

~ Celebrating 75 years ~

IMMACULATE  CONCEPTION  
Catholic School



ALL CLASS  
REUNION

March 21, 2015





*Make it our practice to store up Heavenly Treasures...  
...Remember, where your treasure is, there your heart is also.  
—Matthew 6:20-21*

**Dear Alumni, Parents of Alumni and Staff,**

*Welcome back to ICS!*

It is my honor to serve as principal of Immaculate Conception School, and be a part of the dedicated volunteers and staff that are hosting this All Class 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion! The parish of Immaculate Conception broke ground for this school in Spring of 1939, and opened its doors to welcome students in September of 1939. The dream for this parish to create a school that emphasizes the Catholic Faith, strong academics and a commitment to service continues to be our reality today, 75 years later.

Please enjoy walking the hallowed halls and sharing memories. You will find that ICS continues to be a vibrant and faith-filled school.

We have been blessed with your presence here today and your support as we continue to move forward with God in charge and Mary as our guide.

Blessings,

Jane Bona, Principal

## **STEERING COMMITTEE**

*Chairperson*

Jami Bridgeman

Parent of Alumni, Classes of 2001, 2003, 2009

Roger Bona-Class of 1964

Mike Bridgeman-

Parent of Alumni, Classes of 2001, 2003, 2009

Jane Bona-Principal

Daniele Chartraw-Class of 1992

Bridget Hinrichs-Class of 1979

Steve Mason-Class of 1960

Chris DeLaria-Class of 1962



## **DECORATING**

Barb Hartwick

Bridget Hinrichs



## **BEAUTIFICATION**

Jane & Roger Bona

Jami & Mike Bridgeman

Barb & Joe Hartwick

Steve Mason

Jim Totzke

Anne Jurek

Mike Hattenberger

## **ALUMNI DATABASE**

Daniele Chartraw

Diane Tieden

Jan Golden

Barb Hartwick

Dores Mancino



## **INFORMATION GATHERING:**

Buzz Netkow



## **MARKETING**

Sue Ashmore

Cathleen Cary

Many thanks to all of the volunteers that have helped to prepare for the reunion and assist us today!



*In celebration of the school's 75th Anniversary, the archives have been dusted off and we are finding some great photos and stories to share about our church and school! These historical facts and stories come from a collection of publications and a paper written by a former parishioner.*

## **DID YOU KNOW...**

Manomin County was organized on May 23, 1857. In 1870 the State Legislature merged Manomin County into Anoka County in which Columbia Heights is presently located. In July of 1921 Columbia Heights became a city fourth-class. The name "Columbia Heights" was chosen in a contest and the winner won \$50.00. "Columbia Heights" was selected because it is literally located "on the heights" and the topography resembled that of a town in New York named Columbia Heights. Columbia Heights' highest point is 1,075 feet, and is the highest point in the three adjoining counties of Hennepin, Ramsey and Anoka.



Before 1923 Columbia Heights was under St. Clements Parish in Northeast Minneapolis with Father Fitzgerald. Columbia Heights Catholic residents would have to take a streetcar to Mass, which was late on many occasions.



In the Spring of 1918, Mrs. George (Odilla) Warren and Mrs. Josephine Winchester began the foundation of what was to be the Immaculate Conception Church. Mrs. Warren began teaching Sunday school to her own children and several other children on the West Side Of Columbia Heights. Mrs. Winchester did the same on the East Side of town. When the children were ready to receive First Communion they would take the streetcar to St. Clement in Northeast Minneapolis.

Four men, Anthony Netkow, James McKenna, Fred Lucier, and Barney O'Toole went to see Archbishop Dowling about starting a church in 1918. Since there were only 60 Catholic families in Columbia Heights, the Archbishop felt there were not enough to begin a church. In 1920 two organizations were founded: The ladies sewing society with Mrs. Ben Hawkins as president; and the Catholic League of Columbia Heights. Working together these organizations hosted bazaars, dinners, and other events to raise money so they could approach the Archbishop again with a request for a parish. By 1923 they had netted \$1,700.00 with their events.



Father George Rolwes arrived in Columbia Heights with orders from the Most Reverend Austin Dowling D.D., Archbishop of St Paul, to organize a church. The Parish Of Immaculate Conception of Columbia Heights was established in the month of November 1923.



The Church of the Immaculate Conception was the first Roman Catholic congregation in Columbia Heights. The first Mass was celebrated on December 8th, 1924. which is the feast of The Immaculate Conception.



Father Rolwes took up residence in the Joseph DeMarsh home on Madison Ave, where the first Mass was said, and stayed until June of 1924 when he bought a home on Quincy Street. The first public service was held on December 8, 1923, in the unused dance hall at the Old Forrest Park amusement grounds on 40th Avenue and 7th Street, thanks to an offer by its owner, Mr Kahm (who was an Orthodox Jew and never asked for any rental fee). They used this location for six months. Then in April the church had to move. From the first part of June 1924 until the last Sunday in August Mass was held in the old Motion Picture Theatre, also on the park grounds.

The hall which they used for Mass was put together with an altar from the basement of St. Stephen's Church, the pews were bought for a pittance from the old St. Lawrence Church of S.E. Minneapolis. A chalice was donated by Monsignor Byrne of St. Luke's Church of St. Paul. A complete set of vestments was given by Father Allard of St. Lawrence Church. From the church of the Assumption in St. Paul, came an old vestment case, also vestments and candlesticks. The Sisters of St Joseph's Hospital presented Father Rolwes with a substantial supply of linens. Marie E. Keefe of St. Paul supplied a ciborium, the first set of candelabra and other supplies. Miss Devaney of St. Paul contributed a good sum of money toward an altar fund and Miss Mary Chute of Minneapolis provided the first set of altar cloths.



In 1924 Father Rolwes set up a building committee to find land for a new church, on which the present Church now stands. This was known as Block 59 Columbia Heights Anex Minneapolis, Anoka County, Minnesota. The present church, rectory, convent, and school occupy this original purchase of land. The total price was \$2,800. The city donated an alley that separated the lots facing Quincy and Jackson. The 14 lots were paid for by Father Rolwes through fundraising events.



#### *The Firsts-*

- ◆ The first Baptisms took place on December 23, 1923 when Richard Smith, Walter Wodziak, and Catherine Lubansky were baptized.
- ◆ The first Confirmation class was presented to Archbishop Dowling on November 29, 1925.
- ◆ Mary Stibbi's funeral Mass on December 12, 1925 was the first.
- ◆ On December 26, 1925 the marriage of Agnes Lucien and Harold DeLaria was the first marriage of the Catholic Parish.



Building for the church began early in the Summer of 1924. Plans were drawn by Jacob Gaul of Chicago and the contract was awarded to the firm Arrell & Suhring Company. On May 4th the soil was blessed and on July 6, 1924 the cornerstone of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Columbia Heights was laid and blessed by the Right Reverend Monsignor James M. Cleary, Pastor of Incarnation Parish, Minneapolis. The last Sunday in August the sub-auditorium was in sufficient readiness for Divine Services.



On the fourth Sunday of November, 1924 the congregation assisted at the first High Mass in the new Church and on Sunday, December 7, (anticipating the first anniversary by a day) the new church was solemnly blessed by His Excellency, Archbishop Dowling.



The building was completed, at a cost of \$41,000, and on December 8, 1924, it was dedicated by Archbishop Austin Dowling. The upper hall, with a seating capacity of 400, was used for church services, and the basement for Sunday school and society meetings. The building was planned to allow for the addition of a school. The original church building is now the school auditorium and lunch-room. The stage of the auditorium is where the altar was located.

By 1938, Immaculate Conception Parish grew to approximately 450 families. Archbishop Murray asked Father Rolwes to build a school. Because Father Rolwes felt the condition of his health did not warrant such an undertaking, Archbishop Murray transferred him and appointed Reverend J.F. Lapinski on January 9, 1938. Father Lapinski broke ground for the school May 25, 1939. The corner stone was laid on August 14th of that same year.



When the building was complete that fall, school opened with 224 students occupying six of the nine classrooms. Seven Sisters of the Order of St. Francis, one of whom was a housekeeper, staffed the school and lived in three rooms on the south end of the school. The first principal was Sister M. Loretto Stalock.



In 1948, construction began on a convent for the Sisters and a rectory for the priests. Both were blessed on the same day, December 12, 1948, which came during the celebration of the parish's 25th Anniversary. In 1949, the school had reached its capacity with slightly over 600 children in attendance in 12 classrooms. Kindergarten was dropped in 1950, but by 1953 the school was overflowing with 659 students. In the fall of 1953, building of the addition was underway. At the cost of \$286,000 the school was finished by May 1, 1954. The new wing added eight classrooms, a library, an office and lavatory facilities on every floor.



Reverend J.F. Lapinski was born August 26, 1900 and died on February 3, 1972. During his lifetime he made a major contribution to The Church of Immaculate Conception and is considered the builder of the church. Before being named pastor at Immaculate Conception, he was assistant pastor at St. Mark's parish in St. Paul and at St. Helena and Holy Cross parishes in Minneapolis. Monsignor Lapinski was a Northeast Minneapolis native. He attended Holy Cross grade school and he graduated from high school and St. Thomas College, St. Paul. After college he went to the St. Paul Seminary and was ordained to the priesthood on June 10, 1928.

Father Lapinski was honored for his 25 years of service at Immaculate Conception Church in January of 1963. Pope John XXII, after evaluation, named Father Lapinski, Right Reverend Monsignor Joseph F. Lapinski in April of 1963.



Sister M. Loretto Stalock was born September 21, 1903 and died September 12, 1990. Her legal name was Hedwig Stalock – born in St. Casimir parish in Wells, Minnesota to Peter and Christine Gokla of Warsaw, Poland. Sister M. Loretta served at All Saints School, Holy Cross School and St. Hedwig School in Minneapolis before being a teacher (1939-1941) and then principal at Immaculate Conception School. She was the principal four different times, 1941-43, 1945-51, 1953-58 and 1960-66!



In the Spring of 1955, with as many as eight families entering Immaculate Conception Church per week, Father Lapinski asked Archbishop Murray permission to build a new church. On September 12, 1955, the campaign to raise money began with a goal of \$250,000. By the fall of 1957 it became evident that the goal would soon be reached and bids were taken on the construction of the new church. The lowest bid was from Rauenhorst Construction Company, \$429,995. Father Lapinski broke ground on November 11, 1957. The new church was dedicated on December 8, 1958.



Immaculate Conception Church is built of Mankato stone and has a seating capacity of 900. The lower church (now Maranatha-Fellowship Hall) also seats 900 and can celebrate Mass whenever necessary. The approximate cost of the structure was \$660,000. Features of the exterior include a seventy-five foot bell tower, a hexagonal, sky-lighted baptistry (now the Lending Library) and a large statue of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception over the entrance which is twelve feet tall and weighs five tons. Features of the

interior include a main altar of marble which is ten feet long, three and one half feet wide and weighs about four tons. Above the altar is a huge crucifix that is fifteen feet in length and seven feet in width. The corpus on the cross is human size. On each side of the church there is a shrine, one dedicated to the Sacred Heart and one to St. Francis.



The main altar of our church is ten feet long and three and one half feet wide. The altar top is made of Botticino marble from Italy. The four columns supporting the altar top are made from Red Alberato marble, also from Italy. The altar top, called the mensa, weighs two tons (4,000 lbs.). The weight of the altar top and four columns together is approximately four tons. Situated and imbedded in the center of the altar top are fragments of bones, called relics, of two martyrs: Saint Dignus and Saint Feliccisimus.



The shrine, dedicated to the United States of America under the protection of the Blessed Virgin, was blessed by Bishop James P. Shannon on June 13, 1965. Designed by Angelo Gherandi, made and erected by Dapra Studios in liaison with the E.M. Lohmann Company. It is made of Carrara marble with the background in solid slabs of Nabresina Carrara marble, the statue and pedestal hand carved from Biancoduro Carrara marble. The twelve stars and monogram are inlaid Venetian gold mosaic. The cross is bronze. The shrine stands 15 feet above ground and the statue is a five foot six inch high, life-size statue. The twelve stars surrounding the figure of the Blessed Virgin refer to the famous verse in the Apocalypse, "And a great sign appeared in Heaven; a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."



The year 1976 saw the ground breaking for another addition to the building. This new section included a gym facility, faith formation offices and the parish offices. On April 24, 1977 this parish center

was dedicated in memory of Monsignor Joseph Lapinski. The approximate cost was \$800,000. To cover this cost the parish received a gift of \$250,000 from Jim and Rose Totino, \$315,000 from parish savings and \$400,000 from the parish fund. In that same year the structure that was the old church, then a gym, was renovated to become the present school auditorium. The lunchroom also received a new look that year.



The first meeting of the IC Mother's Club met in the church auditorium on Monday, October 27, 1952. 94 members were present.



- On March 16, 1953 the decision was made to have uniforms for students. Navy blue, straight line with white blouses purchased from Fredin Department Store. For those who wanted to make their own, Fredin also had the fabric available.
- In September of 1954, Mrs. Malmberg became the first school nurse.
- The hot lunch program began on September 28, 1954
- The peak enrollment in the school was 1,223 in 1961!
- 198\_?: Room 201 became the Mac Lab with Apple 2E computers.
- In 1991 an Extended Day program started, providing care before and after school.
- The school library was transformed in 1998 to create a Technology Center, housing 20-30 computers with internet access.
- Two Smart Boards were purchased in the Spring of 2011. As of Spring, 2015 we have ten! We have added 50 iPads in 2013-14.
- During the summer of 2014, the playground equipment was installed and the fence around it in September of 2014.



# NOTES



## AND CONTACTS





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