

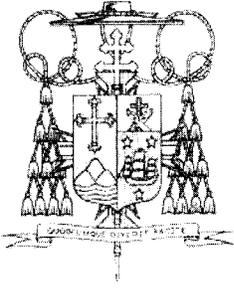
**Saint Joseph Parish  
Wakefield, Massachusetts  
Celebrates 150 Years  
1854—2004**



*Our Anniversary Logo:*  
**Original Church—1854  
Foundation of the Parish School—1925  
Current Church, Hall and Rectory —1980**



**His Excellency, Seán P. O'Malley, O.F.M., Cap.  
Archbishop of Boston**



ARCHBISHOP'S OFFICE  
2121 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE  
BRIGHTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02135-3193

October 23, 2004

Reverend Michael L. Steele  
Saint Joseph Parish  
173 Albion Street  
Wakefield, MA 01880-3224

Dear Father Steele:

It is a great pleasure to extend to you and all of the faithful of Saint Joseph Parish my prayerful best wishes on the occasion of your 150th Anniversary.

The faith has taken deep root and has matured among generations of Catholics in Wakefield through the lives and sacrifices of so many dedicated persons associated with Saint Joseph Parish. The parish in so many ways is the heart of the religious lives of the faithful. Centered around the celebration of the Eucharist and nourished by the preaching of the Word of God and celebration of the sacraments, the faith of the people has been strengthened and their lives enriched. What a beautiful testimony to the goodness of God is the life of this parish!

As I thank you and your pastoral staff for the good work which you have accomplished at Saint Joseph Parish, it is my prayers that all the members of the parish may rededicate themselves to the Lord. May the vitality of spirit and spiritual growth of the parish's life continue to be strengthened through the Lord's favor. I pray in a special way that the young people of the parish might be moved by the celebration to consider what role God expects them to fulfill in the Church.

Asking God's abundant blessings upon you and all whom you serve, I remain

Devotedly yours in Christ,

  
Archbishop of Boston

## St. Joseph's Rectory

173 ALBION STREET  
WAKEFIELD, MASS. 01880  
TEL (781) 245-5770  
FAX (781) 246-2423

October 23, 2004

Dear Parishioners and Friends of St. Joseph Parish:

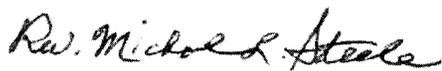
It is a special joy for us to be with you as your Pastor and Parochial Vicar as we note this wonderful milestone in the history of our parish. These one hundred and fifty years of Catholic Faith have been made possible only with the generous time, talent and treasure of countless parishioners, devoted priests and religious sisters.

This Anniversary Booklet contains a brief history of the parish, as well as an assortment of parish life photos for your enjoyment. We owe very special thanks to members of the Anniversary Committee for their creativity and hard work.

As one student at St. Joseph's School wrote, *"We have been here 150 years, and we're still here today with more memories and with more people to pray, because we have over 150 years of Light."*

We ask God's continued blessings upon the parish and upon you and your families as we continue to move forward in Faith.

In the Light of Christ,



Rev. Michael L. Steele  
11<sup>th</sup> Pastor of St. Joseph Church



Rev. David F. Ziomek  
Parochial Vicar

/mlw

## History of St. Joseph Parish from 1854 to Present

Before 1850, the few Catholic families in Wakefield walked to Mass in Lynn, where services were held in the Town Hall and later in St. Mary's Church. The first Mass in Wakefield, then called South Reading, was held in July of 1851 at the home of Malachy Kenney, who lived near the Junction.

It is recorded that the Rev. Thomas Shahan, pastor of St. James' Church in Salem, while en route to visit his relatives in Melrose, was asked one day by several Catholics to say Mass for the faithful in South Reading. The first Mass was attended by the few Catholic families in South Reading, but attracted between 200 to 300 people from the surrounding towns of Melrose, Stoneham, Winchester, Woburn and Wilmington. With the monies collected, Father Shahan bought a piece of land 150 by 80 feet on Albion Street, part of the present parochial site. The building of a chapel was begun in 1852. It was dedicated on August 19, 1954 and named the Church of St. Mary. From 1854 to 1868, this parish of South Reading was considered a mission and was served by pastors from surrounding communities.

The name of South Reading was officially changed to Wakefield in 1868 in honor of its leading benefactor and businessman, Cyrus Wakefield. The town's population was thriving at close to 6,000 citizens and the local industries employed hundreds of workers, many of whom were Catholic Irish and Italian immigrants who had left their native lands to seek a better life in America.

The little chapel on Albion Street became much too small to accommodate its growing number of parishioners. In 1870, Father Fitzpatrick had plans drawn for a new church to seat 800 people. The original Church of St. Mary was eventually moved to Murray Street and renamed Lyceum Hall. It was later to become St. Joseph's Hall. By November, 1871, the new church was opened. Wakefield became a parish, and the dedication of the new church, named St. Joseph's, took place in the summer of 1873 with Reverend Michael F. Flatley its first resident pastor.

Father Flatley organized a Sunday School and soon, as was the custom, every seat was hired, and the new church again became too small. More land was purchased by Father Flatley and the St. Joseph's Soci-

ety; the church saw additions over a period of 16 years. The new church was moved closer to the railroad tracks, the nave was extended, the landmark spire was erected, the church entrance was changed to face what is now Tuttle Street, and a basement was added. In 1884, Father Flatley's successor, Reverend P.J. Hally, arrived and built a new rectory just behind the church at the corner of Albion and Murray Streets in 1885.

The cornerstone of the enlarged, remodeled church was laid on September 8, 1889, and the building was officially dedicated by Archbishop Williams of Boston on November 9, 1890. Irish-born and Holy Cross educated, Reverend Jeremiah E. Millerick, who became pastor in 1887, was the overseer of an extensive physical plant.

Father Colbert succeeded Father Millerick in 1902, and remained in Wakefield until 1913. In 1905, Father Colbert organized the Wakefield Catholic Club. This organization was continually engaged in spiritual and social works in the parish. Outings for destitute Catholic children from Boston, candy sales, whist parties, donations to many charities and annual plays and many other activities for the community furthered St. Joseph's spiritual role in Wakefield.

In 1925, under the able leadership of Reverend Florence J. Halloran, who succeeded Father Colbert, St. Joseph's Parochial School opened with one first and one second grade. Purchased from Mrs. Hugh Morgan in 1922, this valuable property was large enough to accommodate the modern eight-room brick school. Alterations were made to the old Blanchard house, and it served as the convent for the Sisters of St. Joseph until it was demolished in 1958 when the present spacious convent was built in its place.

A mission for the Catholics of South Lynnfield was also built in 1922. Father Halloran was largely responsible for building the South Lynnfield Chapel on Route 1 in 1937. That same year, South Lynnfield became independent of Wakefield and was recognized as a parish. Within Wakefield, Father Halloran helped the Italian Catholic community attend Mass in their own neighborhood, the east side of the town. The Santissima Maria DelCarmine Society had erected a building on Water Street and Mass was celebrat-

ed on the second floor of the building. The Society transferred title to their building and land to the Catholic Church, and this chapel remained a mission of St. Joseph's until 1947, when a new parish was formed and named St. Florence's in memory of Father Halloran.

Under Father Halloran's leadership, the parish grew immensely, not only in the number of parishioners, but in its role in the Wakefield community. In an effort to recognize Father Halloran's many contributions as a priest, Pope Pius XII, through then Archbishop Cushing, elevated the local pastor to the rank of Monsignor in 1946. When Monsignor Halloran died in March of 1947, public schools were closed out of respect. Throughout his many years, Father Halloran had extended himself beyond his Catholic parishioners to improve relations with many of the Protestant denominations in the Wakefield community - thus his influence extended far beyond the boundaries of the parish.

On Tuesday morning, October 12, 1954, St. Joseph's celebrated its centennial with a huge outdoor Mass on Wakefield Common. Nearly 1,000 people participated in the High Mass, and many visiting clergy and nuns were in attendance. The occasion was concluded with a banquet in the State Armory, currently the Americal Civic Center.

On September 20, 1963, a general alarm fire was discovered in the wooden church. Father Deasy, the pastor of St. Joseph's from 1947-1964, oversaw the repair work. During Father Deasy's seventeen years, he made a remarkable impact on the parish. A \$10,000 scholarship was established in his memory and was awarded annually to deserving high school boys and girls who live in Wakefield and graduate in the top third of their class.

With the decrees of Vatican II, St. Joseph's entered a new phase in its history. Reverend Fabian Sammon became the new pastor in April 1967 and oversaw the establishment of a Parish Council in the early 1970's. Additionally, lay readers were encouraged; special liturgies for children's Masses at Thanksgiving, Christmas and Pentecost were originated by caring parishioners. Father Sammon shared his great spiritual convictions by taking a personal interest in the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the Legion of Mary.

It was at this same time that the Sisters of St. Joseph

were withdrawn from the parochial school by their leaders and Father Sammon worked to retain the local school by securing a commitment from the Sisters of Nazareth to supply the school with a principal. This was to comply with the wishes of the parishioners who had voted to continue its existence in a parish-wide questionnaire and an all-lay faculty greeted the youngsters in September of 1973. A kindergarten was soon added followed by the formation of a nursery school in 1978.

Another memorable event in the history of St. Joseph's was the rededication by His Eminence Humberto Cardinal Medeiros on October 13, 1974. The St. Joseph's Boosters' Club, an extension of the St. Joseph's Mothers' Association, was formed in February of 1975 and was responsible for much of the financial stability of the school.

Unfortunately, the most memorable event in St. Joseph's recent history, however, was the March 24, 1977 fire which completely gutted St. Joseph's Church. The blaze was spectacular - and required hundreds of firemen from 16 communities to extinguish. The church was declared a total loss. Masses had to be held in the Junior High School auditorium. Offers of help and donations for the building fund began to pour into the rectory from people of all faiths. The new pastor, Father Edward Gillis, assumed the monumental task of building a new church. The architectural team of Moore and O'Marah joined talent and expertise with the Volpe Construction Company, and the creation of a new St. Joseph's began to be a reality.

Encouraged by the spiritual, intellectual, and financial generosity of the entire Wakefield community, a new St. Joseph's Church complex was built.

The new St. Joseph's has a seating capacity of 750, a chapel which can seat 75 people and a social hall with a capacity for 500 parishioners. Brick was used on the exterior of the church, and a huge bell tower and its clock were also included to continue the tradition. Three of the original four bells had been saved from the fire. They were repaired by the same firm that cast the bells and have been set in the new belfry. The entire church complex cost 2 million dollars. The church was dedicated on June 27, 1980. The church dedication brochure expressed its thanks to the committee that oversaw its construction as well as to the entire Wakefield community for their

support. The greatest lesson from this tragic fire remains that the House of the Lord resides in His People. The destruction of the building did not destroy His family - but strengthened it.

At this point in history, St. Joseph's parish, under the leadership of Reverend Francis O'Sullivan, was serving over 2200 families. Father O'Sullivan was assigned to St. Joseph's in 1983 and had diligently worked to extend the parish to the entire Wakefield community. Inter-denominational services and increased coordination among denominations have been commonplace since the 1980's. In 1993, St. Joseph's was able to continue to offer educational opportunities to children through the school, which at the time had an enrollment of over 260, and included kindergarten through grade eight. The parish continued an active Parish Pastoral Council, CYO program and a top-notch CCD curriculum serving over 800 children.

In 1990, following two generous bequests from parishioners, the still-new rectory complex was enlarged to include an additional conference room, an additional office for appointments and a youth lounge. This was to address the need for additional meeting space for church groups. This need for increased space was created by the Catholic Church's encouragement of more lay involvement in the ministry of the parish. The Parish Pastoral Council, Parish Finance Council, Adult Religious Education groups, Marriage Preparation Programs, Widows and Widowers and Separated and Divorced Support Groups and the St. Vincent de Paul Society were among the groups then accommodated by the new space. The Youth Lounge was then available for those of high school age (with adult supervision) and for young adults to gather in a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere, maintaining their relationship with the Church.

"Over the past 138 years, St. Joseph's Church has reflected the needs and spirit of the community. Its pastors and their assistants have worked tirelessly in dedicated service. In the true ecumenical spirit, friendships have developed among all religious leaders as they share common experiences through the Wakefield Clergy Association." (Margaret Dwyer, writing the history of the parish through 1994.)

On March 19, 1995 His Eminence, Bernard Cardinal Law, made a personal telephone call to Rev. Michael

L. Steele, Director of Religious Education for the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Boston. After 12 years of service to the Catholic Schools Office, Fr. Steele immediately accepted the Cardinal's invitation to succeed Msgr. Francis O'Sullivan, then retiring as pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Wakefield. Fr. Steele had done parish work at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Walpole and at St. Susanna Parish in Dedham before joining the staff of the Catholic Schools office.

Just as Msgr. O'Sullivan had brought to our parish both pastoral skills and his administrative expertise at Archdiocesan Catholic Charities, in similar fashion, Fr. Steele brought to us his pastoral skills and his management experience of an Archdiocesan Director in the area of Catholic Education.

Fr. Steele took up residence at St. Joseph's on June 5, 1995 and was installed in a festive liturgy as Pastor by Most Rev. John McNamara, Regional Bishop of the North Region of the Archdiocese of Boston on September 17, 1995. The Installation Mass was celebrated by many area priests, as well as by personal priest associates of Fr. Steele.

The local parish can never be fully understood without considering the Catholic Church as a whole the trends and changes in the Church and the local culture. By 1995, the parish and the Catholic School were undergoing tremendous change in terms of the numbers of Religious Sisters in the Schools and Ordained clergy serving the parishes. Decreased numbers in Religious and Ordained leadership required the training, management and collaborative workings of professional lay staff alongside the traditional Religious. And so, a Youth Minister, Business Manager, Wedding Coordinator and Grief Counselor are among the new duties of recently established positions.

Many, many parishioners would describe their current pastor as "a Gatherer." Others would characterize his leadership as "deeply spiritual."

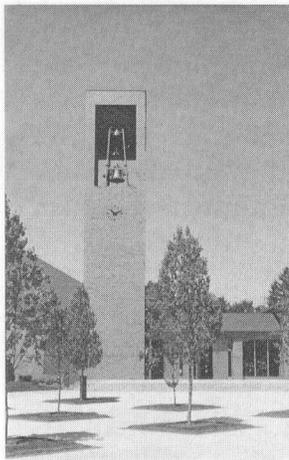
Scripture Programs, along with regular evenings and multi-days of retreat and recollection, would bear out these descriptions. National speakers such as Dr. Robert J. Wicks, Fr. William A. Meninger, O.C.S.O. from the Trappists, Sister Macrina Wiedeikehr, O.S.B., Rev. Simeon Gallagher, O.F.M. Cap.; and Rev. Eugene LaVerdiere, S.S.S., as well as other noted spiritual leaders have taken the pulpit of our

parish and led our Faithful in deep and meaningful journeys of faith. A very special Late Advent Day of Recollection at the Jesuit Retreat House at Eastern Point, Gloucester and more recently at the Notre Dame, Ipswich Center has become a rich feature of the Christmas preparation by our parishioners. Naturally, the beautiful custom of daily adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, established as a custom during Msgr. O'Sullivan's tenure remains a strong support for our parishioners' spiritual lives.

No recent history of our parish could ignore the sadness of the Edgewater Tragedy in our town. Seven sad deaths and untold horror were wreaked on our very neighborhood the day after Christmas in 2000. The parish responded with an open and compassionate heart as Fr. Steele contacted local grief counselors and coordinated an effort of hospitality, counseling and comfort to victims, their families and terror-stricken local citizens. Fr. Steele opened the lines of all parish phones so that Edgewater employees could contact their families and assure them of their safety. Some of these calls were to families as far away as Hong Kong. For these efforts, Fr. Steele and the parish were awarded the Senator Paul Tsongas Award for Exemplary Community Service at Ceremonies at the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston. A Citizenship award from Essex County was also presented in separate ceremonies.

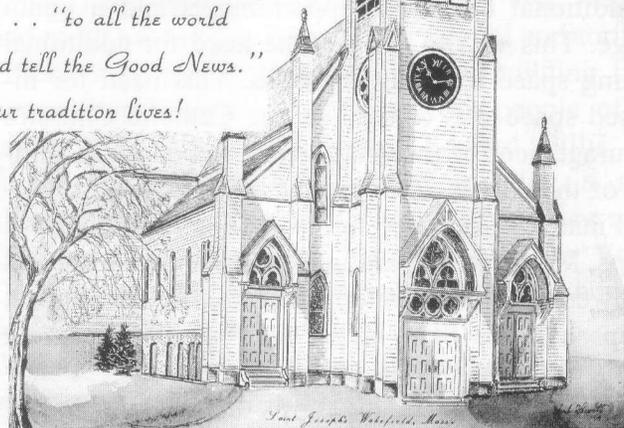
Recent sadness in our Archdiocese over issues of Sexual Abuse has been openly and honestly addressed. Already, Religious Ed. Faculty and Parish School faculty have been trained and facilitated in the Archdiocesan Program entitled "Protecting God's Children."

This spirit of openness and transparency flows into all aspects of parish life and management. Parishioners are kept abreast of the parish's financial situation and project planning with an annual "Power Point" presentation which richly details the actual cash flow and priorities of the parish. All of the major advisory groups of the parish and school meet collaboratively to view, comment on, and to update the parish's mission and plans. Parishioners are further kept informed of upcoming spiritual and social events by means of our semi-annual Parish Newsletter: *St. Joseph, the Worker*. The parish now also has its own Web Page: [www.stjosephwakefield.org](http://www.stjosephwakefield.org) for communication with the Parish Staff over the Internet.



*Let the bells ring —  
 . . . . "to all the world  
 and tell the Good News."*

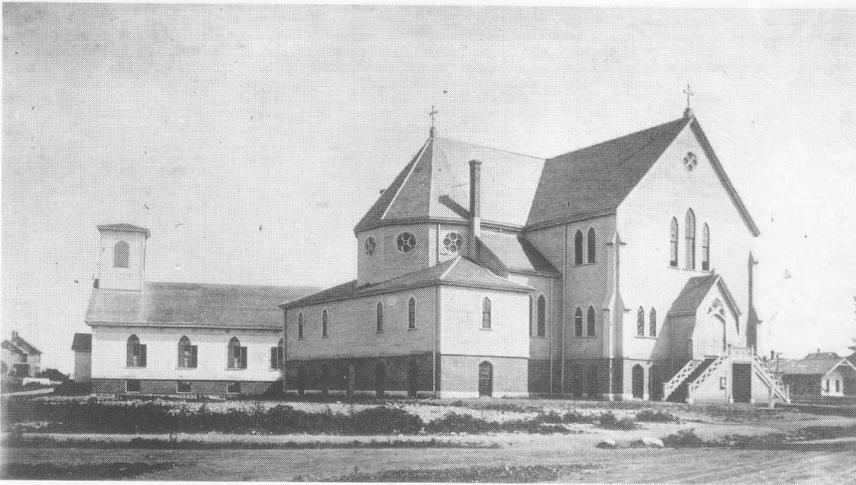
*Our tradition lives!*



### *A Special Memory Shared*

*Fr. John Farrell, currently pastor of Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, Lynnfield, was assigned to St. Joseph's in the early 1960's. In a recent letter, dated Sept. 13, 2004 he writes:*

*"Walter Slocumb, a wonderful man and custodian, and I climbed the bell tower to ring the rope bells on the opening day of the II Vatican Council at noon on October 11, 1962. 'Come Holy Spirit', we prayed. I think of this whenever I drive down North Ave. and Albion Street and see the bells in the new tower."*



**Saint Joseph Church, 1880 — with front facing Albion Street**



**Celebrating the Parish's 100th Anniversary in 1954  
with an Outdoor Mass on Wakefield Common**



**Mass Entrance Procession for the 300th Anniversary  
of the Town of Wakefield, May 30, 1944  
Lead Altar Servers: Bernie Fitzgerald and Matthew Burns**



100th Anniversary Banquet: Held October 12, 1954 at the State Armory



Wedding of Jean and Michael DiCicco on February 19, 1950  
Fr. Thomas J. Mooney is the Celebrant



1954: Anniversary Minstrel Show, sponsored by the Mothers' Club



The Lovely Meuse Sisters: Elizabeth, Dorothy and Loretta  
Ready for the Show



June 27, 1980

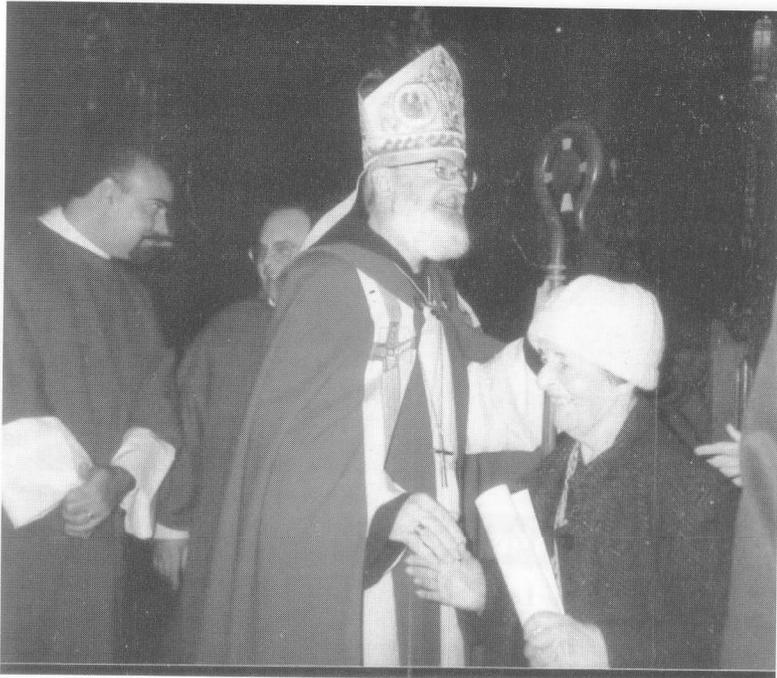
To the Priests, Sisters and Faithful  
of Saint Joseph Parish, Wakefield

With prayerful best wishes and a hearty blessing on the occasion of the Solemn dedication of the new  
Saint Joseph Church.

+Humberto Cardinal Medeiros  
Archbishop of Boston



A Tragic Event in the History of the Parish  
Saint Joseph's Parish Fire: March 24, 1977



**Mary Lou Surette greets Archbishop Sean O'Malley at the Rite of Election in Boston's Holy Cross Cathedral**



**Fr. David with a caregiver from Oosterman's Nursing Home at the luncheon following the Anointing of the Sick Mass , September 11, 2004**



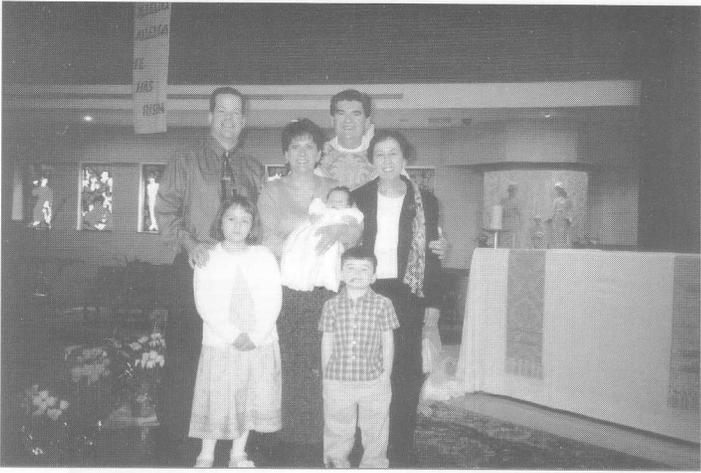
**Our 9th Annual Parish Picnic on the Lake**



**The Best Cooks in New England!!**



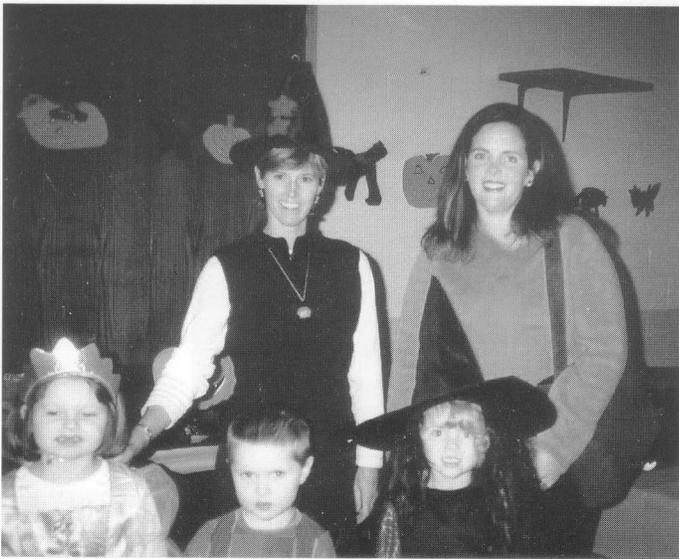
**Assisting at the Picnic's Dessert Table are: back row: Sophie Di-Tonno, Joanne Cefalo and Terry Collins. Seated are Alice Logan and Elaine McNally**



Fr. Steele baptized Lauren Margaret Blois on Easter Sunday, 2004. Lauren is shown with her parents, Sandra and Kevin, her siblings, Julia and Matthew and grandmother, Bea Wheaton



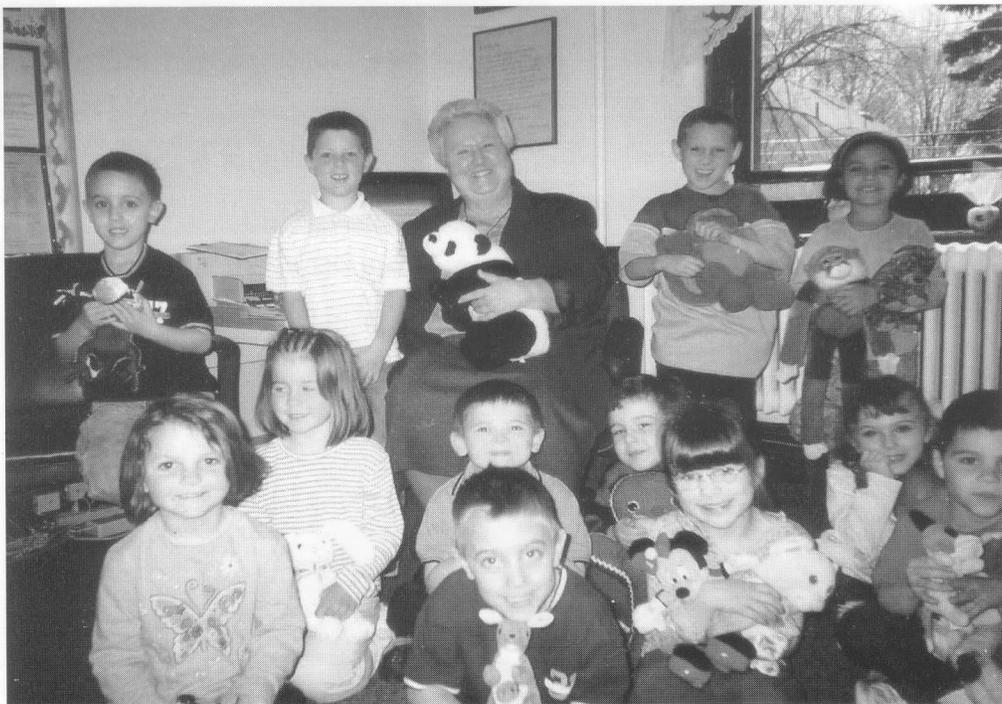
Alumnae celebrating the 75th Anniversary of St. Joseph School in 2000.



Annual Hallowe'en Party  
Joanne Shaw and Leah McCarthy assisting



**SAINT JOSEPH SCHOOL**  
CLASS OF 2004



**Our school Principal, Sister Mary Lou Graziano, S.N.D. with children from our  
Pre-Kindergarten Class.**



**Harvest Parish Mission in October 1997: left to right:  
Fr. Larry Burns, M.M.; Fr. Simeon Gallagher, O.F.M., Cap.  
Bishop Francis X. Irwin, and Fr. Michael Steele**



**Annual Memorial Day Mass celebrated at Forest Glade Cemetery in  
1997; Altar server: Richard Parr; Concelebrants: Fr. Paul Clifford,  
Fr. Steele and Fr. Larry Burns**



Parish Trip to Oberammergau Passion Play, Germany, in 2000. Here the group is pictured at the base of the Alps in Zermatt, Switzerland



Melanie Kelley coordinates over 2200 gifts at our Annual Advent Giving Tree Program together with the students from our Religious Education program



**Pictured are members of the Stewardship Committee: (left to right) Lennie Duggan, Tom Humphreys, Paul Murphy and Jack Kelley**



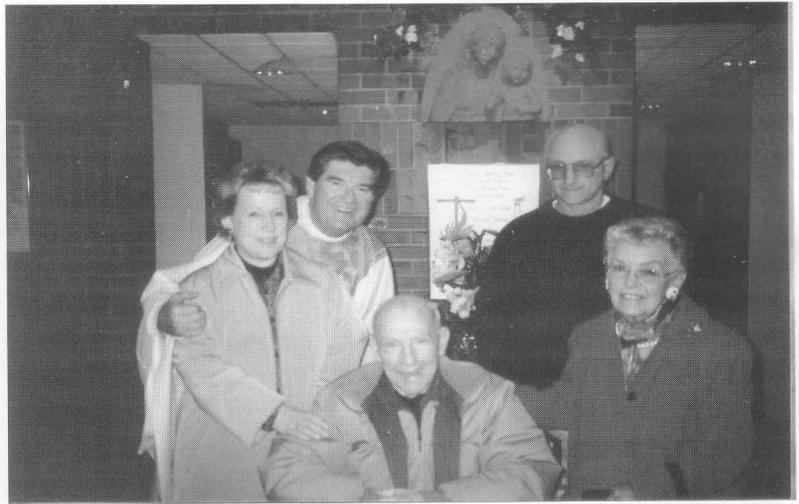
**Canobie Lake gathering, June 2004. Shown in rear: Conor Cummins and Cameron Cronin. In Front: Taylor Makson, Katie Henry, Melissa Dukich and Laurel O'Brien**



**Outstanding students from St. Joseph Parish are Awarded College Scholarships  
Thomas Kelley, Amanda Couture, Sean Kelly, Rel. Ed. Admin., Mrs. Molly DiTonno, Fr. Steele,  
Erica Lee and Joseph Magnarelli**



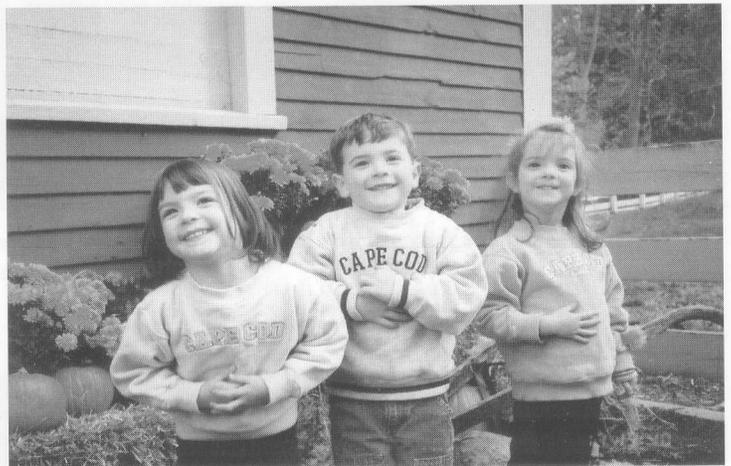
**Junior High Youth Ministry Dance**



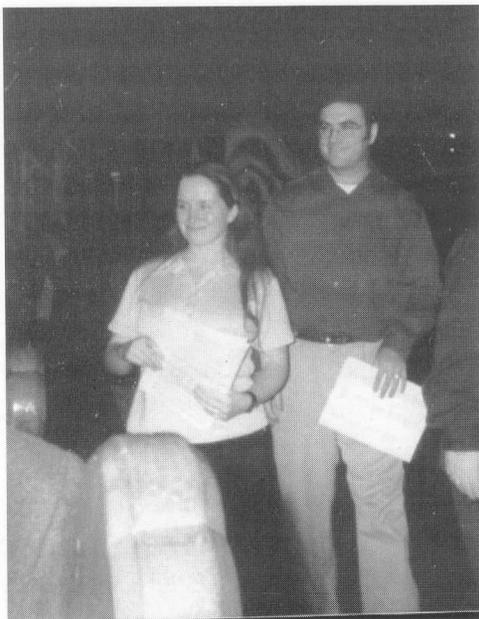
**Ed and Ruth White celebrated their 63<sup>rd</sup> Wedding Anniversary With their daughter and son-in-law Karyl and Tony DiCicco Along with Father Steele on Easter Sunday, 2004**



**Fr. Steele with Ann and Sal Orifice**



**Our Four Year Old Triplets: Anna, Ryan and Erin McCormack They were baptized on October 1, 2000**



**Rite of Christian Election (RCIA) 2004 at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross — George Getty, III and his wife Colleen (Kavanagh) Getty. George is in the process of being received into the Catholic Church**



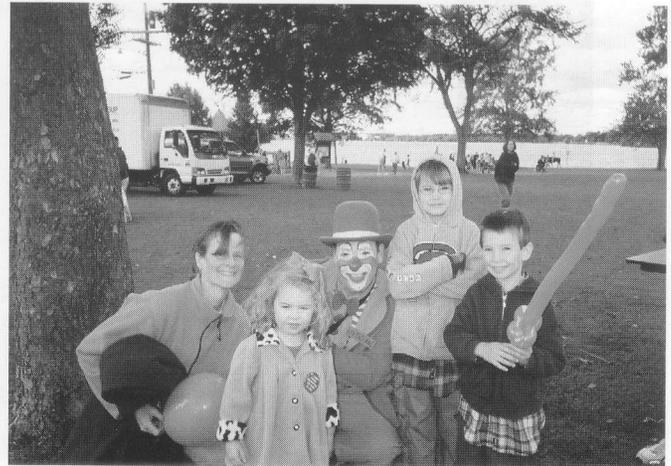
**Christian Service outreach to the Wakefield Food Pantry For Thanksgiving**



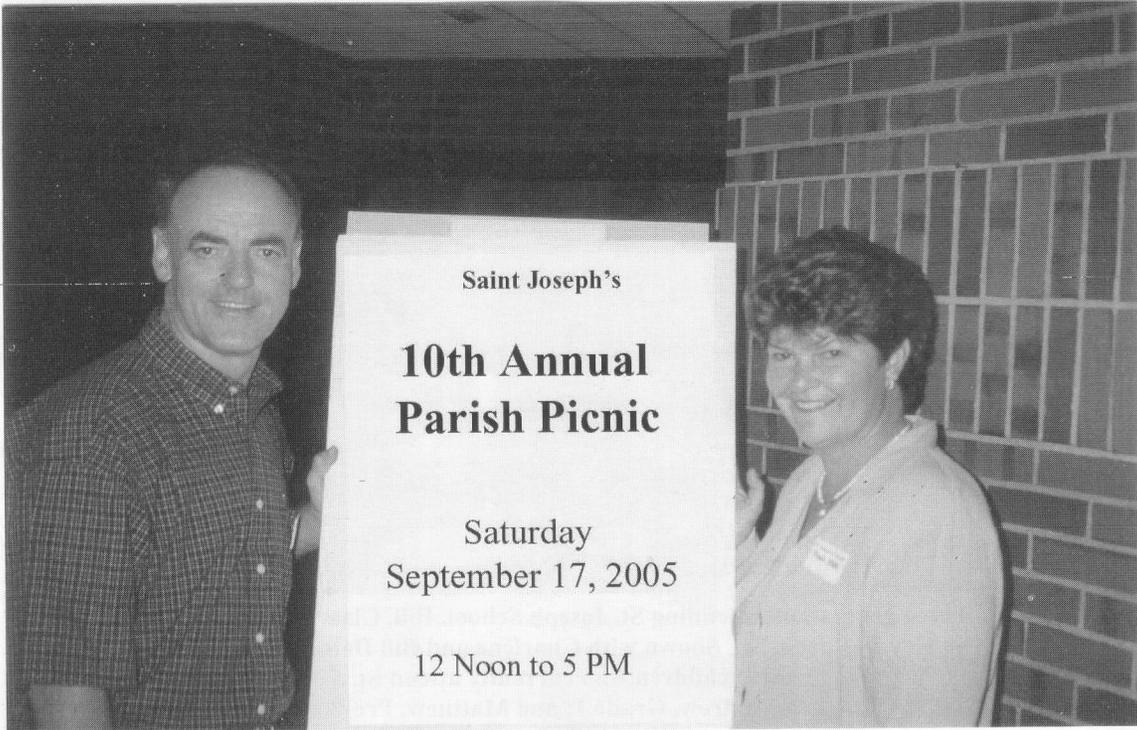
Three generations attending St. Joseph School. Bill, Class of 1942, and Shirley DeRoach, Sr. Shown with Charlene and Bill DeRoach, Class of 1976, and their three children who currently attend St. Joseph School: Ashlyn, Grade 3; Andrew, Grade 1; and Matthew, Pre-Kindergarten



Parish Kids and their friends have fun at the Annual Parish Picnic on the Lake, September, 2004.



Clowning with "Cheesecake" the clown at Parish Picnic on the Lake, September, 2004.



**John and Karen Morrison, Chairpersons of the Parish Picnic for the last 9 years, holding the sign for the 10th Annual Picnic to be held on September 17, 2005**



**August 18, 1996 — the First Annual Saint Joseph School Golf Tournament  
Pictured are: George O'Shea, Fr. Steele, Don Fitzhenry and Fr. Richard Cannon**



**Annual Mass with Anointing of the Sick**



**Family Liturgy participants getting ready for Sunday Mass. Note the new Video setup in the Hall which allows overflow crowds at the liturgy to view their Sunday Mass in the Church. The Video also makes the Family Liturgy available to the homebound via Local Access Cable TV.**



**Palm Sunday and Good Friday are celebrated by players, in costume, from the Family Liturgy**



**The Parish Choir with Mary Pagliarulo and Michele DeMartinis**



**The Gallery of all of the Pastors since the foundation of St. Joseph Parish in 1854**