloch as Re-



*The "White" Cathedral*

Recording Secretary; John Polmann as Financial Secretary; Jacob Dziejor as Treasurer; Stanley Janicki as Marshal; and John Betker, Julius Gordon, Isidor Stroch, Joseph Kostuch, Ignacy Wisniewski and Frank Piszczek as Trustees. Today's All Saints parish committee members are: Elmer Skore, Chairman; Richard Stark Vice-Chairman; Mary Porzak, Recording Secretary; Cleric David Rowinski, Financial Secretary; Roger Heath, Assistant Financial Secretary; Theresa Heath, Treasurer; Robert Maycan, Phillip Smolka, Lorraine Kay (Social Committee), Richard Urban (Audit), Gerald Maycan (Maintenance), and Thomas Porzak as Directors.

Seventy-five clergy have served All Saints Cathedral Parish in her more than one hundred year history. Those who served the parish as pastors have been: the Reverends Anthony Kozlowski (later Bishop) 1895-1907; Jan Tomaszewski 1907-1909; Maksymilian Lawnicki 1909-1911; Joseph Plaga 1911-1919; Francis Mirek 1919-1926; Rt. Rev. Leon Grochowski 1926-1932; Stanley Cybulski 1932-1936; Walter Slowakiewicz (later Bishop) 1936-1951; Joseph Jaworski 1952-1954; and Stanley Gogul 1954-1955. Beginning in 1955 all the bishops of the Western Diocese have served as pastors of All Saints Cathedral Parish: the Right Reverend Joseph Kardas 1955-1958; the Right Reverend Francis C. Rowinski (Fourth Prime Bishop of the Polish National Catholic Church) 1958-1978; the Right Reverend Joseph C. Zawistowski 1978-1993. On November 4, 1993, the Right Reverend Robert M. Nemkovich was assigned and accepted as pastor of All Saints Cathedral parish and serves in that capacity until today. (It should be noted that Bishop Grochowski [who would later become the second Prime Bishop of the Polish National Catholic

Church] continued to reside at All Saints Cathedral from 1932 until he left for Scranton in 1955).

In 1926, because of the great increase of the number of parishioners due in large part to the charismatic leadership of Bishop Grochowski, it became necessary to plan to build a larger and more adequate cathedral. On October 12, 1926 a building committee was elected which, together with the parish committee, worked energetically planing the new house of worship. After several years of planning, fundraising, reviewing and approving architectural drawings, ground was broken in March of 1930 and on May 1, 1930 the foundation for the new All Saints Cathedral was poured. On June 29, 1930 Prime Bishop Francis Hodur, assisted by Bishop Leon Grochowski, Bishop John Jasinski and other clergy of the Church, in the presence of many of the faithful from Chicago and from other areas, blessed the cornerstone of the new All Saints Cathedral. On April 26, 1931 the Right Reverend Leon Grochowski, assisted by the Right Reverend John Jasinski, Bishop of the Buffalo-Pittsburgh Diocese, the Right Reverend Francis Bonczak of Milwaukee, numerous priests and with over two thousand faithful in attendance, opened and temporarily blessed the new All Saints Cathedral. On May 24, 1931 the solemn consecration of the new main altar took place, and on June 14, 1931 the solemn blessing and dedication of the new cathedral took place.

Bishop Joseph Kardas succeeded Bishop Grochowski as Bishop Ordinary of the Western Diocese and Pastor of All Saints Cathedral Parish. From the time of his appointment and acceptance as pastor on February 8, 1955 he worked tirelessly for the good of all the parishioners and the welfare of the Western Diocese and that of the entire Polish National Catholic Church. In November 1957, under the leadership and guidance of Bishop Kardas, the parishioners initiated a building fund drive to pay for necessary repairs on the church property, the cathedral itself, the auditorium and rectory. The bishop did not survive to see these projects completed. On July 8, 1958 Bishop Kardas died of pneumonia contracted after being hospitalized for injuries suffered in an automobile accident. On July 12, 1958 he was laid to rest in All Saints Cathedral Parish Cemetery next to Bishop Anthony Kozlowski.

During the pastorate of the Right Reverend Francis C. Rowinski, after years of discussing the need for All Saints Cathedral to build a church on the far northwest side of Chicago to accommodate the many faithful who had moved to the suburbs, it was decided to build a chapel on the cemetery property on West Higgins Road. A building committee was elected and plans were developed. Bishop Rowinski officiated at the groundbreaking ceremony on May 2, 1965; then on August 8, 1965 he officiated at the blessing of the cornerstone. On May 22, 1966 All Saints Memorial Chapel was dedicated to the Glory of God and in grateful tribute to the living and dead of the Polish National Catholic Church. In addition to the Sunday Masses at the cathedral in the city, Mass was celebrated each Sunday at the chapel.

The property bought on West Higgins Road back in 1895 had been developed into the parish's cemetery and now was home to the Chapel. Another facet of the property was the large area for picnics referred to as "The Grove" and a recreational building called "The Pavillion", which provides the parish and other groups with ample space for picnics, youth retreats, seminars, brunches and other functions of both a religious and social nature.

The faithful of All Saints Cathedral had endured many difficulties throughout the years. Among the most pressing problems were those with the structure of the Cathedral itself. For many years, almost continuously, very large maintenance and repairs bills were incurred. The cathedral also began to experience a decrease in attendance as more and more parishioners relocated to the far northwest side of Chicago and to the suburbs. In 1991 a special parish meeting was held to present the results of an engineering study done on the

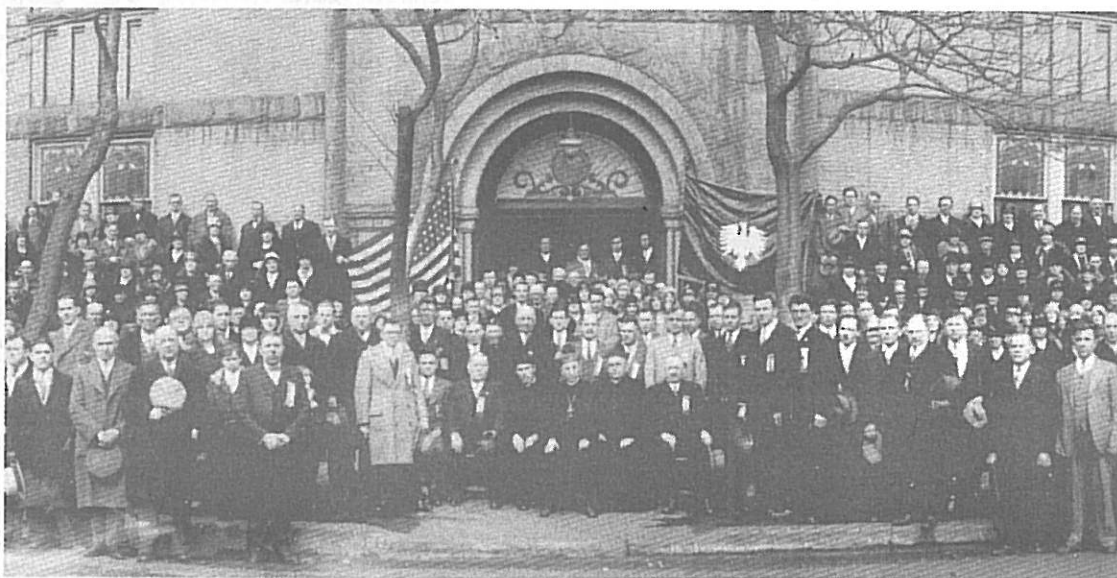


deteriorating building. The parishioners had established a special committee to deal with the various options presented, of repairing the cathedral, relocating or consolidating to the Chapel. The special committee had voted to recommend consolidating to the Chapel. This recommendation was very controversial among some parishioners and very painful for all to consider. Another special meeting was held to vote on the recommendation. The majority voted for consolidating to the Chapel.

After the decision was reached, the parish needed to locate suitable housing for the bishop/pastor and family, plus for an assistant priest and family. The new rectory, located in Park Ridge, Illinois, approximately three miles from the relocated Cathedral, was purchased.

The old Cathedral was sold to the Covenant Presbyterian Church on December 16, 1993. The last Holy Mass celebrated at All Saints Cathedral took place at 4:00 P.M. on October 10, 1993. The Right Reverend Joseph C. Zawistowski was the celebrant, assisted by the Very Reverends Martin H. Wachna and Edward G. Meus, and the Reverend Charles Zawistowski, and with the participation of many parishioners and friends. On October 17, 1993 the parishioners of All Saints Cathedral Parish again gathered in one location to worship, and a new chapter of history began for the cathedral parish of the Western Diocese.

On May 21, 1995 All Saints Cathedral Parish celebrated its One Hundredth Anniversary with a Mass of Praise and Thanksgiving followed by a banquet, both held at the Marriott O'Hare Hotel several



*The first Cathedral, later known as the "Forum"*

blocks from the cathedral. Because many parishioners and guest would be attending, it was necessary to have the celebration in a facility large enough to accommodate each special event. Over five hundred people, clergy and faithful and friends, celebrated the joyous and historic moment together.

In the first one hundred years All Saints Cathedral Parish had experience 6,828 Baptisms; 2,174 Weddings; and 4,878 Funerals. She had given five of her sons as priest of the Polish National Catholic Church: the Reverend Joseph Blyn, ordained May 17, 1939; the Reverend Thomas Wosikowski, ordained June 16, 1955; the Very Reverend Martin H. Wachna, ordained March 12, 1956; the Reverend Francis C. Rowinski Jr., ordained January 11, 1978; and the Reverend Charles Zawistowski, ordained August 31, 1989. Several of her pastors and assistant priests were called by Christ through His Church to serve as Bishops: the Most Reverend Leon Grochowski, (who served briefly as assistant priest in 1910); the Right Reverend Walter Slowakiewicz;

the Most Reverend Francis C. Rowinski; the Right Reverend Joseph C. Zawistowski; and the Right Reverend Joseph P. Tomczyk.

The Right Reverend Robert M. Nemkovich, pastor of All Saints Cathedral Parish, shares these thoughts: "The parish has changed from a neighborhood parish to a 'commuter parish' and the life and activities have had to change as well. I foresee the building of a new complex at our 9201 West Higgins Road location and a gradual increase of the membership. The parish has begun to open its doors and hearts to those who live in the Chicagoland area and who would like to be a part of All Saints Cathedral Parish." "With truth, work and struggle, we shall succeed!"

*"Kapllica" - The original parish church*

