

A BRIEF HISTORY
of the
HOLY NAME OF JESUS
POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH
Est. 1929

PART ONE

The following information has been taken from past historical archives,
corrected and modified for this format.

THE EARLY YEARS

Sunday, June 23, 1929:

On this date, St. Stanislaus RC Church transferred the Rev. Fr. Father Lekston and appointed the Rev. Fr. Anthony Nowak. On this date, a meeting was held, and it was decided that a demonstration would take place on July 7th, to address grievances that were not resolved with Fr. Nowak.

Sunday, July 7, 1929

It was recorded that "several hundred Polish women, and others totaling approximately 600 parishioners, prevented the Rev. Fr. Anthony Nowak, who was the newly appointed pastor of Saint Stanislaus, from entering the church for Holy Mass for nearly one hour. Police Chief, Edward J. Redmond, called in the State Police under the charge of Lt. Mahoney of the Leeds barracks as well as the Deerfield Fire Department.

1. There were eleven (11) Massachusetts State Police officers who were present, four of them tried to escort Fr. Nowak into the Church. The people gathered prevented his access. The Fire Department then aimed their fire hose on parishioners which lasted for approximately fifteen (15) minutes.
2. The trouble had begun at 8:30 am when Fr. Nowak arrived from Northampton. Many of the women who were present, carried umbrellas with them that day and were left broken following the morning conflict, as a silent reminder of what took place.
3. Fr. Nowak left South Deerfield under police escort. after celebrating the Holy Masses and could not be contacted.

Monday, July 8, 1929

A meeting was held of St. Stanislaus parishioners. A committee was elected to approach Bishop Thomas O'Leary about either returning Fr. Lekston to the parish, or at least replacing Fr. Nowak.

Sunday, July 14, 1929

The Rev. Fr. George Roskwicalski, a Franciscan priest of St. Hyacinth's Seminary in Granby, MA celebrated Sunday Masses at Saint Stanislaus.

Thursday, July 18, 1929

A conference was held between Bishop Thomas O'Leary and a committee of four parishioners from St. Stanislaus, along with Fr. Roskwicalski. It was decided that Fr. Nowak would not return to Saint Stanislaus.

Saturday, July 20, 1929

A meeting was held at the Polish Corporation Hall, and it was decided that if Fr. Lekston was not returned, the group would form an independent parish.

Sunday, July 21, 1929

Fr. Roskwicalski again celebrated Sunday Masses. It was recorded that an official statement was being prepared stating that an independent church would be established if Fr. Lekston was not returned to St. Stanislaus.

Wednesday, July 24, 1929

"No pastor will be acceptable to us but Father Lekston" was the comment made by Mr. Frank Farrick, chairman of the Polish parishioners' committee of St. Stanislaus. It was also stated that the Rev. Fr. John Langow, who Bishop O'Leary had recently appointed, would not be accepted.

Saturday, July 27, 1929

Dissenting parishioners of St. Stanislaus RC Church met with Fr. John Langow, about their desire to have Fr. J. Lekston reinstated as pastor. When this fails, Mr. Frank L. Farrick resigns his position as chairman of the Parish Committee. He was replaced by Mr. Frank Wojtkiejewicz.

Fr. Lekston had served as pastor of St. Stanislaus for approximately 14 years and was transferred to All Saints Parish in Housatonic, MA by Bp. Thomas O'Leary. Fr. Lekston did not want to be transferred and appealed against this transfer to the Apostolic Delegate in Washington, DC.

Fr. Langow was then named pastor of Sacred Heart RC Church in Greenfield, Mass in early July 1929

Fr. Nowak was then named as the replacement for Fr. Langow which caused more dissension. Fr. Langow was then quickly named as pastor of Saint Stanislaus and celebrated his first Sunday Mass on July 28, 1929.

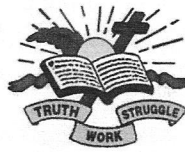
With much turmoil, St. Stanislaus were divided into three loosely defined groups; those supporting Fr. Langow as pastor, those holding out for the return of Fr. Lekston and those supporting the establishment of a Polish National Catholic Church.

Wednesday, July 31, 1929

A meeting of approximately 250-300 persons was held at the Polish Corporation Hall on Elm Street in South Deerfield.

Efforts were made to unseat Frank L. Farrick as chairman of the dissenting group at St. Stanislaus Church. Efforts failed.

Fr. Langow briefly attended this gathering and shortly left without comment along with a group of parishioners who were in cooperation with him. This group announced that they would form a "parish corporation" at St. Stanislaus. Their aim, as stated, was to "restore peace and order" in the parish. They also stated that they would only deal in the "material matters" of the church, and that all "spiritual matters" would be in the hands of the pastor.



A NEW CHURCH IS FORMED

August 1, 1929

A general meeting was held "at a farmhouse" in East Whately to discuss the possibility of establishing a PNC Church in South Deerfield, MA. (Most likely, it was at the home of Frank Farrick), an early organizer of our Church.

August 10, 1929

An evening meeting was held at the Polish Corporation Hall on Elm Street. Plans were further discussed of establishing a PNC Church in South Deerfield, MA. Three members, representing St. Joseph PNCC Parish in Westfield, MA, addressed the assembly.

August 18, 1929

An evening meeting was held with at the Red Men's Hall, on the corner of Elm and Main Street in South Deerfield, MA. At this meeting there were three PNCC priests who addressed all who were gathered. They included: The Rev. Fr. Simon Gusicek of Manchester, CT; Rev. Fr. John Solak of Union City and the Rev. Fr. Joseph Soltysiak of Westfield, MA. Bishop Valentine Gawrychowski was unable to attend due to illness. Approximately 400 people were in attendance. At this meeting, the assembly voted to affiliate with the Polish National Catholic Church, and it was decided to name the new parish "Name of Jesus"

August 20, 1929

An evening meeting was held with the new "Name of Jesus" committee along with Bishop Valentine Gawrychowski of Holy Mother of the Rosary in Chicopee, MA

Saturday, August 24, 1929

The day before the first Mass was to be celebrated, the Rt. Rev. Valentine Gawrychowski, of Chicopee, who was the Eastern Diocesan Bishop of the PNCC, had not yet announced who would celebrate the first Holy Mass. This Mass would be celebrated at 10:30 am in the Red Men's Hall on the corner of Elm and South Main Street.

Sunday, August 25, 1929

The first Mass of the "Name of Jesus" PNC Parish was celebrated by the Rev. John Solak, pastor of the PNC parish in Union City, CT. On this day, that there were approximately 400 people present."

Monday, September 23, 1929

Due to the fact that local landowners would not sell property to this newly organized National Catholic parish, Mr. William Ostrowski acquired the land from Mr. Robert Decker on this date in his own name along with financial assistance from Mr. Frank Grybko.

Saturday, September 28, 1929

Mr. Ostrowski then deeded the property to the parish for \$1.00. Mr. Frank Grybko offered his farm as collateral to obtain a mortgage for the construction of the church.

Monday, December 9, 1929

Three acres of land was purchased from Mrs. Michalina Sakowicz for \$1.00 to serve as a parish cemetery.

Tuesday, January 7, 1930

It was reported that the new church was under construction. The Architect was Mr. Henry J Tessier of Springfield and the Contractor was Mr. Frank Chudy of Three Rivers.

Sunday, May 4, 1930

The first Mass in the new church was celebrated by the Diocesan Bishop, the Rt. Rev.. Valentine Gawrychowski and at this time, a cornerstone was blessed: "Własność ludu Polskiego" (Belonging to the Polish people). The cornerstone was listed to the "Holy Name of Jesus."

Thursday, May 16, 1930

Mortgage obtained.

Sunday, July 20, 1930

Parish Cemetery as blessed.

Sunday, June 14, 1931

Prime Bishop Francis Hodur celebrates a High Mass at 10:30 am and again blesses the church. In attendance were Bishop Gawrychowski, Fr. Strzesinski of Webster, MA, Fr. Wojkowiak of Woonsocket, RI, Fr. Pulita of Ware, Fr. Solak Westfield, MA, Fr. Dombrowski of Northampton, MA and the resident pastor. Fr. Joseph Soltysiak. There were approximately 2000 people in attendance.

Friday, January 4, 1946

Mortgage was paid off.

Thursday, February 28, 1946

Five acres of land purchased from Mr. Stanley Boron for \$1,000.00 for the second parcel of land for the parish cemetery.