

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church

Little Italy, Arkansas
1922-2012



Friday, October 5, 2012

Ninety years later, St. Francis Church remains the focal point of Little Italy, Arkansas. For generations this church has served as a reminder of the sacrifices of those that came before us; it bears witness to a deeply rooted faith in God, a profound love of family and an innate desire to serve

Our Pastors Past and Present

our community.

Pastor	Tenure
Rev. J. P. Fischer†	1919
Most Rev. Albert Fletcher†*	1920-1923
Rev. Paul Hatch†	1923
Rev. William Kordsmeier†	1923-1925
Rev. Otto Loeb†	1926
Rev. Henry Nix†	1927-1931
Rev. Msgr. Francis Allen†	1931-1937
Rev. Lawrence Schaefer†	1937-1938
Rev. George Carns†	1938
Rev. Lawrence Maus†	1938-1947
Rev. Msgr. Claiborne Lafferty†	1941-1942
Rev. John J. Mulligan†	1942-1945
Rev. Paul McLaughlin†	1945-1948
Rev. Joseph Wenger†	1948-1950
Rev. George Freyaldenhoven†	1951-1952
Rev. William Kordsmeier†	1952
Rev. John Roberson†	1952-1954
Rev. William Wellman†	1954-1958
Rev. Robert Dagwell†	1958-1964
Rev. John Hlavacek†	1964-1974
Rev. Herman Paul Strassle†	1974-1976
Rev. Henry Baltz†	1976
Rev. James Savary	1976-1982
Rev. Joseph Correnti†	1982-1983
Rev. Amos Enderlin†	1983-1986
Rev. Edward Marley, CSSp†	1986-1988
Rev. Robert Kepple†	1988-1989
Rev. Donald Althoff	1989-1990
Rev. James West	1990-1996
Rev. Richard Davis	1996- PRESENT
† Denotes deceased clergy	
* Bishop of Little Rock 1947-1972	

In 1922, seven years after Little Italy was settled, the first church was built. The building was that of a defunct Catholic church from Ola that opened in 1914 due to a booming lumber industry there. Services had been held in Little Italy since 1919 at the homes of early settlers and priests were assigned to St. Francis from the faculty of St. John's Seminary in Little Rock. One of those early priests was Fr. Albert Fletcher who would eventually become the fourth diocesan bishop. After the tenure of Monsignor Francis Allen from Our Lady of Holy Souls Parish in the late 1930s, the parish was designated as a mission of St. Boniface in New Dixie. Beginning around the same time in the late 1930s St. Francis has held annual bazaars and parish picnics, highlighted by our traditional spaghetti and Italian sausage.

We are a small parish, but our history is rich.

This weekend we celebrate our heritage

and traditions. We pause to reflect upon the families who helped to spread the Catholic faith to rural Arkansas and the priests who ministered to their spiritual needs. Please keep these clergy and the members /descendants of these founding families (Balsam, Belotti, Busato, Carraro, Cia, Chiaro, Crosariol, Dal Santo, Giacometti, Grenato, Ghidotti, Perrin, Segalla, Solda, Vacarri, and Zulpo) in your prayers.

Prayer Service

Opening Prayer.....Fr. Richard Davis, Pastor
Welcoming Remarks.....Vince Chiaro, Spaghetti Dinner Co-Chairperson
Remarks and Recognition of Descendants.....
.....Chris Dorer, Spaghetti Dinner Chairperson
Re-Dedication of St. Francis Church and Closing Prayer of Thanksgiving.....
..... Fr. Richard Davis, Pastor

Wine, Cheese and Dessert Reception

St. Francis Parish Hall

Menu:

Savory Mediterranean Cheesecake
Balsamic Strawberries with Cream
Rosemary Infused Lemon Pound Cake
Fritole
Grustoli
Assorted Italian Cheeses
Mixed Varieties of Table Grapes
Figs

Wine Menu:

Prosecco
Orvieto Classico
Monepulciano de Abruzzi

St. Francis Anniversary Prayer

God the Father, Divine Architect, Creator of our Human Family,
Risen Jesus, Cornerstone of our Faith, Lover of us all,
Spirit of Wisdom, Preserver of community, Our Inspiration and Guide,
You have called us to build up Your Kingdom and continue Your work on Earth:
On our ninetieth anniversary as a parish, bless us with generous hearts,
open minds, greater unity, and renewed vision.
Bestow upon us the courage and faith of our founding families and the compassion
of our priests, both of whom, sacrificed for the preservation of our
sacred, Catholic faith.
May St. Francis Church continue to be a spiritual home where all are welcomed,
nourished and empowered to serve others.

AMEN

Announcement !!!

2015 Marks the 100th Anniversary of the founding of Little Italy

A grant has been applied for to establish a permanent Exhibition or Museum dedicated to the history of Little Italy through the Arkansas Department of Heritage. To receive this grant, it must be proven that there is a collection of original artifacts donated to the Museum Foundation that can be displayed.

Items are already being collected, but we need more. That is where you could fit in. Do you have something from early Little Italy that could be donated? Many times these items are stored away hardly ever seen, but now they can be shared with the Museum Project for all to see.

Here are some ideas for artifacts to donate... We are looking for these items related to or used by the early Italian settlers of Little Italy:

- * Wine Making items/tools
- * Early tools (farming, carpentry, etc)
- * Photographs
- * Diaries/Journals
- * Religious items
- * Toys/Children Items
- * Entertainment items (cards, music, etc)
- * Advertisements/labels for other businesses owned by the early settlers
- * Little Italy Wine Labels/Bottles
- * Early Utensils or Kitchenware
- * Immigration items (trunks, passports, etc)
- * Wine Ledgers/Receipts
- * Clothing
- * Housewares
- * Small furniture

Here are some items already donated...

- * Vintage Arkansas Wine Revenue stamps
- * Fourche River Lumber Token
- * Photos
- * Vintage currency/coins
- * 1915 Chicago, Rock Island RR Timetable
- * Early church items
- * Newspaper Articles
- * 1919 RR map of Arkansas

Please contact Chris Dorer for more information.

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