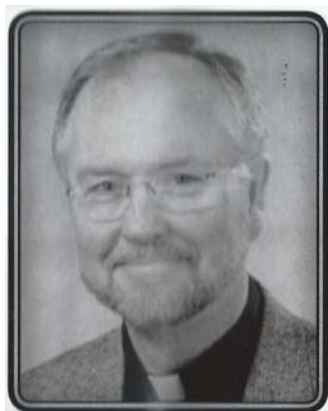


## 2006-2008: The Rev. James E. O'Connor



Father Jim O'Connor shared his exceptional vocal and instrumental gifts during the celebration of the Eucharist and other liturgical services. Using his artistic abilities, he personally fashioned environmental enhancements for the worship space. As a recognized thespian, Father Jim performed in a number of plays in Kanawha and Fayette counties. During his time of service, some renovations were made to the rectory, including the kitchen and bathrooms. An office for the pastor was created near the administrative office providing appropriate space for individual counseling and other pastoral matters. Father Jim O'Connor served as pastor from 2006-2008.

### Father Jim's Musical Gifts

Father Jim transferred from St. Mary, Queen of Heaven in Madison, WV, to Blessed Sacrament in 2006. Father Jim enjoyed giving missions and sometimes traveled around the country to give a mission concert. He favored a charismatic style of music and worship. He enjoyed singing and playing the piano. He was known as "the Singing Priest".

### Renovations and Additions

Renovations began in Sept. 2006 to replace the wood ceiling in the Worship Space with acoustical tile, glass doors placed at the entrance to the chapel and a window was installed in the chapel's outside wall.

At the end of Father Leon's pastorate, some parishioners expressed an interest in a columbarium (niches for cremated remains). A committee interviewed various consultants and selected Mr. Wayne Johnson (Barlow-Bonsall). Father Leon selected the memorial garden as the ideal location providing peace, security and convenience. Matthew Bronze installed the Columbarium at the west interior wall in Nov. 2006.

There are 64 niches, each accommodating two urns. Niches remain available and the Columbarium can be expanded.

The garden crucifix originally hung in the interim church located in the school gym from 1962-1980. The statue of Mary was purchased in memory of Father O'Reilly after his death, stood by the convent, was refinished and placed in the meditation garden. A marble bench, donated by the Providenti family in memory of their mother, Gennette, provides peaceful rest during a visit.

In Dec. 2006, Tony and Joyce Ciliberti donated a stained glass window to replace the plain one located above the Baptismal Font.

An outside changeable church sign was placed at the 4th avenue corner in June 2007, to announce events. The wall behind the sign was extended and church name inset to identify our location.

Father Jim needed a private office, convenient to the staff, which was carved out, in Aug. 2007, from the nearest school room. It provided him with an appropriate private counseling setting and other personal matters done in the rectory.

## Events

In August, 2006, the parish sponsored and built a second Habitat for Humanity home, at Jubilee Heights (Spring Hill), Jubilee Heights was diocesan land formerly considered for a second Catholic high school during Father Griffin's time.

Deacon John Hanna became a paid pastoral associate. The parish held a dinner on May 26, 2007 to celebrate and honor Father Jim's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination.

Father Jim left the parish on Sept. 28, 2008. He was Later assigned to the parishes in Grafton and Philippi, WV.