



HISTORY OF ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH

The year 1776 is an easy one to remember because it marks the birth of our nation. It is also the year that the parish of St. Patrick's can officially trace its records. This was the first Catholic Church in the area and the church building has always been at the present location with various changes. The first permanent church was erected in 1810.

The first permanent rector of the Church was Father Leonitus Huber, S.J. (1819). During the pastorship of Father Patrick Dwen (1824-1833), an addition was made to the Church in 1833. The parish was periodically without a pastor, until 1846 when Father Michael Martin assumed charge. In 1851, the property adjoining on the north side was purchased. During the stay of Father Martin, the first parochial school in York was opened. In 1870, Father Thomas McGovern was appointed as pastor and later became Bishop of Harrisburg. He was responsible for an addition being made to the priests' residence. Father Charles Kenny, during his tenure as pastor (1875-1880), arranged for the Sisters of Charity of Mount St. Vincent to teach in our school.

After Father John Shanahan became pastor (1882), he purchased over six acres of land along the Baltimore road, south of the city, for a cemetery. In 1885, Father James O'Reilly became rector and built a school building on the rear of the Church property, which is still being used as part of the present school. In 1890, the pastorate was assumed by Father Charles Galligan. During his stay, work on the present Church building was begun. The cost of this edifice was \$40,000.00, a low cost even at that time. The cornerstone was laid by Bishop McGovern in October of 1895. The Church was completed during the rectorship of Father W. J. Hooman. It was dedicated on September 11, 1898.

Father James McGrath (1912-1925) was responsible for the erection of the present rectory. He also purchased property on Beaver Street for a convent. In August of 1934, the Sisters of St. Vincent were recalled by their Superior. At the request of Father George Brown (1925-1934) this vacancy was filled in the same month by the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary; and they are still serving in the parish school.

Early in his pastorate, Father Thomas McGough (1947-1966) redecorated the church and excavated it for construction of a cafeteria. He purchased property on both sides of the church for play and parking facilities. The school building was also renovated and enlarged. In 1966, upon the appointment of Msgr. McGough to the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at Conewago (Conewago Chapel), Father Thomas Simpson took charge of the parish. In November of 1967, Father George Koychick assumed the pastorate and continued in this position until June 1981. In 1980, Father Koychick was responsible for erecting a spacious parish hall on the northeast corner of the parish grounds.

Msgr. Thomas Brenner is the current pastor. His main objectives are to foster a vibrant Christian community among the parishioners and to afford the opportunity for spiritual growth.