



**60 th Anniversary
1922-1982**

**St. Clement Church
Lakewood, Ohio**

PASTORS WHO SERVED ST. CLEMENT PARISH

Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph J. Schmit
April 22, 1922--November 12, 1956

Rev. Leo A. Warth
December 20, 1956--February 22, 1963

Rt. Rev. Msgr. Edward J. Seward, J.C.L.
March 1963--January 1972

Rev. Joseph A. Sweeney
January 11, 1972



HISTORY

ST. CLEMENT'S PARISH

APRIL 27, 1922 to NOVEMBER 23, 1982

The rapid growth in population of Cleveland's westerly neighbor, Lakewood, justly heralded as the most beautiful residential city in Ohio, made it necessary to establish new centers to serve the spiritual interests of the Catholics located there. The crowded conditions of the churches of St. Rose and St. James hastened the decision of the Right Rev. Bishop, and therefore he established two new parishes, St. Luke's to serve the territory from the lake front to Detroit Avenue and St. Clement's the territory from Detroit south to Fischer Road. The official announcement of the foundation of St. Clement's Parish was made April 27th, 1922, by the appointment of a pastor, The Rev. Jos. J. Schmit.

Through the courtesy of Mr. John Feighan, the pastor established a temporary residence at 1510 Elmwood Avenue.

On June 30th, 1922, property was purchased at the corner of Madison Avenue and Lincoln. In the purchase was included a six room brick residence on Lincoln Avenue which was at once remodelled and enlarged to serve as pastoral headquarters.

It was the original plan of the pastor to build a temporary frame church and at the same time a permanent school, but this plan had to be abandoned because the fire regulations in Lakewood forbid the erection of a frame building on

Madison Avenue. It was therefore decided to build a permanent church, and Mr. Wm. Koehl was engaged as the architect to draw the plans. It was not to be a church of cathedral proportions nor built on cathedral lines, but a church that would serve the ordinary spiritual needs.

The general contract exclusive of plumbing, heating and lighting was given to the lowest bidder, the Schrader Construction Co., for \$68,000.

Ground was broken for the new church on August 17, 1922, and one month later, September 17, the cornerstone was laid by Rt. Rev. Joseph Schrembs, Bishop of Cleveland.

Work on the church was pushed with a view to preparing the basement for a Grand Opening Bazaar. Everyone constituted a committee to work for the Bazaar and naturally it was another grand success, for without a trained parish organization it netted \$8,250.00. It was held December 4th to 9th, 1922.

Two weeks remained till Christmas and they were spent in preparing the basement of the new church, which will very soon be dedicated to the exclusive service of God and the welfare of souls. There will be offered up for the first time the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on Christmas Day.

Christmas Day, 1922, was therefore another red letter day in the history of St. Clement's Parish for it marked the beginning of uninterrupted services and the continued presence of our Lord in the Tabernacle.

At last the long-looked-for day arrived when everything was in readiness for the official opening of the upper church. It was on Easter Sunday, April 1, 1923, that we entered in triumphal procession into the new church, singing allelujahs of

joy and thanksgiving for the privilege of giving this new home to God.

Trinity Sunday, May 27th, was the next event of importance, for on that day the first class of children to receive their First Holy Communion in the new church were welcomed by a crowded house of worshippers. There were 57 in the class.

At last came the day of the official dedication, September 16, 1923. "They have made me a sanctuary and I will dwell in the midst of them."

In the spring of 1924, only a few months after the solemn dedication of the church, the parish had to face the problem of building a school. The plan was to build an eight room school, making provision for a future addition when needed. The school was completed at a cost of \$95,000 in time for opening day September 8, 1923 with an enrollment of 350 children. The Sisters of St. Joseph, under the direction of the first Principal, Sister Rita, took charge. The school was dedicated on November 23, 1924, the Feast of our Patron Saint.

In 1927 eight more rooms plus a gymnasium were added to the school. The rectory was also enlarged to accomodate a second and later on a third assistant.

By 1931 the parish had tripled in size from the original membership of 314 families. And, of course the need to enlarge the church became imperative and with it a dream of a church that possessed a soul worthy to be ranked with the noble churches of the past, not in grandeur nor loftiness, but in a quality of true piety and devotion; not shallow, showy or pretentious, but full of still, quiet earnestness which seems to lull and soothe the spirit with promise of peace and benediction. In the year 1931, the dream became a reality. The original small church of brick and wood trimming of the Italian Romanesque style was enlarged and made into a permanent