

too. "Friends" are welcome to visit their website, [www.communityofstpeter.org](http://www.communityofstpeter.org), to read about their activities, or sign up to receive emails from them by sending your own email to: [contact@communityofstpeter.org](mailto:contact@communityofstpeter.org). St. Peter's is another of the parishes with an appeal pending in Rome.

# Local RC church closings still in news

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Three months have passed since the last time that the *Old Brooklyn News* has published an article about the closings and mergings of parishes in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Cleveland. But that does not mean that nothing has been happening during that extended period of time; it simply means that we've been giving the topic a rest.

November 30th was actually supposed to be the date (in the most recent round of extensions) by which parishes which had appealed their closings to the Vatican were told they would hear of a decision. But if past history is any indication of what's to come, another extension is probably in their futures, and they won't hear a definitive "yes" or "no" for quite a while. And so their hopes and efforts to survive continue...

To more easily convey the volume of closing/merging news for this article, I decided to organize it in alphabetical order according to parishes which I know Old Brooklyn/Brooklyn Centre residents attend or have attended —

## BLESSED SACRAMENT CHURCH

Formerly located at 3381 Fulton Rd., the church and parish buildings are still for sale ([www.ccd-sales.org](http://www.ccd-sales.org)), but many of the c. 1950 stained glass windows from the church have been removed and sold via the Diocese's/Henninger's website ([www.church-inventory.com](http://www.church-inventory.com)). Six large rectangular ones, in fact, are now in place at St. Leo the Great Church in Old Brooklyn, and a large round one is waiting to be installed there. (Read the details in the St. Leo listing later in this article.)

## CORPUS CHRISTI CHURCH

Officially the church and parish buildings on Pearl Rd. between Archmere Ave. and Northcliff Ave. are still for sale, but rumor has it that a deal is in the works. Fr. Doug Brown, the pastor of Mary Queen of Peace (the parish created from the merger of Corpus Christi and Our Lady of Good Counsel), is responsible for managing the Corpus Christi property until it is sold.

Within the last couple of months Fr. Brown had sixteen of the pews from Corpus Christi moved to Mary Queen of Peace. Favorite statues from Corpus Christi, a crucifix and a wall hanging have all also found a new home at Mary Queen of Peace in recent months (in addition to the indoor picture of Our Lady of Czestochowa — by the piano — and the marble outdoor shrine to Our Lady of Czestochowa — in front of the rectory — which we wrote about in earlier articles).

Just because OLGC and Corpus Christi were official merging parishes, though, doesn't mean that all the former Corpus Christi parishioners are now at Mary Queen of Peace. Many are at St. Thomas More, where one of their former deacons is now stationed (and a "son of Corpus Christi parish" is pastor), a number are at St. Bridget of Kildare in Parma Heights, a few are at St. Leo the Great, and others are still trying to decide about a new church home.

## MARY QUEEN OF PEACE CHURCH

The church building at 4423 Pearl Rd. in which MQP is located will always be known as Our Lady of Good Counsel, because that's what it was called when it was consecrated. But MQP is the name of the parish formed from the merger of the former OLGC and Corpus Christi. As mentioned in the preceding listing, some of the pews from Corpus Christi are now in MQP's lower church (chapel) where daily Mass is celebrated. That increases the capacity to about 150.

The Corpus Christi statues mentioned in the preceding paragraph are: the Holy Family — by the baptismal font; St. Therese of Lisieux — in the Marian Lounge; and four smaller statues, including St. Anthony and St. Anne, which have not been placed yet.

The crucifix which was at Corpus Christi when it was a mission church is now hanging in the stairwell between MQP's upper and lower churches. A wall-hanging of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal from Corpus Christi School now hangs inside the front doors of MQP's Parish Center.

The merged parish also has a new music director. His name is David Jaronowski and he lives in Independence. At one point in his musical career, David was the director of music at St. Michael's in Independence, but he has also worked in other parts of the country. One of the musical changes at the former OLGC since it became Mary Queen of Peace is that the organ and choir have been moved back up to the choir loft.

## HISTORIC ST. PETER'S CHURCH/ THE COMMUNITY OF ST. PETER

Before being closed out of their historic church at 1533 E. 17th St. and Superior Ave. due to Diocesan downsizing, this "intentional Eucharistic community" secured an area at the former Baker Electric Company at E. 71st St. and Euclid Ave. They have been celebrating 11 a.m. Sunday liturgies in the converted space since Sunday, August 15th. During that time, in addition to gaining some new members and losing some old ones, the Community has welcomed a couple of children through Baptism, *See Church Closing page 8*



## ST. BARBARA CHURCH

This founded-by-Polish-immigrants church at 1505 Denison Ave. in Brooklyn Centre isn't on either of the aforementioned Diocesan "for sale" websites because it is another of the churches which have an appeal pending in Rome. In the meantime, a number of the parishioners are attending St. John Cantius, the Polish parish in Tremont (whose pastor was administering St. Barbara's before it closed). Others, however, are shopping for a new parish, and still others are so disillusioned by the Diocesan decision to close their financially secure parish that they are not attending Mass anywhere.

## ST. EMERIC CHURCH

This Hungarian parish at 1860 W. 22nd St. (behind the West Side Market's parking lot) also has an appeal pending in Rome. Most Sunday mornings, a remnant of parishioners meets to pray outside the closed church, usually at 9:45 a.m.

St. Emeric's pastor, Fr. Sandor Siklodi, had his priestly faculties in the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland removed by Bishop Richard Lennon after the parish closed June 30th; in early October he accepted a position with the Archdiocese of Chicago at St. Stephen of Hungary Church.

Fr. Siklodi was back in Cleveland for the celebration of St. Emeric Day on Sunday, November 7th. That day Fr. Bob Begin and he celebrated a special Mass in Hungarian at St. Colman's, the church at which Fr. Begin is pastor. But even when Fr. Siklodi is not in town, Fr. Begin has been offering Mass in Hungarian for a group of the St. Emeric folks on the first Sunday of the month.

Although I have not yet been there to see it myself, I have heard from a most reliable source that when Fr. Siklodi was ministering in the Cleveland Diocese, he'd purchased a cemetery plot and gravestone with his name on it in the priests' section at Holy Cross Cemetery. That seems to indicate that even though he is a native of Transylvania, he thought that he'd be spending the rest of his priestly days here.

## ST. CASIMIR CHURCH

The story of this Polish parish at 8223 Sowinski Ave. has many similarities to the story of St. Emeric's — appeal pending in Rome, outdoor Sunday morning — 11:30 a.m. — prayer services every week since the parish closed on November 8th of last year, foreign-speaking pastor, highly committed members of a strong ethnic community.

To mark the first anniversary of their closing, the service on Sunday, November 7th, was more widely publicized and thus attended by more people. Just over a week ago the parish submitted a petition to the Diocese asking to reopen. The petition had been signed by almost 1000 people, including sixteen members of Cleveland City Council.

### ST. LEO THE GREAT CHURCH

The early 1970s style church at 4940 Broadview Rd. was not directly affected by the recent church closings and mergings, but as a result of other closings in the Diocese, it now owns a number of artifacts from churches which had pieces and parts to sell or give away.

At St. Leo pastor Russ Lowe's request, Fr. Doug Brown donated two items from Corpus Christi. The other items were purchased, some as memorials to deceased loved ones. They are:

Four early 1950s oblong windows from Blessed Sacrament Church which are "joyful mysteries" of the rosary — the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple and the Finding of Jesus in the Temple; they have been placed in specially made wooden frames/light boxes which cover the existing colored glass windows from the inside of the church;

Two oblong windows from Blessed Sacrament which are images of popes — St. Peter and Pius XII; they are installed in light boxes on the rear wall of the sanctuary;

Another round window, which will be a more challenging installation; it will be placed on the right front side-wall of the church in a chapel-like area.

Three additional "new" items are also at the right front side of St. Leo's church. The first, a wooden altar from Corpus Christi, is being used in the chapel area where daily Mass is now celebrated (to keep down costs in terms of not having to significantly heat the whole church during the week in winter).

St. Leo's also purchased an altar-like stand which came from St. Christine Church in Euclid, on which the tabernacle from Corpus Christi Church now sits. St. Leo's tabernacle, currently installed in the chapel-area wall — but which was moved there from its original position in the back of the sanctuary — will ultimately be removed.

### ST. MALACHI CHURCH/ THE COMMUNITY OF ST. MALACHI

The Community of St. Peter is not the original "intentional Eucharistic community" in the Diocese of Cleveland. All the way back in 1971, that same concept was brewing in the minds of a group of people who had been worshipping at the 11 a.m. at St. Malachi Church, 2459 Washington Ave. They received Diocesan approval for a provisional, non-territorial parish on an experimental basis in 1975, and permanent parish status in 1980.

But as of November, 2009, the Community of St. Malachi no longer exists, as that's when it was officially closed and subsequently merged with the parish of St. Malachi (founded in 1865).

At the time of Bishop Lennon's decision to close their parish, the Community of St. Malachi, as prescribed in their constitution, voted as to whether or not they would appeal his ruling; the majority opted not to. The majority of the members still attend the 11 a.m. Sunday morning Mass at St. Malachi, but they are no longer governed in the way in which they used to be.

### ST. PROCOP CHURCH

Since the closing of this Bohemian/Czech parish at 3181 W. 41st St. in August 2009, many of the former members have migrated across the Harvard-Denison Bridge to another Bohemian/Czech parish, Our Lady of Lourdes, on W. 55th St. just south of Broadway Ave. St. Procop's music ministry immediately began providing the music for the 4 p.m. Mass on Saturday afternoons, and before long, they were also playing their instruments and singing at the 10 a.m. Sunday morning liturgy, too.

When St. Procop's was in existence, another of its ministries was a community meal which it provided for hungry people in our neighborhood. The Diocese of Cleveland has asked us to publicize that St. Boniface Church, 3545 W. 54th St., north of Denison Ave., and St. Rocco Church, 3205 Fulton Rd., have taken on that ministry. Their parish organizations are sharing the responsibility of putting on a hot dinner on the first Friday of every month in the school hall at St. Boniface.

### ST. THOMAS MORE CHURCH

Like St. Leo's, this parish has survived intact, but the look of its modern interior has changed somewhat due to the addition of statuary from closed churches. The relatively stark interior of the church at 4170 North Amber Dr. has plenty of white space and provided a good backdrop for charming, old-fashioned statues from closed churches. At press-time we

were still waiting to hear the names of all the saints who are now represented there and the parishes from which the statues came; we can still share that information in a future article.

### ST. WENDELIN CHURCH

The Slovak parishioners from the financially-secure parish at 2281 Columbus Rd. also have an appeal pending with the Vatican. Although they have not done so every Sunday since their closing on May 23rd, they, too, have conducted Sunday morning prayer services

outside their shuttered church. And on the evening of Saturday, October 16th, they conducted a special Marian service by candlelight.

Former St. Wendelin's parishioners are planning a Christmas Reunion on Sunday, December 19th. It will be held at Mary Queen of Peace Church, thanks to Fr. Doug Brown's willingness to offer his parish facility for their use. On the agenda are a 2 p.m. Mass followed by a social. Ruth Novak, the former music director at St. Wendelin's, has been organizing the event. Contact her through the MQP office, 216-749-2323, for more information about it.

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Two other parishes which are appealing their closings, but which don't have a particular connection to our neighborhood — St. Patrick's, West Park, 4427 Rocky River Dr. and St. James, 17514 Detroit Ave. — have also organized Sunday morning outdoor prayer services. St. Pat's is at 11:30 a.m. and St. James' is at 12:30 p.m.

Endangered Catholics continues to meet at the West Side Hungarian Evangelical Church, 3245 W. 98th St., on the south side of Denison Ave. Visit their website, [www.endangeredcatholics.webs.com](http://www.endangeredcatholics.webs.com) for details.

Part of Endangered Catholics recent emphasis about building community among Catholics from disenfranchised parishes has been to hold "Solidarity Masses". The most recent was on Sunday, November 18th, at St. Augustine Church in Tremont. Fr. Joseph McNulty celebrated the Mass; Sr. Corita Ambro, CSJ, also spoke toward the end of the liturgy.

Space prevents us from recounting other Catholic church closing information this month, but we will continue sharing information as soon as possible.



Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, 1404 E. 9th St.

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