

In 1927 when Christ the King was founded, Grand River Avenue cut through farmland and wilderness from Redford to the town of Brighton. Fr. Leo Gaffney was sent to found a new parish at the end of the streetcar line. On Christmas Day, the first mass was offered in Redford High School.

About 300 families joined the parish, and we built our first church in 1928. A year later, the bottom fell out of the world economy and we could hardly pay the light bill, much less the bank loan. We had to take out a second loan just to pay the interest on the first.

When Fr. Joseph Marshke arrived in 1932, it is said that he uttered a prayer of desperation over the unfinished building, surrounded by frog ponds. The parishioners resolved to build a temporary chapel for Sunday Mass, so that plans could go forward to establish a school. They built the new church "brick by brick, with their own hands." Those first buildings still stand, now incorporated into the school.

The school opened on September 12, 1938, but the building was not finished. Classes met in the four corners of the gymnasium.

In the fall of 1947, with a new wing of the school partly constructed, Fr. Marshke became ill and died. The new pastor, Fr. Henry Koelzer led the parish as we completed building the school, convent, church, social hall, rectory and parish offices. Fr. Koelzer's memory is preserved in the hall named in his honor.

In January, 1968, Msgr. Arthur Karey was installed as pastor.

In the summer of 1980, Fr. Victor Clore was assigned as pastor to Christ the King along with Fr. Kenneth Kauchek as his Associate. formation, decision-making and social service. Today Christ the King is breaking new ground by forming a "collaborative ministry" that crosses cultural, vicariate and geographic boundaries.

Christ the King still faces challenges with courage and optimism, leading the way into the Twenty-First Century Catholic Church. You may have seen the "portrait" of Jesus that is composed of dozens of small pictures of many people. That picture is aptly named "In His Image." This parish is like that. All these faces of Christ the King Parishioners make up the face of Christ in this Community.

Fr. Victor Clore, Pastor

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