

*Praise to the Lord, the Almighty. All you have
needed has been met by his gracious ordaining.*

—from Gather, "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

Out of Love Grows Our Church

From the time the Mission of Our Lady of Good Counsel Church was officially established in September 1962, we have participated in prayer and celebration with our families, our friends and our entire parish.

Over this period of time we have had confidence in how much God loves us no matter how we may feel about ourselves. You may remember how God touched your life. Maybe it was a special occasion, such as a first Communion, the birth of a child, or your wedding day, or perhaps it was a time of sadness, such as the death of a loved one or a severe illness.

Perhaps the Scriptures of Mass gave us meaning in our daily lives. For surely there is a commitment in the response of our parishioners to fruitful and grace-filled activities here at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church.

Our church culture has become an experience for us, developed over many years of pastoral guidance and leadership by our religious, the priests, associates, sisters, deacons and many others.

More recently a shift in church concept has become more apparent. Stewardship and church ministry on the part of parishioners have become necessary to accomplish newly estab-

lished goals of Our Lady of Good Counsel.

The building of our new church is a perfect example of that stewardship. Parishioners have given their time, talent and financial gifts for the establishment of our new church building. Stewardship and giving of one's gifts and resources will provide more opportunity for active participation by parishioners in our church community.

Looking back on our church, we celebrate almost 40 years of community.

OUR LADY
OF GOOD
COUNSEL
CHURCH:
A HISTORY



(Top left, clockwise) Members of the women's council; Money counters; repairs being made to the original rectory (Opposite page) Original chapel of Our Lady of Good Counsel Church.

1962

Sept. 20: Mission of OLGC officially established

Sept. 23: First meeting of the men of the parish

Sept. 27: First funeral

Sept. 30: First baptism

Oct. 8: First meeting of the ladies of the parish.

Nov. 12: Board of Education grants permission to use cafeteria of high school for Sunday Mass.

Nov. 18: First Sunday Masses of the new parish.

1963

Jan. 4: Land and buildings purchased.

Jan. 10: Architect Gerard Joseph Oakley of Bergenfield selected to begin planning the parish school.

Jan. 16: Outfitting of the rectory and chapel begins.

Jan. 27: Building fund campaign day; campaign workers visit homes from 1-6 p.m.

June 29: Registration for grades 1, 2 and 3 for the following September.

Oct. 8: Mission of OLGC elevated to status of parish.

Nov 12: Ground broken for school.

1964

June 31: Work resumes on school as Building Trades Council strike is settled.

Sept. 8: OLGC Parochial School opens.

Nov. 8: Cornerstones of school and convent set at 3 p.m.



(Above) An early 1960's mass held in the high school cafeteria; (Below) Father Pat holds Ann Marie (Corley) Greiner.

It was a hot day in July of 1975 as Father Patrick Scott left the searing city streets of Paterson, N.J., and headed toward the country. Just a week earlier he was pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes, an inner-city church. Now he had been reassigned to Our Lady of Good Counsel in Pompton Plains. While both parishes were part of the diocese of Paterson, and separated by only a few miles, they were worlds apart in many ways. But Father Pat would find that the people shared the same vision.

Father Pat drove his way past the colonial-era homes, farms and stables along West End Avenue. He turned at

the sign for Good Counsel and rode along the quarter-mile lane through the woods to a clearing where he would begin his new assignment as pastor. The parish had been in a period of transition for some time, and Father Pat knew that this task would be one of his most challenging. But if the parish was in transition, the church itself, along with the school and rectory, could not have been located in a more peaceful environment. Not another building could be seen from the rectory, which was surrounded by woods and far from the main road. With the exception of parish buildings, the area looked like it had more than a decade earlier, when the church was founded.



THE BEGINNING

The history of the parish begins on Sept. 20, 1962, with the announcement by Most Reverend Bishop James A. McNulty of the Diocese of Paterson of the formation of a new mission at Pompton Plains to be known as the Mission of Our Lady of Good Counsel. The Rev. Daniel A. Vecchiollo of St. Theresa's in Paterson was named pastor.

Those attending mass elsewhere, who resided in the northern portion of Pequannock Township and the western section of Riverdale, were informed of the new mission and of



the formation meetings, which were planned for the upcoming weeks.

On Sunday, Sept. 23, 121 men joined the Founders Group at a meeting held in the library of Holy Spirit School. This group agreed to take part in a door-to-door census of the homes in the new mission area to determine the needs for the school and hall, which were then only visions. Two weeks later, on Oct. 7, the survey began and on the following day the first meeting of the ladies of the mission was held, with 122 attending.

With the nucleus of a parish, the members needed a place to gather and celebrate the Eucharist. The Pequannock Township Board of Education gave its permission for the use of the high school cafeteria on Sundays for \$50 a week. On Nov. 18, the first of three Masses of Our Lady of Good Counsel Mission were celebrated. Members rented 275 chairs for the day, and the first collection totaled \$520.02.



(Top) Children enjoying themselves at a parish picnic; (Bottom) A 1960's First Holy Communion

1965

June 13: Dedication ceremonies for parish buildings

1968

March 31: OLGC officially designated a "Liturgical Experiment" parish of the diocese according to the norms established by the National Conference of Bishops.

1969

June 22: Father Francis Bischoff appointed pastor.

July 6: New parish offices located at 84 Sunset Road, opposite high school.

1970

Jan. 1: The National Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, blessed by our Holy Father, Pope Paul VI, at OLGC for the week.

June: First graduating class from OLGC School

1971

July 4: Father John Scerbo, from Our Lady of the Lake parish, welcomed to OLGC.

1974

Jan. 20: Father John Martin, from St. Mary's in Denville, welcomed to the parish.

1975

More than 200 parishioners sign a petition leading to the decision to allow girls as acolytes.

July 15: Father Patrick J. Scott named pastor of OLGC.

1976

Men and women installed as Eucharistic ministers.

Religious Sisters at Holy Spirit Parish and OLG Parish moved into a single residence at Holy Spirit. OLG convent becomes the rectory.

Sept. 1: Father Pat Scott on sabbatical to study at Washington Theological Union at Silver Springs, Md., and Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

Nov. 13: Bingo begins

1977

Convent relocates to 84 Sunset Road, where two Newburg Dominicans reside. Sr. Jean Redmond named first director of religious education, and Sr. Dawn Redmond becomes eighth grade teacher in OLG School.

Dec. 18: Pope Paul VI appoints Msgr. Frank J. Rodimer as bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Paterson.

1978

Edward Jaroszewski and Charles Mallory ordained as deacons at St. John's Cathedral in Paterson.

Sr. Rosemary McSorley, SHCJ, joins the staff as director of religious education and pastoral minister.

1979

Oct. 7: Bishop Rodimer makes pastoral visit to OLG and expresses his gratitude for the warm welcome and generous response of the parishioners of OLG.

A PLACE OF OUR OWN

The founding parishioners continued looking for a more permanent home, and on Jan. 4, 1963, 18 acres on West End Avenue were purchased, which included a 125-year-old farmhouse, barn and other outbuildings. Later that month, Bishop McNulty gave his blessing to the volunteers of the Building Fund Drive, and fund-raising began. The parish had the faith and people, and now it had a home site.

By April 26, Father Vecchiollo, helped by parishioners with building skills, moved into the farmhouse, which became Good Counsel's first rectory. The barn was converted into a chapel. During this period, bids were received for construction of a school and what was to be only an interim church. On Oct. 8 of that year, Our Lady of Good Counsel Mission was elevated to the rank of parish and on Nov. 12 ground was broken.

Although construction was completed on the school, with the first

classes held Sept. 8, 1964, funds couldn't be stretched to erect a church building at that time. Parishioners turned the "interim" church in the school's cafeteria into a more permanent home. More than three decades would pass with Good Counsel services being held in the school building. Many people baptized there would return to be married in the same church. It was modest, but to most members of the Good Counsel family, it was proof that a church community is built of people and faith, not bricks and mortar. It was a comfortable building in very pleasant surroundings. Still, many people looked to the day when the time might be right for them to consider a real church building of their own. But that was not to be for more than a generation.

TIME OF TRANSITION

Father Francis Bischoff was appointed pastor of Good Counsel on June 22, 1969. That year, the church purchased the home at 84 Sunset Road, which



(Top) New school building whose cafeteria served as an "interim" church; (Right) Father Daniel A. Vecchiollo blesses cross on the building.



(Top, clockwise) Father Jack Egan at children's mass; Father Vincent McTighe with Elaine Patterson at animal blessing; Father Martin McDonnell at Christmas Mass; Father Ed Lambro with Patti Dean at a Valentine's Day Party.

became the church offices and later the convent.

During the early 1970s, consideration was given to consolidating the schools of Good Counsel and Holy Spirit with lower grades in one school and upper grades in the other. At the time enrollment was dropping in all Catholic schools, and many were having a hard time staying financially solvent. About that time, Father Bischoff was reassigned, and Bishop Casey assigned Father Pat Scott to OLGC.

When Father Pat arrived on July 15, 1975, he experienced a culture shock of sorts, as would the parish of Our Lady of Good Counsel shortly thereafter.

"I was very embedded in Paterson," Father Pat says. "It was a lot of fun. I was in constant motion. But I'm adaptable."

Adaptability and flexibility are two of the many traits a priest needs when undertaking a new assignment. In a church community that was barely 12 years old, Father Pat found a parish on the threshold of developmental change.

"The parish had not really been educated in Vatican II," he recalls. "But that was very much a part of my life."

One of his first actions was to introduce music into the Mass by bringing a record player into the church. Next he removed the altar rails and had dark paneling behind the

1980

Father Pat Scott celebrates 20 years of priesthood, having been ordained June 11, 1960.

Elaine Patterson named parish business manager. She and husband Gene serve the parish as lectors, Eucharistic ministers, bingo workers, ushers, social directors and lay trustees.

Oct. 5: Father Martin leaves OLGC for new assignment. Reception held in gym.

1981

April 24: Bishop Rodimer, after careful review of study and report, closes OLGC school. Decisions are based on lack of necessary registration of students and support.

June 15: Father Michael Lombardo becomes weekend assistant at OLGC.

1982

Sr. Helen Williamson, SHCJ, joins OLGC as pastoral minister.

June 13: Father Vincent McTighe appointed associate pastor of OLGC.

1983

Nov. 13: Father Jack Egan, weekend assistant, leaves for Paramus after five years at OLGC.

1984

Seventy parish families affected by April 5 flood. Associated Churches of Pequannock and Lincoln Park formed to organize flood relief assistance.

1985

Sr. Helen Williamson leaves for new assignment at St. Teresa's and Overlook Hospital in Summit.

Feb. 3: Parish mission: "A Week With Christ," the facts and feeling of being a Catholic in today's turbulent world

June 9: Father Patrick Scott celebrates his silver jubilee in the priesthood.

1986

April: Complete renovation, redecoration and modernization of the church, including all new windows and rugs, completed in three weeks by volunteer workers who "tithed" with their labor and skill.

1987

Feb. 1: Parish contributes financial support for crisis hotline Contact.

Sept. 1: Father Pat leaves for sabbatical; Father Edward Lambro named temporary administrator of the parish.

1988

May 1: Father Pat returns from sabbatical.

1991

January: OLGC joins other community churches for prayer service at Holy Spirit on eve of Gulf War.



(Top) Fr. Pat with children at the annual Christmas pageant; (Left) Former convent, present rectory



altar taken down. And to further brighten the church, the windows once intended for a cafeteria were replaced with large windows that looked out into the 200 acres of woods that surrounded the church.

Altar girls were welcomed to the church, and later the term "altar servers" would be applied to both boys and girls. And to the extent possible, Father Pat elevated the role of women in the church. Many women became Eucharistic ministers and lectors. And a children's choir and an adult choir were established. Father Pat remembers that these changes were part of the revival of the church.

The school eventually was closed by order of Bishop Rodimer because of declining enrollment of students and

financial support. Tithing was introduced by Father Pat, which helped keep our church functioning and open to continue to meet the spiritual needs of our parish.

Several years later, the school would be leased to Chancellor Academy, a private school whose rent payments were part of what would become the strong financial position of the parish.

A GROWING PARISH

During the latter part of the 1980s, Pompton Plains, Pequannock and the surrounding communities experienced explosive population growths. Little by little, the forests that encircled Good Counsel fell to development. But unlike the haphazard building of previous booms, careful consideration was given to the environment, and the members of Good Counsel were permitted to offer input on the development. Civilization had met the little

church back in the woods. West Parkway bisected the church property, and Good Counsel changed its address from West End Avenue to West Parkway without moving an inch.

Although now almost encircled by The Glens and other housing, careful planning has allowed Good Counsel to retain its wooded surroundings. In fact, many newer members are residents of The Glens and part of the reason the parish has grown from 500 families 25 years ago to well over a thousand today.

It was against this backdrop in 1997 that Father Pat decided the time was right to consider a new church. In Easter Sunday homily, March 30, Father Pat, after having asked several

people to pray for him for a change, shared his vision of a new church, one that would hold many people and offer a gathering place and prayer gardens. He asked all parishioners to participate in the planning stages. He was nervous, not knowing what the reaction would be to his dream. But the overwhelming positive response left no doubt that the parish was ready to grow. With money in the bank, proceeds from the sale of property between West Parkway and West End Avenue, and generous pledges from parishioners, the project moved forward.

During the summer of 1997, church members visited dozens of churches in many towns and states to gather ideas for the new building. In January 1998, an architect was chosen, and by that summer a design was

1997

March 30: In Easter Sunday homily, Father Pat shares vision of new church with parishioners.

Sept. 10: *Building Our Dream* newsletter keeps all informed of committees, plans and accomplishments on regular basis.

June 8: Sr. Rosemary McSorley marks 44 years as a sister.

Oct. 6: At Church Design Workshop parishioners design parking lots, prayer gardens, gathering areas and other aspects of new church. Members of Liturgical Design Committee give guidance throughout process.

Nov. 20-21: Parishioners share ideas for new church with pictures and floor plans of churches visited during the summer.

Nov. 28: OLGC Building Public Relations/Communications Committee meets.

1998

Jan. 18: Architect Selection Committee unanimous in its choice of Martin DeSapio of Flemington, N.J., as designer of new church.

May 15: Building Fund campaign begins with pledges totaling \$1.6 million. Phase II ready to start.

May 18: Parish representatives meet with Pequannock Township Planning Board to review and discuss plans for church construction.



(Clockwise from top left) Construction sign; Groundbreaking ceremony; Construction under way.

May 29: Bishop Rodimer informs Father Pat that Pope John Paul II has named him honorary prelate, with title of reverend monsignor. Ceremony scheduled in St. John's Cathedral, Paterson, N.J., Sept. 13.

July 20: Township Planning Board approves design of church building and parking lot.

July 28: Committee formed to produce Dedication Journal reflecting life as a family of God at OLG.

1999

May 4: Ground breaking prayer service Easter Sunday

December: Parishioners get first look at interior of new church.

2000

April 23: Easter Sunday Mass is celebrated in new church. More than 2,300 people are estimated to have attended.

June 24: Dedication of new church at 4 p.m. Mass; celebration at Wayne Manor dinner dance.

ready. The theme "Out of Love Grows Our Church" was chosen. Parishioners fanned out among the Good Counsel community to gather pledges. It was also during this time that Father Pat was named honorary prelate with the title of reverend monsignor.

Ground was broken on May 4, 1999, and parishioners watched the progress of the new building and Father Pat's vision throughout the summer and fall. In December, special construction arrangements were made to allow members to view the interior of the new building, where they saw how the piles of stone, wood, steel and aluminum were being joined to form their new church.



Work progressed well enough through the winter that Father Pat felt it might be possible to open the building for Easter weekend services.

Dozens of members of the church began working feverishly early Saturday, the day before Easter, to temporarily open the church for the Easter Vigil that evening. The altar, tabernacle and rented chairs were placed in the spots occupied only hours earlier with scaffolding, power tools and workbenches.

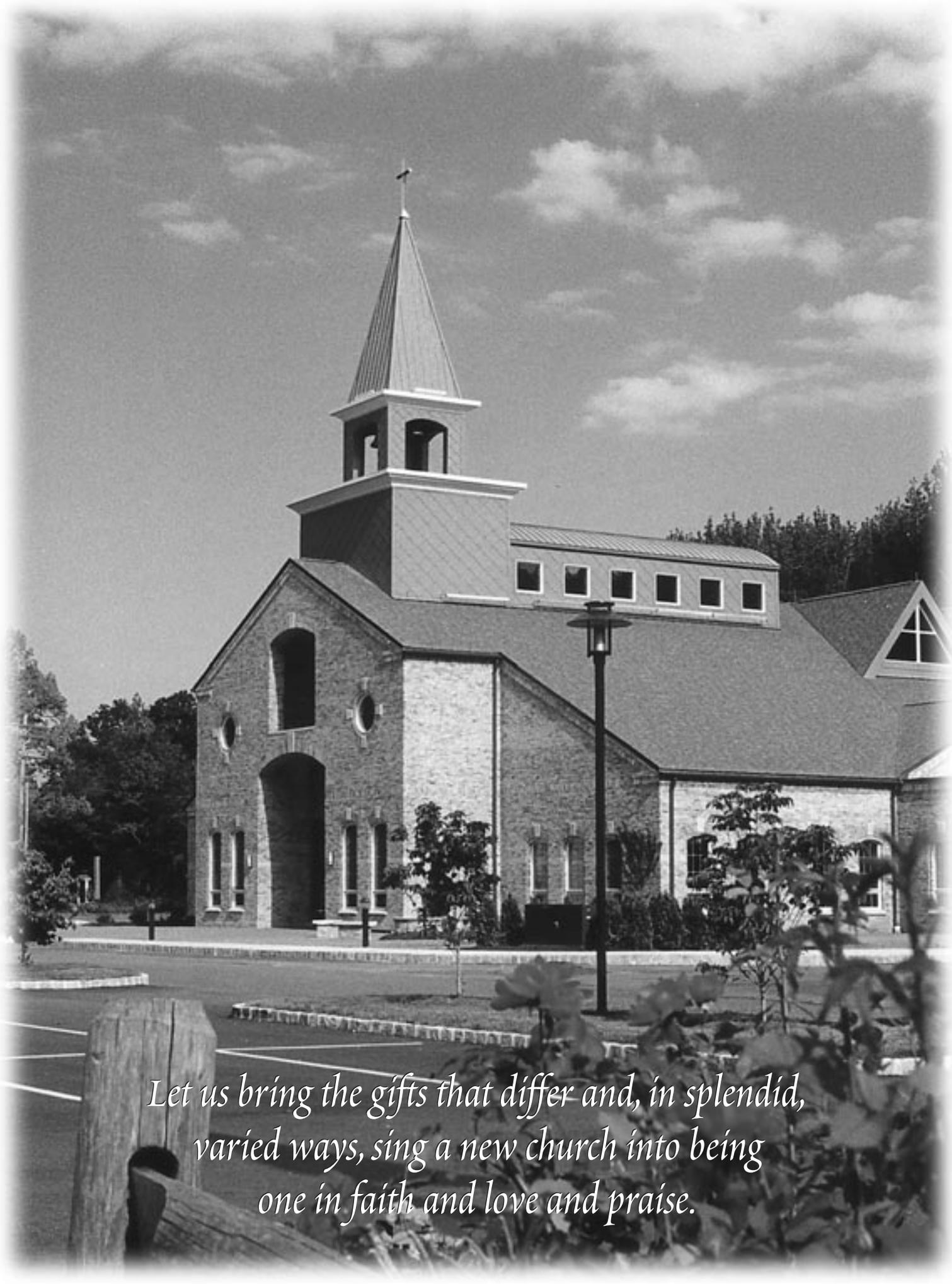
The sound system was only half-installed, as was the lighting. But when the doors opened that night, the only thing that mattered was that parishioners and guests could see that their hard work had come to fruition.

Although the church could seat more than 500, each mass witnessed an overflow crowd. And during the 10 a.m. mass on Easter, Father Pat set the cornerstone. But after the noon mass, volunteers worked with even more determination to clear the building of the chairs and altar so that on Monday the contractors could resume their efforts to complete the church by then end of May. And today, June 24, local clergy and dignitaries officially dedicated the new church.

"My dream has become the people's dream, and it has come true," Father Pat said in his Easter homily. He expressed his deep gratitude to the committees and people of the parish who shared their talent and treasure—stewardship—to make this dream come true. It began with Father Pat's dream but it became the people's church.



(Top, clockwise) Father Pat blesses the cornerstone; Holy Spirit rose window; Blessing of the cross on new church. (Opposite page) Our new house of worship.



*Let us bring the gifts that differ and, in splendid,
varied ways, sing a new church into being
one in faith and love and praise.*