

ST. THOMAS
OF CANTERBURY

+ **CATHOLIC** +

CHURCH



100
years

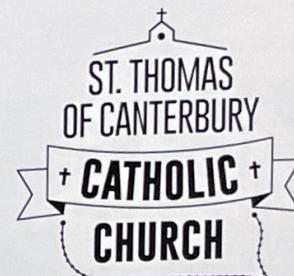
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*Congratulations
St. Thomas of Canterbury
on your 100th Anniversary!*



CONVENTUAL FRANCISCANS
SAINT BONAVENTURE PROVINCE

St. Bonaventure Province Office,
6107 North Kenmore Ave., Chicago, Illinois, 60660



CHÀO MỪNG! មិល្លីត័ចន័ប ;BIENVENIDOS! አንቋሪ ብድሓን መጸለኩም
WELCOME!

These are exciting times as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of our parish and school and the 40th anniversary of our soup kitchen. Even though I have only been here at St. Thomas of Canterbury a very short time, I have fallen in love with this community of faith. One of my favorite first impressions was listening to the Rosary being prayed after our daily Mass in several different languages, all at the same time. It was truly a Pentecost moment! A common faith among a diversity of cultures is part of what makes our parish special as we come together to pray and celebrate the Sacraments. On any given Sunday you will find Mass being celebrated in Vietnamese and Laotian, English, Spanish, and on the first Sunday of the month we host the Eritrean Coptic Catholic Community.

Not only does our common faith unite us, but we also put our faith into action through our outreach programs, such as our soup kitchen, food pantry, and clothing pantry. Through these past 100 years, St. Thomas of Canterbury and the Uptown neighborhood have experienced many changes, but we, as a parish, have kept the faith and continued to lend a helping hand to those who are in need through our outreach programs. We have so much to celebrate and give thanks for on the 100th anniversary of our church and school and the 40th anniversary of our soup kitchen. As we celebrate our past, we also look forward to our next 100 years and the joys and challenges it will bring. We may be a small parish but we have a big heart that is full of faith and love.

May God bless each of you as we celebrate our past and look forward to our future!

- fr paul

ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY - PARISH HISTORY -

1916

• St. Thomas of Canterbury Church at 4815 N. Kenmore Ave. was the first of three parishes organized in March 1916 by Most Rev. George W. Mundelein following his appointment as Archbishop of Chicago.

FEB 1916

• Following a severe snowstorm in February 1916, a number of Catholic laymen requested that a parish be formed in the north end of the "Wilson Avenue District" (subsequently known as Uptown).

• The north boundary of St. Thomas of Canterbury parish was formed by Argyle St. from Magnolia Ave. to Broadway, and Winona St. from Broadway to Lake Michigan. The



south boundary of the parish was set at Wilson.

MAR 1916

• On March 4, 1916, the Archbishop appointed Fr. Francis M. O'Brien as the first pastor. The first Mass was celebrated on March 26, 1916 at 4730 N. Sheridan Rd. Fr. O'Brien rented a house at 4824 N. Sheridan Rd. which served as a rectory. On Sept. 5, 1916, the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary opened the parish school in a house at 4827 N. Kenmore Ave. Enrollment numbered 60 children in kindergarten through fourth grade.

OCT 1916

• Father O'Brien turned his attention to providing a combination church-school building. At the direction of

Archbishop Mundelein, architect Joe W. McCarthy was hired to draw up plans for a colonial-style structure. The colonial-style structure is a distinctively American style of architecture which symbolized love of God and love of country. St. Thomas of Canterbury was the first and only Catholic Church built in this style in Chicago, but it also served as a model for St. Mary of the Lake Seminary which was built in 1921 in Area, IL (later renamed Mundelein).

The cornerstone for the present church was laid on Oct. 27, 1916, and a combination church and school building was dedicated by the Archbishop on June 24, 1917.

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1926

• Msgr. Edward J. Fox became the second pastor in 1926. The present rectory at 4827 N. Kenmore Ave., designed by Henry J. Schlacks, was built in 1931.

1953

• When Msgr. Fox's health began to decline, his associate pastor, Fr. William Rogers was appointed pastor in June 1953. For 17 years, he was a familiar figure as he greeted parishioners at the door of the church. During his tenure as pastor, Father Rogers organized the Legion of Mary and the St. Vincent de Paul Society to meet the changing needs of the Uptown neighborhood.

1968

• In January 1968, Rev. Hubert S. Hoffman, an associate pastor of St. Thomas of Canterbury Church, was named pastor. He had firm command of the Spanish language and under his leadership services for Spanish speaking Catholics were established.

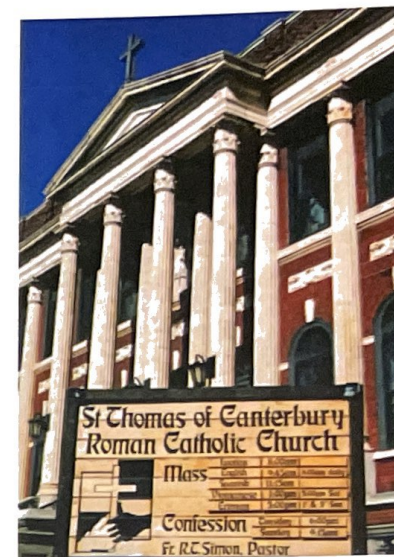
1971

• By 1971, parts of Uptown had become what one leading magazine called "the toughest neighborhood in America." On July 1, 1971, John Cardinal Cody appointed Rev. Thomas V. Millea, Rev. Michael R. Pelka, and Rev. E. Michael Rochford to be co-pastors of St. Thomas of Canterbury Church. The major goal of the team was to make the parish responsive to the Uptown neighborhood. To this end, programs were developed to meet the spiritual, educational, and social needs of the many groups in the community.



Rev. Francis O'Brien

May 8, 1872 - July 4, 1943
Founding Pastor



• The team ministers organized a reach-out program for the 3,000 shut-ins who lived in nursing homes and hospitals within the parish. Pastoral teams composed of clergy, religious and laity visited the shut-ins and they set up ecumenical prayer groups in apartment buildings throughout the parish.

1978

• As roles developed, Fr. Rochford was appointed the sole pastor in 1978.

• St. Thomas of Canterbury parish had been instrumental in the

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formation of several organizations which now function independently. These include: The Uptown Peoples Action Program, Uptown Senior Citizens Organization, The Centre, Inc. (a multi-service center for young people), Prologue Alternative High School, the National Day Labor Institute (an advocacy group), and the Amos Day Labor Agency, a not-for-profit organization.

1979

• In 1979, St. Thomas of Canterbury parish operated the largest free food pantry in Chicago under the direction of Tim Roemer. The pantry served more than 250 families every month along with providing related services such as financial counseling and family counseling.

APR 1979

• St. Thomas of Canterbury parish was profiled in the April 1979 issue of U.S. Catholic magazine in the article entitled, "The Parish Speaks Five Languages."

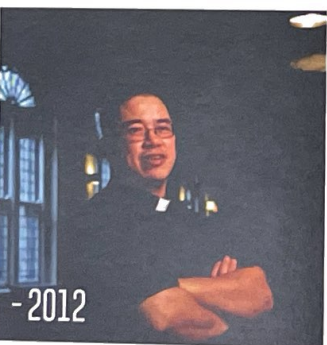
• The parish also sponsors a Soup Kitchen on Tuesdays and Fridays which was originally staffed by Catholic Workers.



• Fr. Richard Simon was appointed pastor of the parish in 1986 and served here for 20 years.



• Fr. Daniel Costello served as pastor from 2006 until 2012.



• Fr. Tirso Villaverde served as pastor from 2012 to 2016.

2016

• Fr. Paul Schneider, OFM Conv. was appointed as pastor in July 2016, marking the first time a religious order priest has served as pastor.



ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

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Religious orders who have assisted the people of St. Thomas of Canterbury Parish:

Lovers of the Holy Cross (Vietnamese) • Franciscan Sisters of the Poor
Dominican Sisters, Sinsinawa, Wis. • Sisters of St. Joseph of the Third Order of St. Francis
Franciscan Sisters, Springfield, Ill. • Sisters of St. Francis, Mishawaka, Ind.
Franciscan Fathers • Holy Cross Brothers • Jesuits • Vincentians
Society of the Divine Word • Conventual Franciscans

We are grateful for the generous support of our sharing parishes:

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St. Mary's, Evanston • Ss. Faith, Hope, and Charity • St. Lambert
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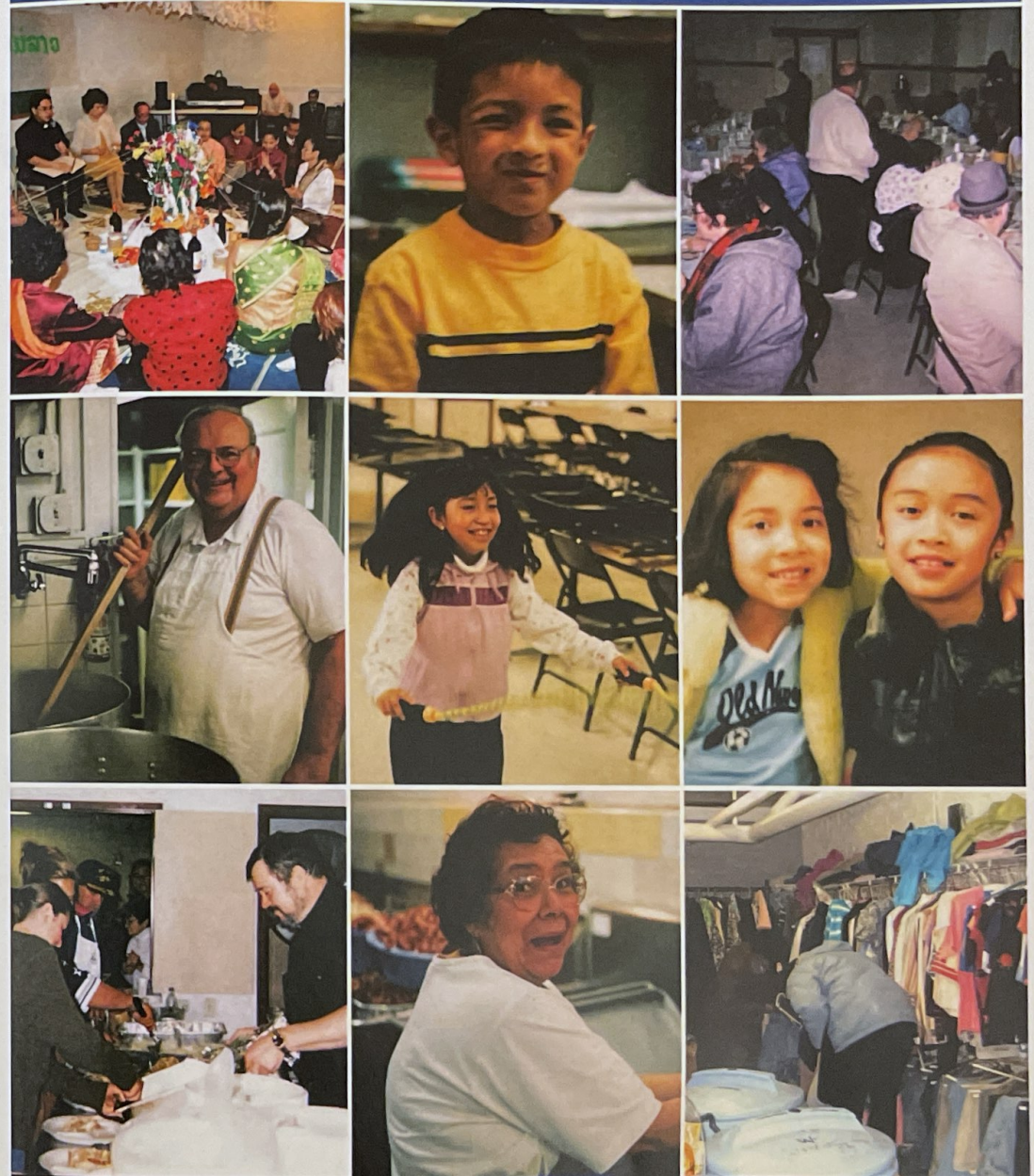
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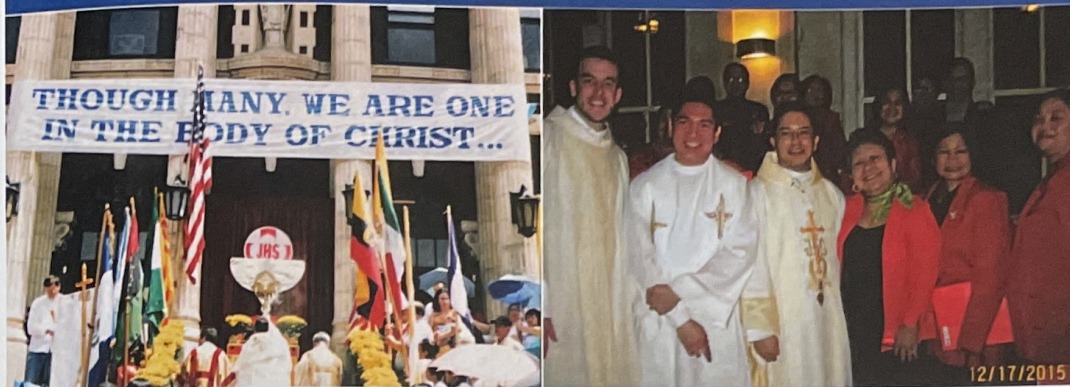
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We gratefully acknowledge the following benefactors, who have made
 donations to parish ministries in honor of our centennial:

St. Vincent de Paul Society - St. Juliana Conference • John Brow
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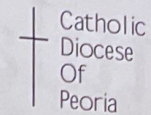
Catholic Community
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**Conventual
Franciscan
Friars**

*Congratulations and may you be
Blessed for many years to come!*

