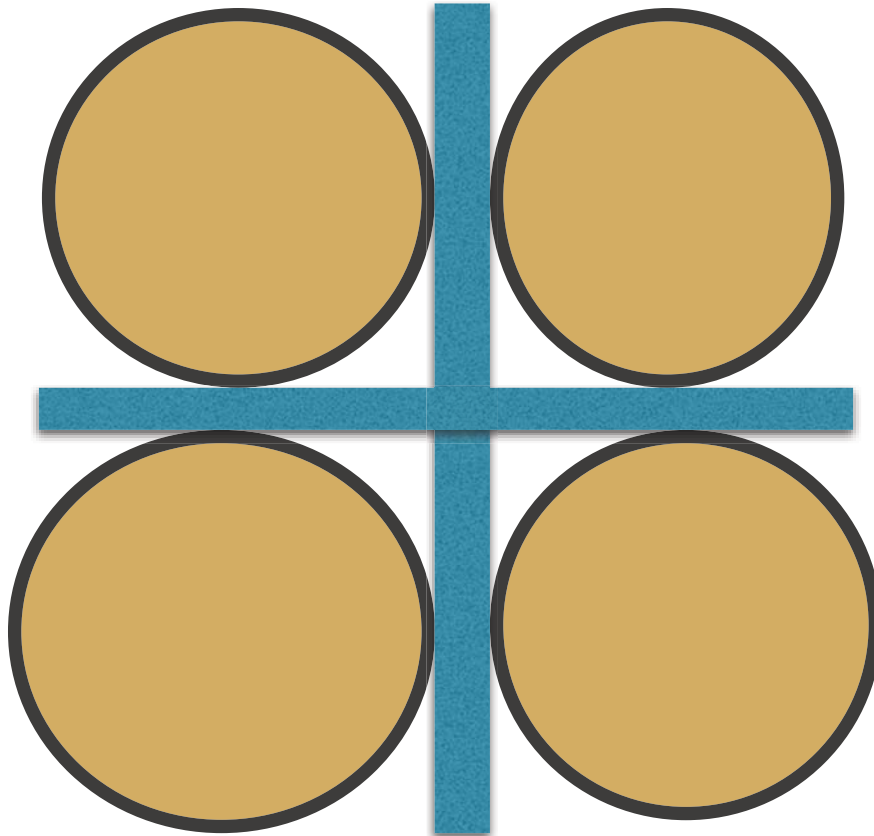


# Blessed Sacrament



## Parish History 2016



For St. Angelo Guiseppe Roncalli

“We are the living local church...who worship together, joy and sorrows, provide comfort and support in times of tragedy, take part in our programs of Christian education, formation and service. True, we share this life in different ways and participate in these activities in varying degrees. But we are all - whether we are very active or silent and almost anonymous - a part of the warmth and friendliness that characterizes Blessed Sacrament.”

—————Father Hilarion Cann, Pastor, 1979

“...[Blessed Sacrament] is the young; the old; the married; the single; the widowed and divorced. All different yet bonded together by a common union of life based on the Gospel, a belief in Jesus Christ as Lord of All and enlivened by God’s Spirit to go forth and truly make a difference.”

————— Father Jody DeBias, Pastor, 1983

“My vision for our parish is a community that experiences, celebrates and radiates the powerful love and loving power of God. As we come to know one another better, we can recognize both the abundance of gifts that God has given to each of us and the many needs that call out to us for help. I believe that this [history] will be a great help in carrying out our parish mission to be a Christ-centered community committed to worship the Father; committed to respond to the Spirit’s gifts; committed to loving service to all God’s people.”

—————Father John Finnell, Pastor, 2013

## Introduction

In 1907, after the Kanawha Land Company acquired land and gave it the name of South Charleston, company officials auctioned industrial sites near the Mound area and along the Kanawha River to attract businesses who would bring people to work and settle in this area.

The land company sold the first site to Banner Window Glass Company, which transferred roughly 40 Belgian and French families, many Catholic, from Shirley, Indiana, because low-cost natural gas had played out there and the land company had made the most attractive offer among several competing locations in West Virginia.

Thus began a Catholic worker presence in the town who built homes there and worshipped at St. Anthony Church to the east and across the river in Charleston, a significant traveling distance for the time.

Other businesses located on these industrial sites, principally Union Carbide, as it was known later on, Westvaco (FMC later) and the Naval Ordnance Plant. Banner Glass closed and was replaced by newer technology of other local companies.

In the years prior to World War II, these companies expanded to prepare for the coming war. A significant portion of these new workers were Catholic, all worshipping at St. Anthony and Sacred Heart churches.

This history covers the first 75 years of Blessed Sacrament Church from 1941 to 2016.

After the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II), we addressed priests less formally in parish documents like this history. After the first full title and name, we subsequently write Father O'Reilly, Griffin, McDonald and Cann. After Vatican II: Fathers Jody, Leon, Jim, and John. Orally and after Vatican II, Father Cann preferred Larry; the others Jody, Leon, Father Jim, and Father John.