

# 1923-2023 100 Years of Worship

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF OUR LADY OF MERCY PARISH

Rev. Anthony Nickel arrived in Carrollton from Holy Cross Church in Columbus, Ohio on Thursday December 13 1923. The author of Rev. Nickel's diamond jubilee booklet described his arrival as follows: "He arrived in Carrollton, a little town of about 2,500 inhabitants, with the streets wide, modern homes, two potteries, one tire plant, one aluminum factory, two coal mines and one brick yard." Rev. Nickel was sent to Carrollton to establish a new Catholic parish on an abandoned 84-acre dairy farm, intersecting Ohio State Route 39 and 43, which had been purchased from Robert M. and Jennie Bothwell by the Knights of St. John in Steubenville. The congregation consisted of six families and Mass was celebrated in an abandoned farmhouse on the property.

"Mass was celebrated in two rooms of the house. The Bishop insisted that a church be erected immediately, and the parishioners wanted to have a nice church; since brick was being made Carrollton, excavations for the new church began in May. The Amsterdam mines were not working, so all labor came from that parish, with Rev. Nickel as the contractor of the building of the church..." The cornerstone for the new church was laid on a Sunday in July, 1924 by Mr. Stevens and Mr. McCarrens, laymen of the Carrollton Parish. Over 2,000 people were on hand for the ceremony, which was presided over by Rev. Joseph Weigand of Steubenville, Ohio.

The new church was dedicated on November 16, 1924, by Bishop Hartley of Columbus. Pews for the new church had been purchased from a Protestant church in Akron for \$200.00 and the total cost of the church was \$10,500.00, with a seating capacity of 300.

The present rectory was constructed by Rev. Paul Metzger and the debt on the building was paid of by Msgr. Edward Gilbert. Msgr. Gilbert also added new windows to the church. The church, upstairs and downstairs, and the rectory were remodeled and redecorated while Rev. Dale Tornes was Pastor. Ground was broken for a new Parish Hall on June 19, 1988, and the new hall was dedicated by Bishop Albert Ottenweller on May 20, 1989. The present rectory was again remodeled and redecorated with Rev Tom Marut as pastor and major repairs were made to the windows in the church and its front entry steps.

As Rev. Anthony Batt took over as pastor in 2010, plans had begun for the construction of a new church for Our Lady of Mercy Church. A final vigil Mass was said in the old church on September 18, 2017, and the final Sunday Mass was celebrated on September 17, 2017. With hearts full of faith, memories, and tears, we sadly closed the door, and joyfully opened another.

On Sunday, September 24, 2017, the feast day of Our Lady of Mercy, the new church was dedicated. Reverend Jonas Shell came to the church on July 1, 2019, as Parochial Administrator and took over as Pastor on February 15, 2020.