

**From Blacksmith Shop  
To Gothic Cathedral:**

**THE JOURNEY CONTINUES**

**1887 — 1957**

Rededication

ST. AGNES CATHEDRAL

on the occasion of

The Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Diocese of Rockville Centre

The Most Reverend John R. McGann, D.D.

Bishop of Rockville Centre

Principal Celebrant

May 27, 1982

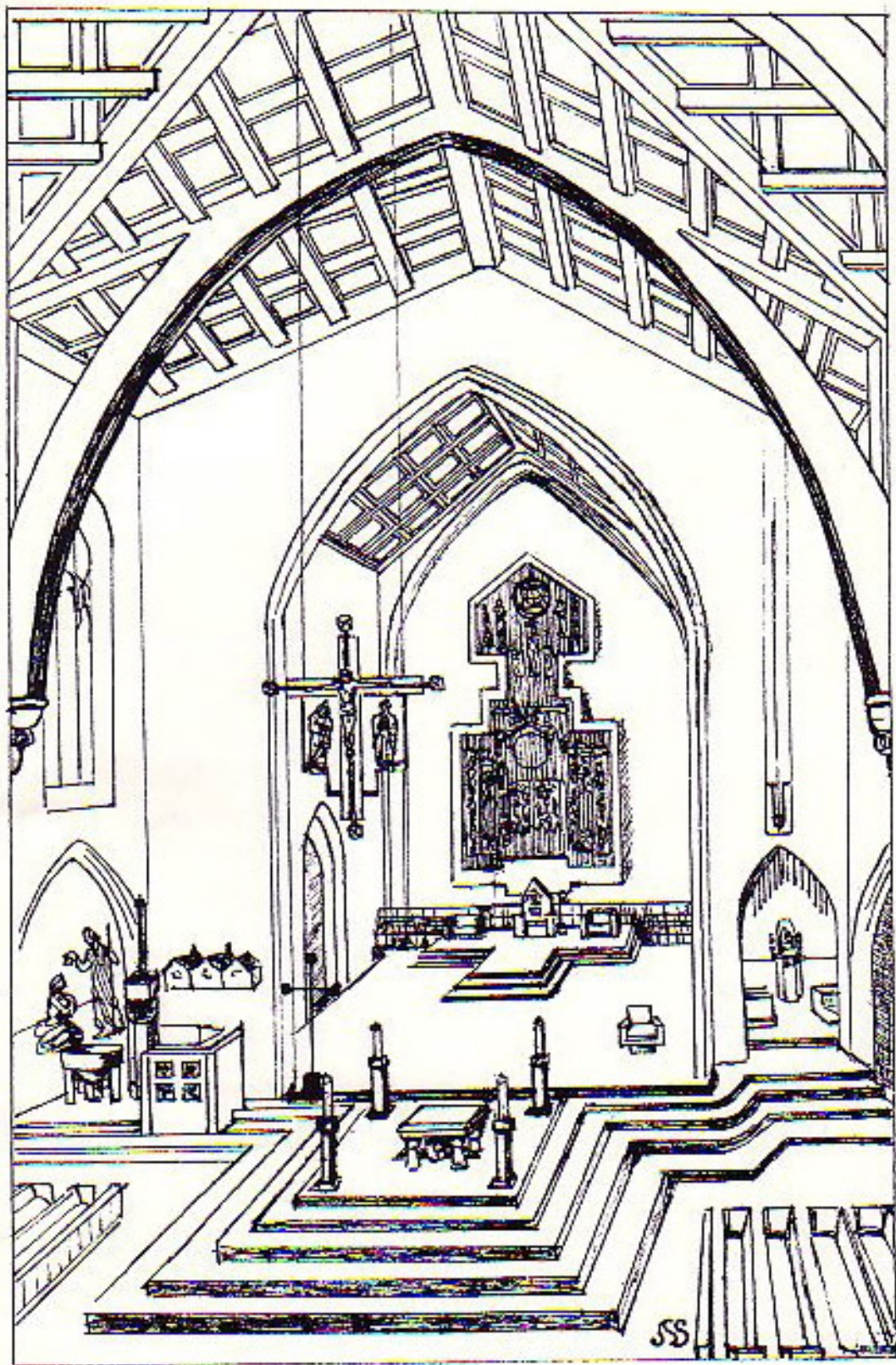
Rockville Centre, New York

*Father in heaven,  
source of holiness and true purpose,  
it is right that we praise and glorify your name.*

*For today we come before you,  
to dedicate to your lasting service  
this house of prayer, this temple of worship,  
this home in which we are nourished by your word  
and your sacraments . . .*

*Lord,  
send your Spirit from heaven  
to make this church an ever-holy place,  
and this altar a ready table for the sacrifice of Christ . . .*

-from Prayer of Dedication



## "Serve the Lord with Gladness"



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CATHEDRAL RENDERINGS:  
Exterior: Michael Kraemer  
Interior: Noreen Samu

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SECRETARIAT OF STATE

No. 84805

FROM THE VATICAN. April 1, 1982

Dear Bishop McGann,

The Holy Father was pleased to learn that the Diocese of Rockville Centre is commemorating the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of its founding.

His Holiness knows that over the years the grace of God has been active in the hearts of the faithful. Through the catechizing efforts of many people God's word has taken root in the life of the diocesan community and numerous men, women and children have come to a better understanding of the great mystery of Christ and his Church.

In giving thanks to the Lord for the benefits received in the past, the Holy Father is confident that our Lord Jesus Christ will lead all the faithful to an ever greater knowledge of himself. He prays that the teaching of Christ, diligently transmitted, will be a source of inspiration and strength to the youth of the Diocese and that it will truly lead them to the joy and fulfillment of authentic Christian living. He also prays that the task of passing Christ's message on to the new generations will be zealously shared by the whole diocesan family.

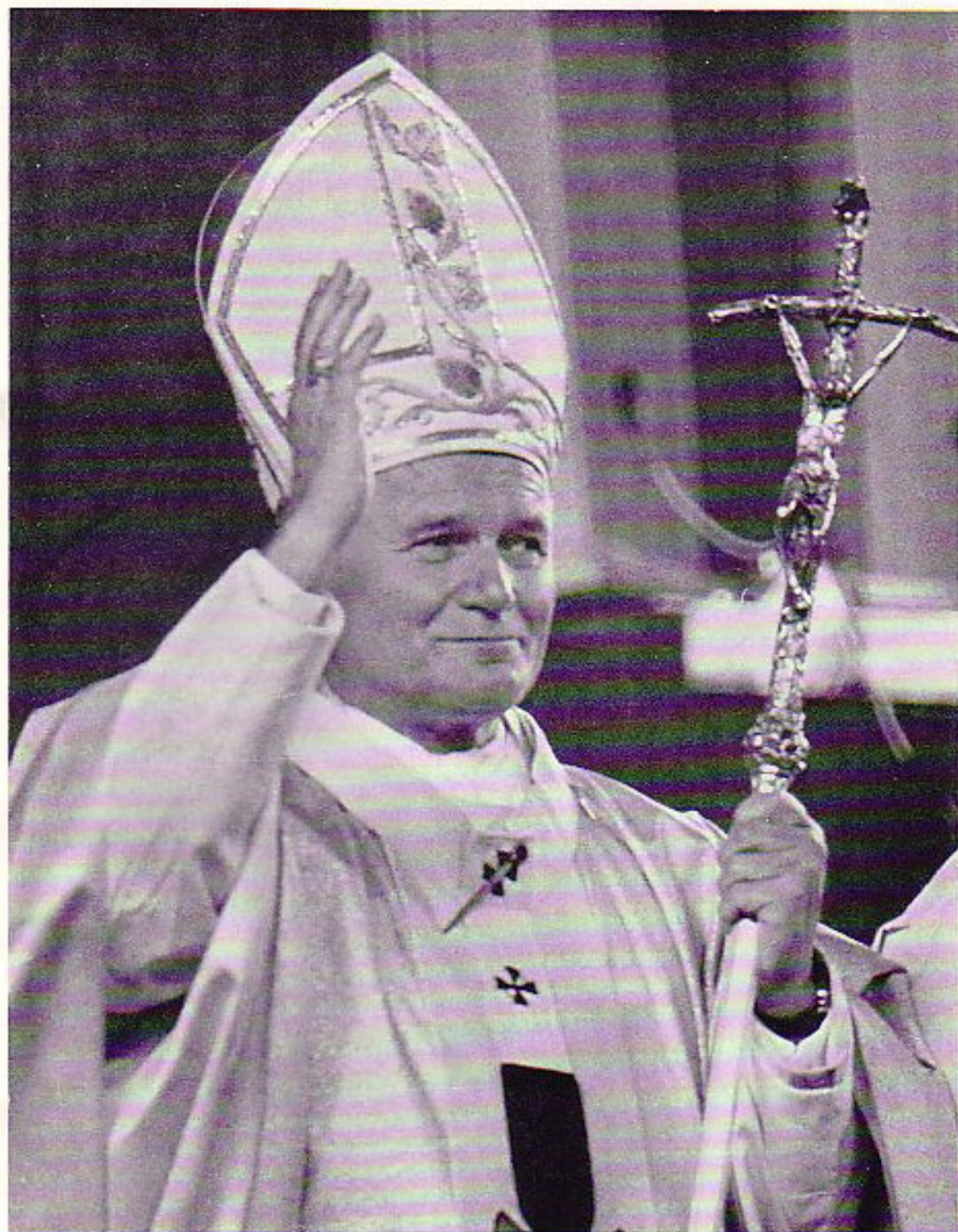
His Holiness commends you and all your clergy, religious and laity to Mary the Mother of Jesus, asking her to sustain you in the great task of making her Son ever better known and loved. As a pledge of strength and peace in Christian living he sends his Apostolic Blessing.

With my own prayerful good wishes for the anniversary, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Secretary of State

The Most Reverend John R. McGann  
Bishop of Rockville Centre  
50 North Park Avenue  
Rockville Centre, NY 11570



*His Holiness Pope John Paul II*

- Long Island Catholic Photo





DIocese OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE  
50 NORTH PARK AVENUE  
ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NEW YORK 11770

Office Of The Bishop

April 2, 1982

My Dear Friends in Christ:

On the day of Bishop Kellenberg's installation as our Founding Bishop, I was among the priests serving the Mass and Installation Ceremony, never thinking of how much my life would be affected by the establishment of our Diocese. It has been a joy to be so much a part of the life of our Diocese these past twenty-five years. I am sure that you join me in expressing sincere and prayerful gratitude to Bishop Kellenberg for all that he was able to accomplish in our parish and in the Diocese. We are blessed that he is among us as we celebrate this Silver Anniversary, and I am sure that we pray that the Lord will continue to bless him with good health for many years to come.

The priests, religious and laity of the Cathedral Parish have always been so supportive of so many endeavors in our life as Church, for which I am most grateful. Our beautiful Cathedral is very closely linked with the lives of all of us on both the diocesan and parochial levels. It is a joy for me to have lived in the Cathedral parish, first as Bishop Kellenberg's Secretary, and more recently as Bishop. I am very much in admiration of the tremendous spirit so evident in our Cathedral Parish, and I am most appreciative of all that you have done to foster that spirit of faith.

The completion of our renovated Cathedral is a tribute to your prayerful and generous support. May its renewal foster our worship of God, and our appreciation of His Son's presence among us in Word and Sacrament. May our Holy Year celebration of our Twenty-fifth Anniversary as the Church of Rockville Centre bring us closer to Christ's fullness.

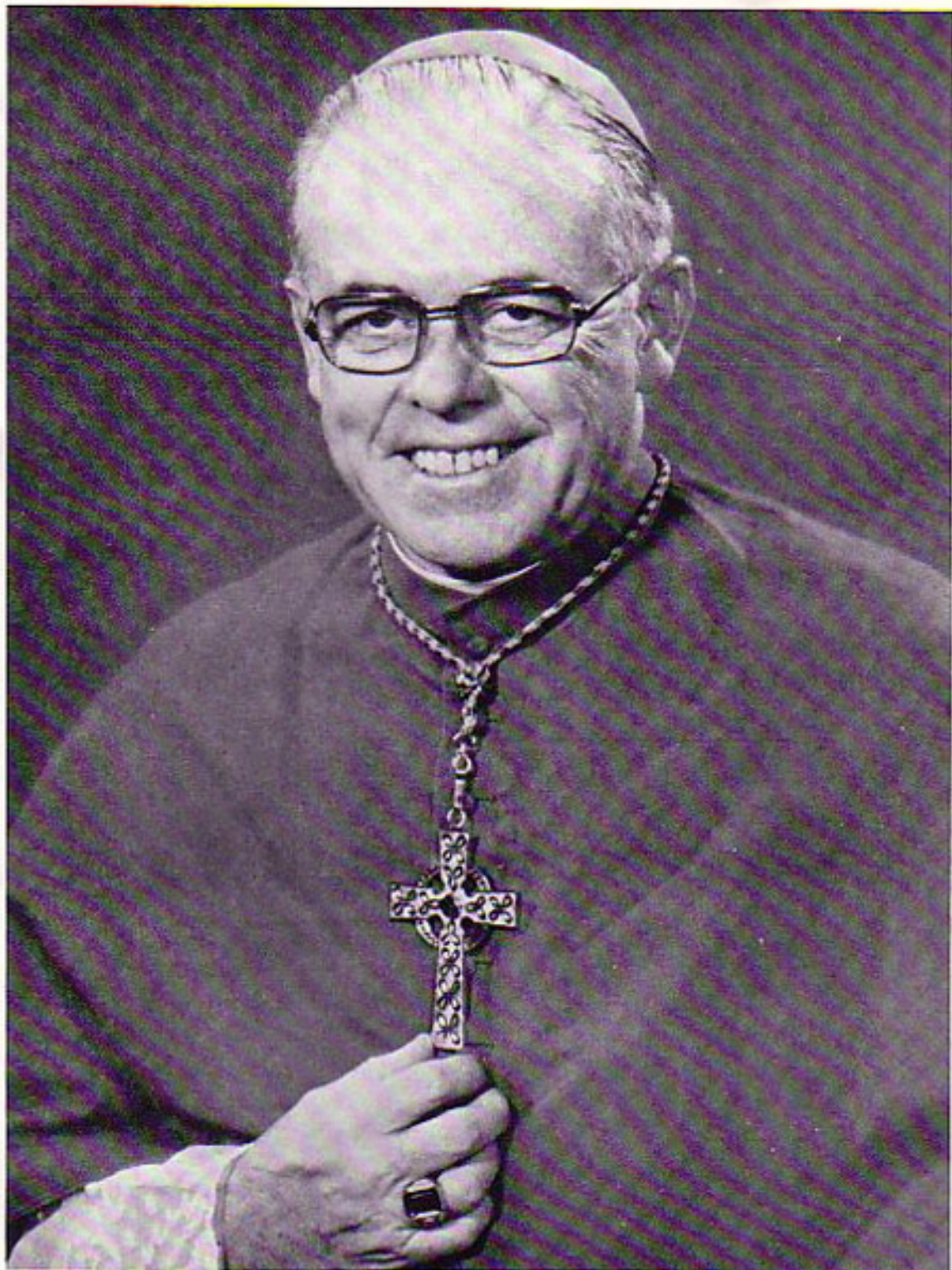
In the words of Saint Paul to the Philippians,

"I give thanks to my God every time I think of you -- which is constantly, in every prayer I utter -- rejoicing, as I plead on your behalf, at the way you have all continually helped promote the gospel from the very first day.

I am sure of this much: that he who has begun the good work in you will carry it through to completion, right up to the day of Christ Jesus."

Faithfully yours in Christ,

*+ John R. McLean*  
Bishop of Rockville Centre



*Most Reverend John R. McGann, D.D.*

- Long Island Catholic Photo



BISHOP'S RESIDENCE

29 GUFALY PLACE

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NEW YORK

April 2, 1982

My Dear Friends in Christ:

It hardly seems possible that twenty-five years have passed since my installation as the Founding Bishop of Rockville Centre. The intervening years have been very exciting ones, as our Diocese has continued to grow in so many ways, and as the universal Church has constantly striven to foster the growth of God's kingdom.

Twenty-five years ago, your beautiful parish church became a Cathedral, the seat of our new Diocese. Your warm welcome on my arrival in the Diocese, your support of my work as Bishop and your assistance to Bishop McGann more recently, and the constant assurance of your prayers have indeed been blessings from God, for which I am ever grateful.

Our Cathedral has been the setting of so many memorable moments in our Diocese, among them the episcopal ordinations of Bishops Baldwin, McGann, Daly and Ryan, the ordinations of so many of our priests, and a wide variety of other celebrations. On many occasions, we came together in sorrow, as we commended people like Monsignor Quealy and Monsignor Williams to the Lord whom they had served so faithfully and so well in this parish for so many years. It has always been a very special place for all of you, and for your families.

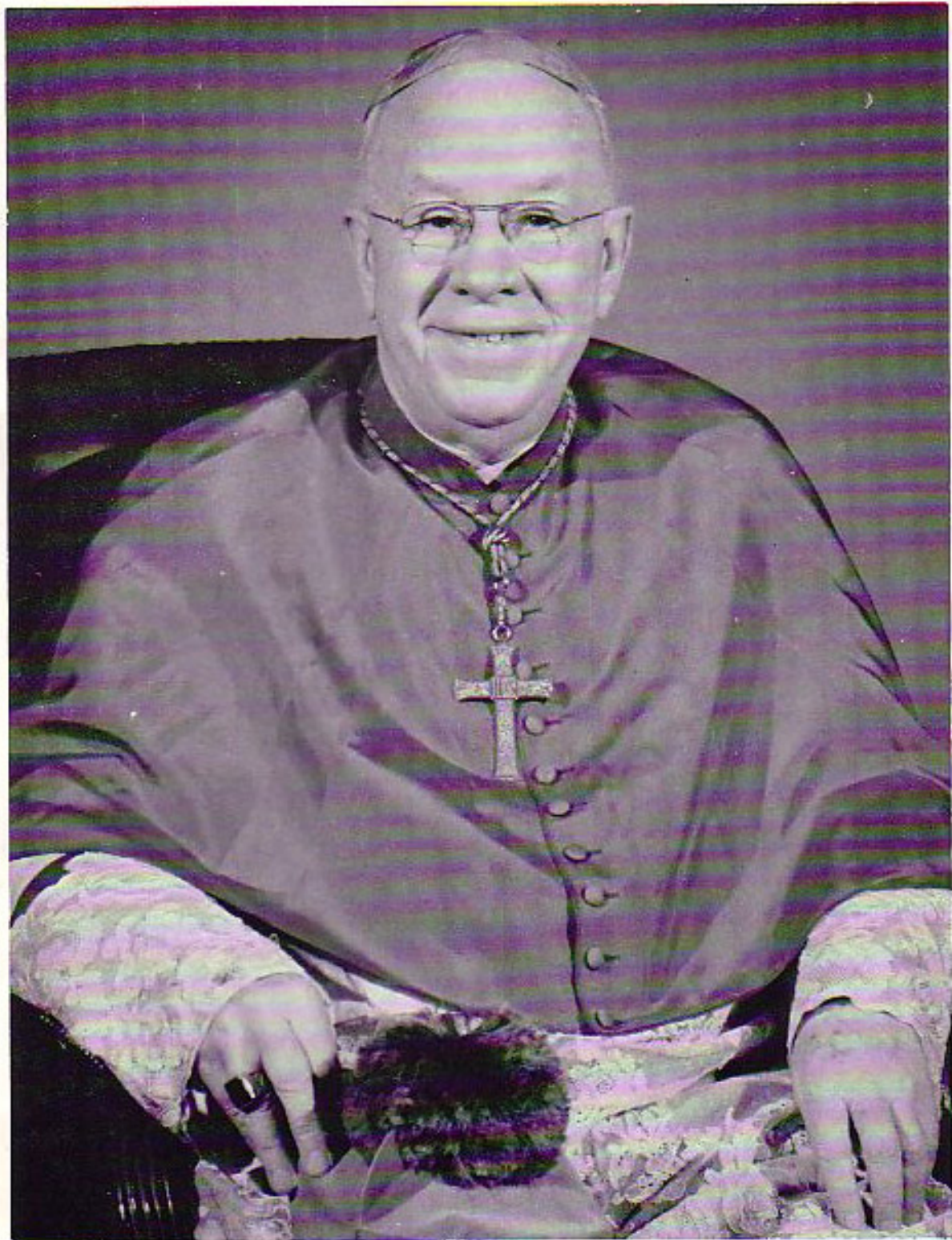
The Twenty-fifth Anniversary of our Diocese, and the completion of the renovation of the Cathedral, are welcome opportunities for us to celebrate our life as Church, and to thank God for his many blessings. It is a joy for me to share these celebrations with you. Be assured, as always, of my deep and prayerful gratitude for all that you have done to foster the life of faith in our parish, and in our Diocese.

With prayerful best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

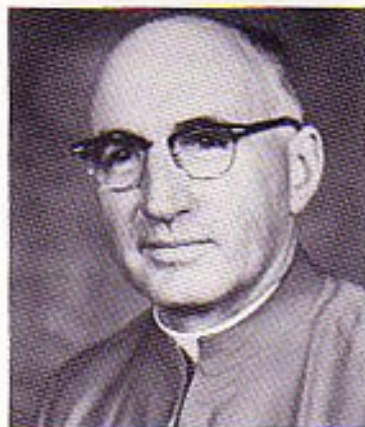
*+ Walter P. Kellenberg*

Most Reverend Walter P. Kellenberg, D.D.



*Most Reverend Walter P. Kellenberg, D.D.*

- Long Island Catholic Photo



**ST. AGNES CATHEDRAL**  
ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NEW YORK 11570

April 18, 1982

My Dear Friends in Christ:

It is indeed a privilege to welcome you on this momentous and happy occasion as we celebrate today the ceremony of Rededication of St. Agnes Cathedral, and the Silver Anniversary of our Diocese of Rockville Centre.

We are fortunate and happy to have with us our Founding Bishop, Most Reverend Walter P. Kallenberg. We thank him for his leadership, inspiration and pastoral concern which resulted in so many parish and diocesan accomplishments.

Truly blessed are we with the Holy Father's selection of Bishop John R. McGann as our second Ordinary. He typifies all that a spiritual leader should be. May God grant him many healthy and fruitful years.

St. Agnes Cathedral Parish has also been blessed with the exceptional quality of our parish priests, residents, deacon, Dominican sisters, lay staff and volunteers. These are the people who make things happen, making ours a truly vibrant parish.

This celebration today must elicit a special sense of satisfaction and accomplishment from all our parishioners and friends from near and far who so generously responded when called upon to support our Cathedral renovation drive. Their encouragement has been an inspiration to all.

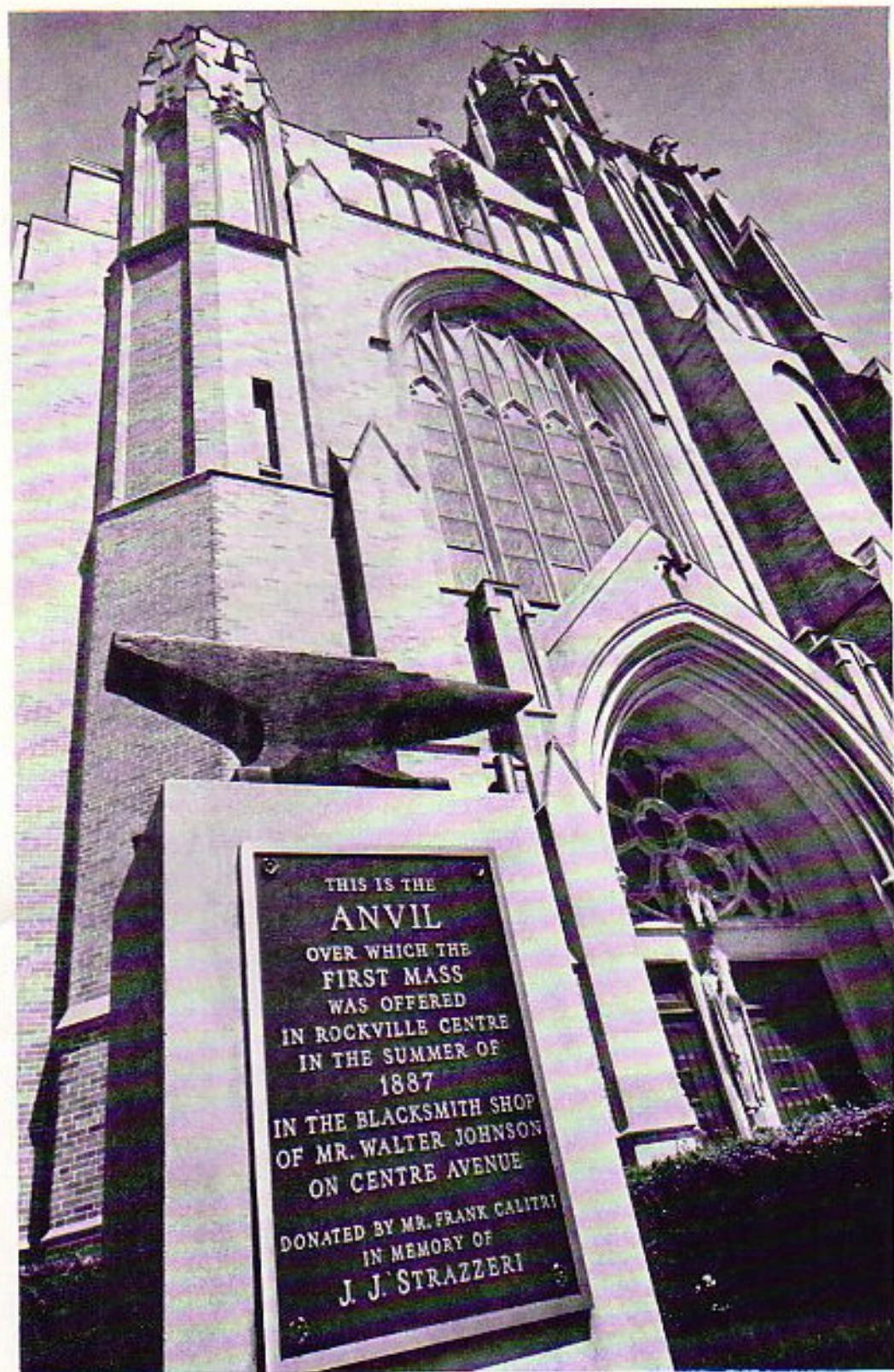
Nostalgia is the note of the day. Succeeding Msgr. Francis J. Williams as Administrator of this vast Cathedral parish was indeed a challenge. But our Bishops, priests and people have made it a joy. For me, they have been most rewarding years.

As we celebrate the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of our diocese, we thank God that St. Agnes was chosen as the Cathedral See. May we, under the guidance of Bishop McGann, face the future with confidence, and may we continue to "Serve the Lord with Gladness."

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*Edward L. Melton*

Reverend Monsignor Edward L. Melton  
Administrator

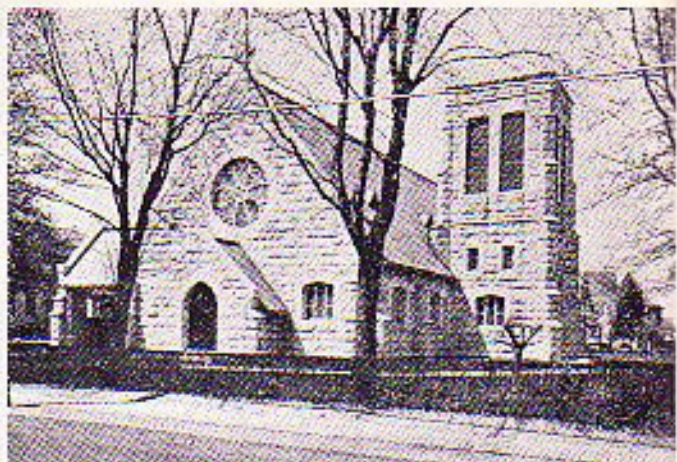


*From blacksmith shop to Gothic cathedral . . . A majestic St. Agnes towers over the anvil used at the site of the first Mass in Rockville Centre.*

• Long Island Catholic photo



*Monsignor Peter Quealy,  
Master Builder of St. Agnes Cathedral.  
- Kenneth R. Sanderson Photo*



*The white marble church 1905-1933*



*The completed interior of St. Agnes Cathedral - 1935.*

## FROM YESTERDAY'S MILESTONES

### *Blacksmith Shop 1887 -*

In the summer of 1887 the first Mass in Rockville Centre was celebrated by Rev. E. J. Connell in a blacksmith's shop on Centre Avenue near Merrick Road, an occasion commemorated by the blacksmith's anvil that today stands in front of St. Agnes Cathedral. Services later were moved to a rented hall on Village Avenue and the fledgling parish did not get its first church until several years later when an old frame schoolhouse on the north side of College Place (now Quealy Place) between Clinton and Village Avenues was acquired at public auction and converted into a church. Rev. Thomas Carroll, the parish's first resident pastor, later built a small rectory alongside the church.

Rev. James Flood became pastor in 1902 and bought additional property that extended the parish's holdings to the corner of College Place and Clinton Avenue. Construction began on a church with an exterior of white marble and was completed in 1905. In December of that year, Bishop John Loughlin named Rev. Peter Quealy, the master builder of St. Agnes Parish, pastor of the only Catholic parish in an area that stretched from Rockville Centre to Long Beach and from Lynbrook to Baldwin.

Father Quealy's first building project was an elementary school completed in 1917 on the site of the present rectory. A new rectory was built where the Cathedral lawn is now, and the old rectory was moved across the street to become the home of the Dominican sisters who taught in the school. It later was moved and annexed to an existing house west of the school. Next came the two-story high school in 1924, a third story in 1938, and the entire building was expanded both eastward and westward in 1950.

Meanwhile two other major projects began. The present convent was completed in 1928 to house the additional Dominican nuns on the schools' staffs, and in 1933, Msgr. Quealy began his greatest building project, a replacement for the old marble church, now too small for his growing parish. The Norman Gothic edifice with its cross-crowned tower, was dedicated in October 1935 by Bishop Thomas E. Molloy of Brooklyn. In 1957, Msgr. Quealy, who had arrived in the United States from Ireland in the "Blizzard of '88," saw his beloved St. Agnes Church become the Cathedral of the Diocese of Rockville Centre.

### *To Gothic Cathedral 1957 -*

1957 On April 18, Pope Pius XII announces formation of the Diocese of Rockville Centre and appoints the Most Rev. Walter P. Kellenberg, Bishop of Ogdensburg in upstate New York, as its first Ordinary; his motto: "Regina Verte Lumina" . . . A gala reception greets Bishop Kellenberg on his arrival in Rockville Centre on May 26; he visits with Msgr. Peter Quealy, pastor of St. Agnes since



1905. He is installed as Bishop the following day by Francis Cardinal Spellman in the newly designated St. Agnes Cathedral . . . Chancery offices are set up in the basement of St. Agnes High School, later they are transferred to a former bank building on Sunrise Highway and North Park Avenue . . . St. Agnes purchases Clinton Avenue School from the village (present St. Agnes Cathedral Elementary School, later expanded, principal now Sr. Kathy Carlin, OP).

1958 Pope Pius XII dies after a reign of nineteen years; he is succeeded by Pope John XXIII . . . Diocese opens St. Pius X Preparatory Seminary in temporary quarters in Hempstead . . . Bishop Kellenberg conducts first of many ordinations of priests for the new diocese, dedicates Molloy College in Rockville Centre . . . Rev. John R. McGann comes to St. Agnes as assistant to the Bishop.

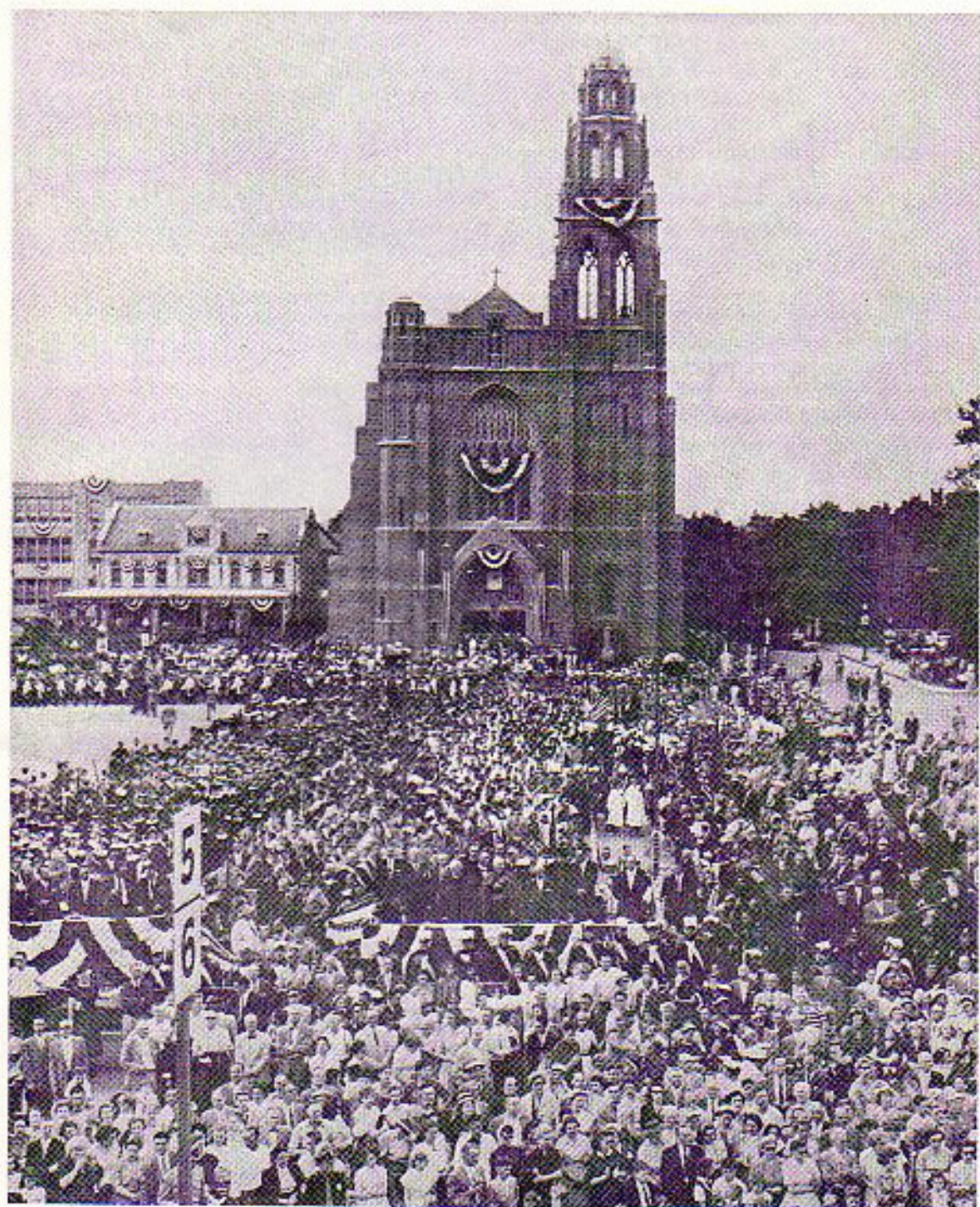
1959 Msgr. Peter Quealy, 91, diligent servant of the Lord, dies . . . Pope John names seventeen priests as papal chamberlains and domestic prelates. They include Very Rev. John R. McGann, secretary to Bishop Kellenberg; Very Rev. Francis J. Williams, administrator of St. Agnes Cathedral; Right Rev. Vincent J. Baldwin and Very Rev. Edward L. Melton, diocesan director of health and hospitals . . . Bishop Kellenberg establishes diocese's first new parish, Christ the King in Commack . . . Molloy College graduates its first class.

1960 Diocese, already the fourth largest in the nation with over 630,000 Catholics, continues to expand rapidly. More than a score of churches, schools, convents and rectories are opened this year . . . Immaculate Conception Seminary sees its thirtieth birthday.

1961 Pope John XXIII convenes the Second Vatican Council, celebrates his 80th birthday . . . Bishop Kellenberg dedicates an eight-room addition to St. Agnes Elementary School and an addition to the St. Agnes convent . . . Cardinal Spellman dedicates new home of St. Pius X Preparatory Seminary in Uniondale (former St. Agnes resident Rev. Msgr. John C. Nösser, current rector).

1962 Right Rev. Vincent J. Baldwin, vicar general and chancellor of the diocese and pastor of St. Joseph's, Garden City, becomes the first Auxiliary Bishop of the diocese . . . Bishop Kellenberg announces establishment of The Long Island Catholic, a weekly newspaper (now under Editor Rev. Msgr. Daniel S. Hamilton) . . . First session of the Vatican Council is held in October . . . Bishop Kellenberg forms Catholic Interracial Council; offers first golden anniversary Mass in the Cathedral for couples married fifty years or more . . . St. Agnes Cathedral's First Annual Parish Celebration honors Bishop Kellenberg, Garden City Hotel - Joseph B. Wagner, chairman.

1963 Pope John XXIII dies and is succeeded by Pope Paul VI . . . Bishop Kellenberg announces plans for four diocesan high schools in Uniondale, Hicksville, South Huntington and West Islip . . . First lay trustees are appointed to board of Catholic Charities . . . Bishop Kellenberg participates in groundbreaking for new south wing of Mercy Hospital . . . Addition to Chancery building is completed . . . St. Agnes Cathedral Choir under Director Paul D. LaMedica offers first of its annual Christmas concerts in the Cathedral (now a tradition at St. Agnes).



*Rockville Centre welcomes our founding bishop: the Most Reverend Walter P. Kellenberg, May 27, 1957.*

1964 Bishop Kellenberg is first bishop to celebrate Mass at Vatican Pavilion . . . Diocesan commissions are established for liturgy, ecumenism and interracial affairs . . . Second Vatican Council in its third session.

1965 Pope Paul VI visits New York World's Fair, speaks at United Nations . . . Bishop Kellenberg appoints committee to coordinate anti-poverty efforts . . . He names principals for diocesan high schools, including Rev. Andrew P. Connolly, former curate at St. Agnes . . . Vatican Council holds its final session . . . Cornerstone is laid for new Cathedral rectory.

1966 Bishop Kellenberg dedicates four diocesan high schools . . . Plans are announced for Priests Advisory Council . . . Guidelines for promoting Christian unity within the diocese are published.

1967 St. Agnes Cathedral is site of first Christian unity service with non-Catholic clergy . . . Priests Advisory Council holds first meeting . . . Diocesan Education Board is formed . . . Bishop Kellenberg is honored by National Conference of Christians and Jews for promotion of charities, education, ecumenism . . . Msgr. Williams, administrator of the Cathedral, dies; he served the Lord and St. Agnes for twenty-five years. Rev. Msgr. Edward L. Melton is named administrator of growing parish of over 4000 families.

1968 Major new role for laity in the Church is unveiled as all parishes are directed to establish parish councils to assist and advise pastors and priests . . . Board is established to make recommendations regarding assignments of priests . . . In St. Agnes, Msgr. Melton hires first full-time CCD coordinator (now the Office of Religious Education, Pam Shannon DRE, serving over 900 families).

1969 Bishop Kellenberg dedicates the Regina Residence for unwed mothers . . . With Cardinal Spellman and Bishop Mugavero of Brooklyn, he issues guidelines for Catholic-Jewish relations . . . Diocesan task force on race and poverty is established . . . St. Agnes Parish Council holds its first meeting.

1970 Diocesan census shows over one million Catholics in Nassau and Suffolk . . . Diocese begins continuing venture into new form of communication and education with establishment of Diocesan Educational Television Center . . . Full-time priest is assigned to the Smith Haven Ministries . . . Rev. (now Msgr.) R. Emmet Fagan succeeds Rev. Msgr. (now Bishop) Gerald J. Ryan as Director of Catholic Charities . . . Msgr. McGann is one of ten diocesan priests in the country named to serve on fifty-member advisory council to bishops of the United States.

1971 Msgr. McGann becomes the diocese's second Auxiliary Bishop at his ordination ceremony in the Cathedral in January; homilist, John Cardinal Carberry, his former instructor. Bishop McGann is designated Episcopal Vicar for Suffolk County, Bishop Baldwin assumes similar responsibilities for Nassau County . . . Bishop Kellenberg sets up Task Force on Poverty, Race and Allied Problems under Rev. Msgr. Henry J. Reel (now the Human Development Office) . . . Cathedral resident Rev. Edward G. Sullivan is asked to initiate pilot project



*As we knew him, a smiling Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Williams.*  
- Patrick Photo



*Bishop John R. McGann's Ordination as Auxiliary, January 7, 1971. (l. to r.) Most Reverend Charles R. Mulrooney, His Eminence Terence Cardinal Cooke, Most Reverend John R. McGann, Most Reverend Walter P. Kellenberg, His Eminence John Cardinal Carberry and Most Reverend Vincent J. Baldwin.*

- Long Island Catholic Photo



*Off to attend Vatican II: Rev. Msgr. Edward L. Melton, Cathedral administrator; Bishop Gerald J. Ryan, Bishop Walter P. Kellenberg; Msgr. Thomas V. Daly, Pastor of Corpus Christi, Mineola; the late Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Williams and Bishop McGann, then a monsignor, and Bishop Kellenberg's Secretary.*

- F. Gerard Moran Photo

for spiritual care of the diocese's Hispanic Catholics, beginning in the Freeport/Rockville Centre area . . . In an interview, Bishop McGann says of St. Agnes, "It's an alive parish!"

1972 Women of St. Agnes celebrate Thirtieth Annual Mary's Day Mass . . . Journal for Annual Parish Celebration commemorates St. Agnes' fifteen years as the Cathedral Parish . . . Bishop Kellenberg implements Pope Paul VI's 1971 permission authorizing Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist. Msgr. Melton, administrator of the Cathedral, commissions the first group in St. Agnes in December: three ministers – two nuns, one lay woman, designated to serve the Cathedral Parish as assigned.

1973 In the first of a series of continuing efforts to counter the rising tide of abortion, the diocese promotes participation in the first March for Life in Washington, D.C. Parishioners of St. Agnes board buses and trains for the trip with hundreds of other Catholics from all over the diocese. (Former resident of St. Agnes, Rev. Paul Driscoll now heads Human Life Office.)

1974 Sixth Religious Education Congress celebrates theme "From East to West," in series of major programs promoting religious education for children and adults, under auspices of Religious Education Department. (In 1981 Department became Office of Catechesis and Worship; Cathedral resident Rev. (now Msgr.) Francis J. Maniscalco, Director since 1975.) . . . St. Agnes begins expanding its program involving Eucharistic Ministers as Msgr. Melton commissions five new ministers to join original three serving the Cathedral . . . Retreat and prayer movements continue drawing thousands.

1975 Pope Paul VI designates 1975 a Holy Year for the Universal Church; St. Agnes' celebration includes procession from Molloy College to Cathedral . . . Bishop McGann names Cathedral resident Rev. Edward G. Sullivan as Coordinator for Apostolate to see to the spiritual care of the diocese's 100,000 Hispanics spread over twenty parishes . . . Consolation Residence opens in West Islip . . . The Cathedral Parish continues tradition of Pentecost confirmations with five bishops administering the sacrament: Bishop Kellenberg, Bishop McGann, Bishop Benedito Coscia OFM, Bishop John E. Taylor OMI, Bishop Ronald G. Connors CSSR.

1976 Bishop Kellenberg announces he will retire at the age of 75. Pope Paul VI appoints Bishop McGann to succeed him . . . June 24 Bishop McGann is installed in colorful, crowded, joyous ceremonies in Nassau Coliseum; he adopts as his motto: "Serve the Lord with Gladness" . . . In one of his first episcopal actions, the Bishop implements a program for permanent deacons . . . Bishop McGann leads diocese's participants to Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia . . . St. Agnes opens its storefront Cathedral Service Center on Clinton Avenue opposite St. Agnes High School, under direction of Sr. Josephine Hitlin OP, with the guidance of Catholic Charities . . . Seniors in St. Agnes High School Religion Department's expanding volunteer service projects find their Fridays well spent (current principal, Dr. Arlene Gilligan).



*Msgr. Edward L. Melton and Msgr. Henry J. Reel, co-chairmen of the committee for the installation, greeted Bishop McGann on his return from Chicago and the U.S. bishops' meeting just after it was announced that Bishop McGann would be the second Ordinary of the diocese.*

- Long Island Catholic Photo



*Most Reverend Walter P. Kellenberg, Founding Bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Centre with his two auxiliaries, right, Most Reverend John R. McGann and Most Reverend Vincent J. Baldwin - June 24, 1976.*

- Long Island Catholic Photo



*March, 1977 - the official announcement of the two new auxiliary bishops. Bishop McGann is flanked by Bishop Kellenberg and the late Bishop Baldwin. Bishop-elect Gerald J. Ryan is at left, while Bishop-elect James J. Daly is at right.*

- Long Island Catholic Photo

1977 The 129-parish diocese receives two new Auxiliary Bishops: For Nassau, Bishop James J. Daly, formerly pastor of St. Boniface, Elmont; and for Suffolk, Bishop Gerald J. Ryan, formerly pastor of St. Raymond's, East Rockaway . . . Bishop McGann heads pilgrimage to canonization ceremonies of St. John Neumann . . . Issues pastoral letter on racial justice . . . Approves Communion in the hand . . . Hispanic Apostolate expands as Sr. Dorothy Ammon OP becomes co-coordinator working with Father Sullivan . . . Bishop McGann hosts New York State Bishops' three-day Provincial Meeting on Aging; concelebrates closing Mass in Cathedral for participants from all over the state with their bishops, including Terence Cardinal Cooke of New York.

1978 Pope Paul VI dies after a reign of fifteen years. He is succeeded by Pope John Paul I and then, only a month later, by Pope John Paul II, the first pope from Poland . . . In the Diocese of Rockville Centre, the first Bishop's Annual Appeal is conducted to improve the financial condition of the diocese. This annual drive surpasses its goal every year and the parishioners of St. Agnes top theirs also . . . Mercy Hospital Hospice opens, offering loving care to the terminally ill and their families.

1979 Bishop McGann releases Revs. Kenneth Hasselbach and Robert Field to assist Bishop Ronald G. Connors CSSR in his Diocese of San Juan de La Maguana, Dominican Republic. Srs. Jane Reilly and Beatrice Barry, Josephites from the Diocese of Rockville Centre, expand this mission, tending another village fifteen miles distant . . . Bishop Baldwin dies at the age of 72, a priest for forty-eight years and bishop for seventeen. His motto was: "Conquer Evil with Good" . . . Pope John Paul II makes memorable visit to the United States; the St. Agnes Choir sings at his appearance at Shea Stadium; Bishop McGann introduces him at the Youth Rally in Madison Square Garden which many St. Agnes young people attend; Cathedral residents Rev. (now Msgr.) John F. Bennett, secretary to Bishop McGann, and Rev. (now Msgr.) Francis J. Maniscalco much involved: Father Bennett carries the Papal crozier during Mass at Yankee Stadium, Father Maniscalco is one of television Channel 11's commentators . . . Bishop McGann issues pastoral letter opposing the death penalty, approves the distribution of Holy Communion under both Species, ordains first group of forty-eight permanent deacons . . . Feast of St. Agnes sees First Volunteer Appreciation Day in the Cathedral, with Mass celebrated for all the parish's volunteers both in and out of the many organizations contributing to life in the Cathedral Parish . . . St. Agnes Parish celebrates with Sr. Marian OP her sixty years of service to First Graders - her "Little Ones."

1980 First convocation of all clergy of the diocese is held . . . first housing project sponsored by the diocese is dedicated in Selden; additional projects are planned . . . In commemorative book for Immaculate Conception Seminary's Fiftieth Anniversary, Bishop McGann and Brooklyn's Bishop Francis J. Mugavero describe its expanded purpose: "From serving only the ministry of priesthood, it now serves as well the ministries of the restored diaconate, extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist, and programs for effective religious education for religious and laity." . . . Bishop McGann ordains second class of permanent deacons, including St. Agnes' Robert J. Poh . . . Bishop McGann preaches at Rockville Centre's annual Thanksgiving Eve interfaith prayer service held this year at Shiloh Baptist Church, Rockville Centre.



*Prior to his first Mass as the new Ordinary, Bishop McGann receives the keys to the Cathedral from Administrator, Rev. Msgr. Edward L. Melton. Looking on, (l. to r.) Rev. Edward Sullivan, Director of Hispanic Apostolate, Rev. John J. Fitzgerald, and Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Maniscalco. - Long Island Catholic Photo*

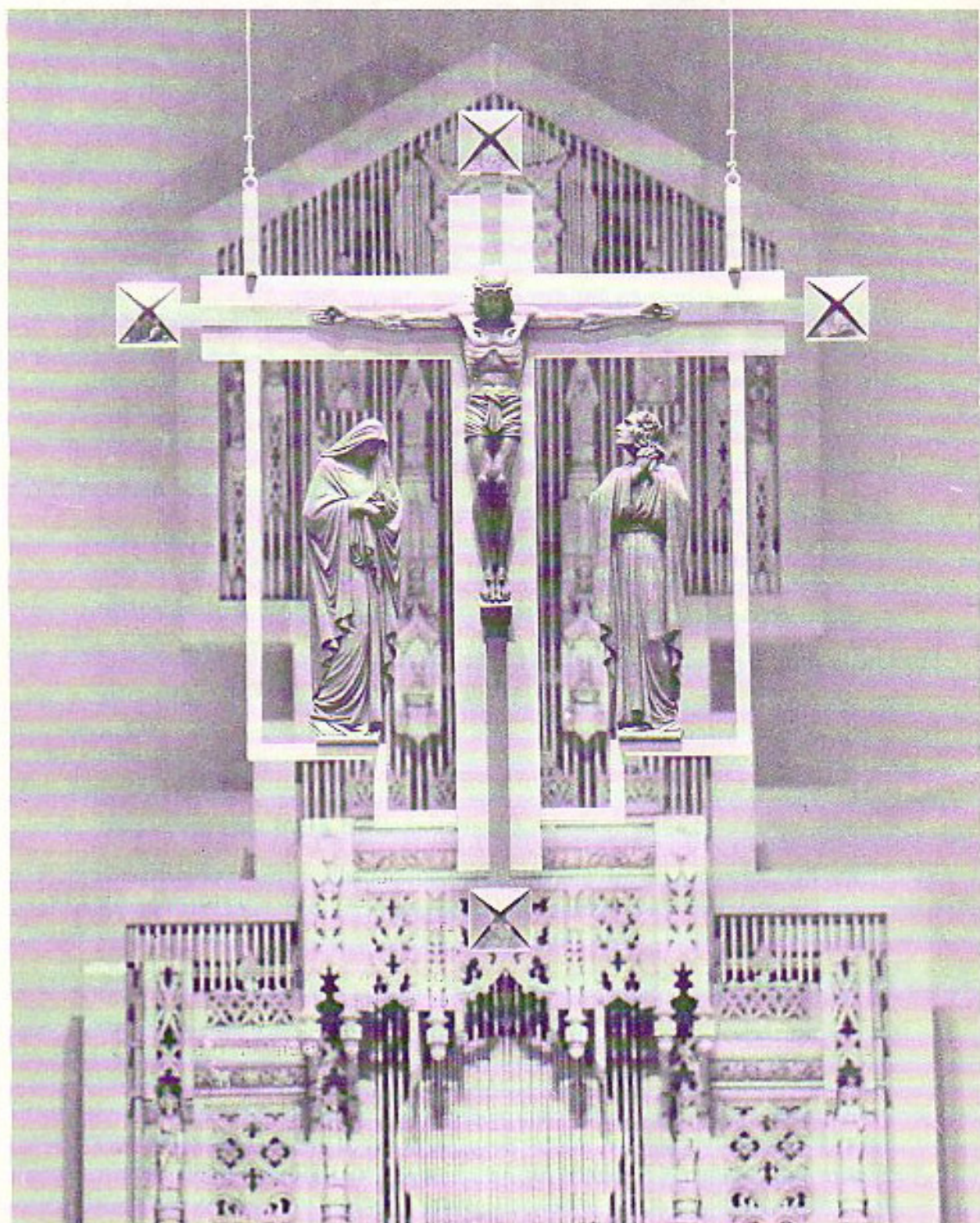
1981 Bishop McGann conducts diocesan pilgrimage to Eucharistic Congress in Lourdes, France . . . Msgr. Melton, Cathedral administrator, adds Sr. Maelene Meehan OP to staff, as full-time Parish Visitor . . . Plans are announced for a major renovation of St. Agnes Cathedral; fund drive begins, goals are topped; scaffolding goes up as does temporary chapel for daily Masses in the parking lot across from the Cathedral . . . Bishop McGann announces 1982 will be a Holy Year to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the diocese. "It is not years that are holy," he says, "but people who are called to mirror God's goodness." . . . St. Agnes' Rev. Daniel A. Picciano serves on diocesan steering committee for 1982 Holy Year, theme: "Unto the Fullness of Christ: A Call to Growth and Unity;" as moderator of Cathedral's Eucharistic Ministers, gives annual Day of Recollection, theme: Zacchaeus . . . John Hanlon, senior lay member of the Cathedral family and Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, hits his 25-year mark with St. Agnes.

1982 Lent finds St. Agnes parishioners and others attending daily Masses in the Episcopal Church of the Ascension (opposite St. Agnes convent) at the gracious invitation of The Venerable Donald C. Latham, as the temporary "Lady Chapel" proves too small for Lenten communicants . . . At local nursing home, St. Agnes' Rev. Joseph C. McComiskey receives joyous lady into the Church amid friends and co-residents; a memorable one-liner after Easter: "In approaching one another, we approach the sacred." . . . First Holy Week ceremonies in soon-to-be-finished Cathedral on Holy Thursday sees morning Chrism Mass with more than 140 priests joining Bishops McGann, Daly and Ryan in renewing their priestly commitment and accepting sacred oils for their parishes; then at 8 p.m. the Mass of the Lord's Supper sees Bishop McGann washing the feet of twelve parishioners ages 16 to 86 . . . Bishop McGann appointed to sixty-member U.S. Bishop's Advisory Council, which includes laity, Religious, priests and bishops, a consultative group assisting the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the U.S. Catholic Conference . . . Renovation is completed. St. Agnes Cathedral is rededicated at special ceremonies on May 27, twenty-five years to the day that Bishop Kellenberg became the Founding Bishop and St. Agnes became the Cathedral of the Diocese of Rockville Centre.

*The Journey Continues . . .*

-Compiled with assistance from The Long Island Catholic, Parishioners and other Friends of St. Agnes





*Christ crucified, with Mary, His Mother and John, the Apostle, beneath the Cross – all figures from the original altar of St. Agnes.*

*- Long Island Catholic Photo*

## AND TODAY'S REDEDICATION

*"O Lord, I love the beauty of Thy house  
and the place where Thy glory dwells."*

In 1935, when the newly built Church of St. Agnes in Rockville Centre was dedicated, a brochure entitled "From A Blacksmith Shop To A Majestic Gothic Edifice" recounted the history of St. Agnes Parish from its earliest days in the late 1880's through the construction of the old white marble church in 1905 and, finally, to the construction of the magnificent church that dominated the Long Island landscape for miles around.

Prophetically, the description of the new church in that brochure began: "Cathedral-like in quiet strength, grace and majesty . . ." That description became reality in 1957 when Msgr. Peter Quealy, then in the fifty-second year of his pastorate at St. Agnes, saw the church that he and his loyal parishioners had built become a Cathedral, the seat of the new Diocese of Rockville Centre that was formed by separating Nassau and Suffolk Counties from the Diocese of Brooklyn.

In 1982, the Diocese of Rockville Centre observes the twenty-fifth anniversary of its establishment and also marks the completion of a major renovation of St. Agnes Cathedral, a project that begins a new stage in its life of service to both the Parish of St. Agnes and the Diocese of Rockville Centre.

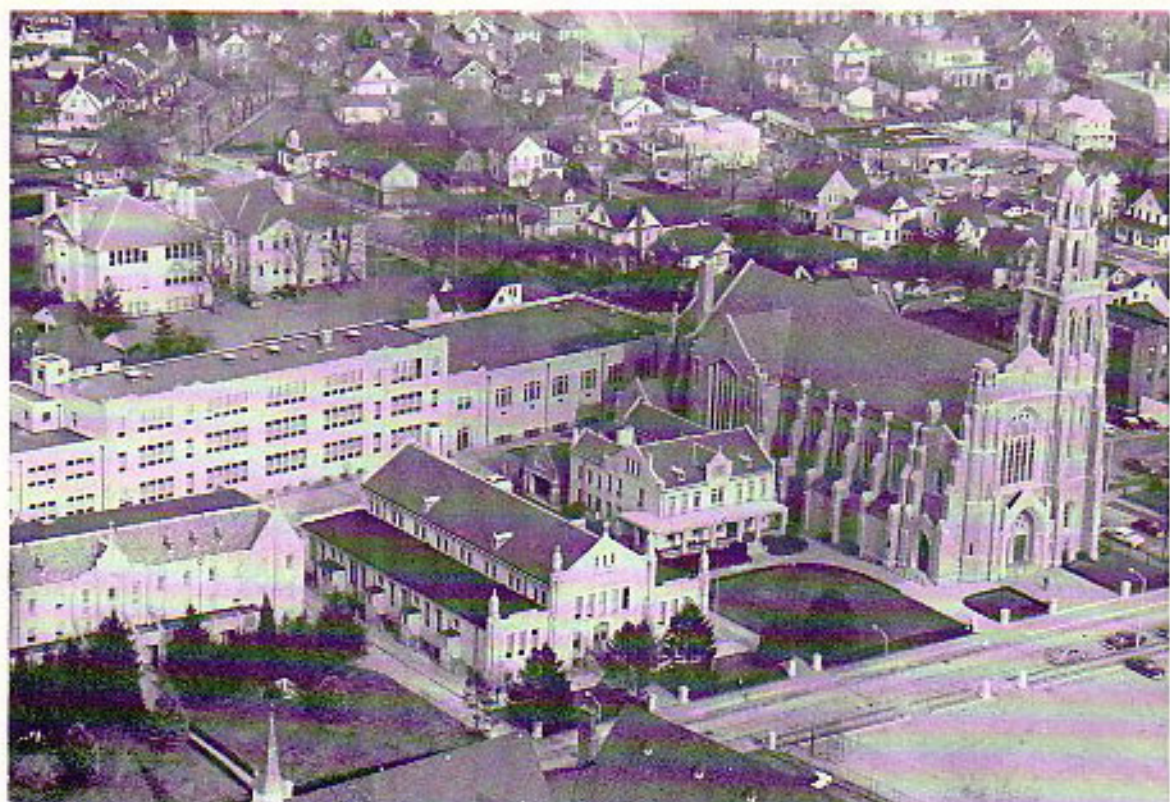
To explore the changes that have been made in the Cathedral and how they are intended to enhance the spiritual lives of the people of God in Rockville Centre and throughout the diocese, we enlisted the services of Rev. John J. McGeever, an assistant pastor of St. Agnes who heads the committee for the liturgical appointments for the Cathedral.

Outside, the Cathedral has not changed at all. The massive walls of buff-colored brick and limestone trimmings still reach to the multihued slates of the roof. The bell tower still ascends 150 feet toward heaven. The statues of Christ the King and St. Agnes, virgin and martyr and patroness of the Diocese, still stand watch over the faithful as they move through the Cathedral's main entrance on Quealy Place.

Inside, all appears to be quite different from what it was before. But, as Father McGeever pointed out as we began a walking tour, some changes are more apparent than real. "Whatever could be saved was saved," he declared. "There's very little here now that wasn't here before. You may not recognize some of the old features in their new places but they are still here in one form or another. Statues, marble, oak panels — all have been used in new ways. Just look around, you'll find them."



*St. Agnes Cathedral . . .  
Interior 1982.  
- Frank McHugh Photo*



*Aerial view circa 1952 of St. Agnes with original rectory to the left of the Cathedral and original elementary school to right of convent.*

*- F. Gerard Moran Photo*

The reasons for the changes were both practical and liturgical, Father McGeever explained. Old, outmoded electrical and heating systems had to be brought up to contemporary needs and standards. The Cathedral also had to be modified to conform to recommendations in post-Council documents, as well as those of the Bishops of the United States, regarding the purposes and designs of cathedrals.

These recommendations indicated, among other things, that liturgical ceremonies should be audible and visible to all. Further, to offer us the opportunity to sense as deeply as possible our role as the People of God, his community worshipping together, the altar of the Cathedral was brought forward and raised to bring the celebrants closer to the congregation. The pews in the transept areas also were turned around to face the altar from the side, again to foster this concept of community.

Another recommendation was that the *cathedra*, the Bishop's chair, be in a prominent position visible to all. And so a new cathedra was designed and placed in its new location in the center of the sanctuary. Still another recommendation was that the repository for the Holy Eucharist should be in a well-defined area separate from, yet accessible to, the main part of the church. And so the Blessed Sacrament Chapel came into being at the east side of the sanctuary.

Another major consideration in the design of the renovation, Father McGeever noted, was the enhancement of the administration of all sacraments in the Cathedral. This is reflected in the transfer of the baptismal font from its former location in the rear of the church to the sanctuary area, placing it in the very heart of the Cathedral, and further, in the conversion of the old confessionals into rooms of reconciliation which also will offer the penitent the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the traditional screened area. Speaking of the new baptismal area, Father McGeever noted: "It emphasizes the public aspect of the sacrament. It is a reminder that all of us have been made one with Christ and one with each other."

As we stood in the vestibule by the main entrance, Father McGeever pointed out some other changes. The rose window above the vestibule that depicts the life and martyrdom of St. Agnes remains, of course, but the statue of St. Agnes that originally stood in a niche above the main altar, and then on the back wall of the vestibule, now stands in a new, more fitting shrine on the east side of the entrance to the Cathedral. On the west side, at the site of the old baptistry, rests the poignant wooden sculpture of the Pieta, the Blessed Mother holding her dead Son beneath the empty wooden Cross. Between the doors stands the old font from the baptistry, now to be the central holy water font for all as we enter the Cathedral.

Entering the nave of the Cathedral, changes appear to be everywhere. The bright reds, blues and greens of the ceiling form a brilliant scarlet cross that stretches to the new altar. Above hangs the great wooden crucifix; below the crucified Jesus stand His Blessed Mother and His faithful apostle and friend, St.



*The original baptismal font, used in the marble church and the current Cathedral, now the central holy water font at the doors of the Cathedral.*

- James O'Neill Photo



*"I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Bishop McGann baptizes infant at the new baptismal font during the Easter Vigil Mass, April 10, 1981.*

- Frank McHugh Photo



*Rose window of St. Agnes.*

- O'Neill Photo



*Tiles representing the four evangelists - Sts. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John that once graced the sanctuary floor.*

- Long Island Catholic Photo



*Monsignor Melton with the project engineers: left, Salvatore A. Milone of Dominick Milone, Inc., Construction Managers; and Richard Wiedersum of Wiedersum Associates, Architects.*

John. All three figures are from the reredos, or ornamental screen, that previously rose above the main altar. Other parts of the old reredos now are incorporated into the massive new reredos over the Bishop's chair. The designers describe the reredos as: "In providing an architectural background for the renovated sanctuary at St. Agnes Cathedral, the existing reredos was restored and recomposed to create a new majestic sculpture. Being centrally located, it is given importance by its form, color and scale. The overall design is meant to recall the Gothic architectural imagery one experiences from the exterior. This concept carries out a redefined fashion that strongly supports the Gothic spirit which is the vernacular in this Cathedral. An important feature of the reredos is the circular form in the center, articulated to evoke a rose window typical in most authentic Gothic cathedrals. This design is a profound statement of the Cathedral renovation."

The new ceiling with its brilliant panels has two purposes, Father McGeever explained. "It adds brightness to the space below and it accentuates the colors of the windows of antique stained glass, which are masterpieces." The windows, of course, have not been changed. The three largest windows depict major events in the life of Christ and relate them to the mysteries of the Rosary.

The window in the west transept depicts the Birth of Christ and the Joyful Mysteries. The east transept window depicts the Resurrection and the Glorious Mysteries. The window above the choir loft depicts the Crucifixion and the Sorrowful Mysteries. The windows above the sanctuary depict the four evangelists, Sts. Matthew and Mark on the east side and Sts. Luke and John on the west side. The other windows contain portraits of various saints:

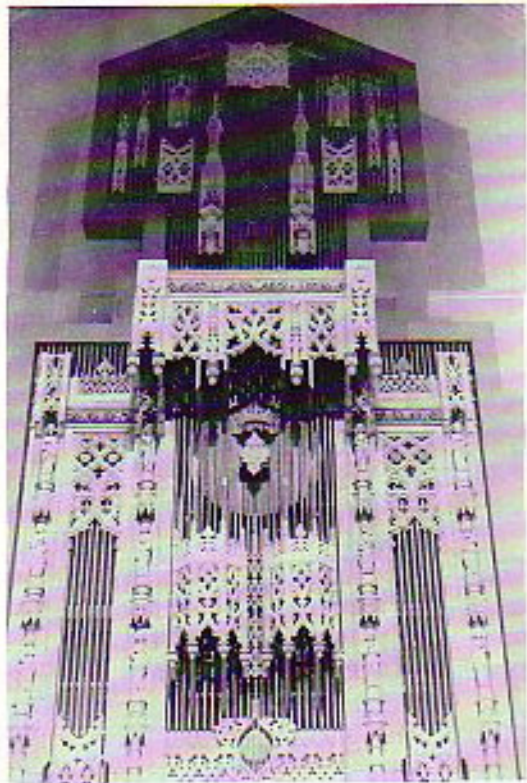
<i>West side, from sanctuary to rear</i>	<i>East side, from sanctuary to rear</i>
Sts. Ambrose and Athanasius	Sts. Basil and Gregory
Sts. Augustine and Jerome	Sts. Gregory the Great and Chrysostom
Sts. Paul and Peter	Sts. Brendan and Agnes
Sts. Boniface and Anthony	Sts. Brigid and Patrick
Sts. Thomas Aquinas and Elizabeth of Hungary	Sts. Catherine of Siena and Francis de Sales
Sts. Margaret Mary and Francis of Assisi	Sts. Rose of Lima and Theresa

Along with the windows, other reminders of the past include the Stations of the Cross, their Austrian-made mosaics of stained glass polished to their original luster, and the chandeliers of hammered iron that are suspended from the six great trusses that support the arched ceiling. "We really don't need the chandeliers for light anymore," Father McGeever observed, "but they are very much a part of the character of the Cathedral." The arches remain as they were, with the emblems of the twelve apostles in shields where the arches enter the carved stone corbels built into the side walls. The apostles and their emblems include:

<i>West side, from sanctuary to rear</i>	<i>East side, from sanctuary to rear</i>
St. Peter - cross and keys	St. John - eagle
St. James the Less - windmill	St. Philip - Tau cross and basket
St. Matthias - book and battle-ax	St. Andrew - fish hook and cross
St. Thomas - girdle, stones and T square	St. Bartholomew - skin and cross
St. Jude - boat	St. James the Greater - shells
St. Matthew - purses and battle-ax	St. Simon - oar, saw and ax



*St. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr.*  
- O'Neill Photo



*The new Reredos.*  
- O'Neill Photo



*The Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist.*  
- O'Neill Photo



*Study of the Restored Pieta.*  
- O'Neill Photo

Back on the ground, our attention was attracted to the new rooms of reconciliation that have been installed in the locations of the former side altars to provide a more spacious and comfortable setting for the administration of the Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation. Outside, the rooms are faced with the oak panels from the old confessionals. A lighted candle when a priest is present in the room signifies that the sacrament is being administered. This theme also is reflected in the symbols of peace and reconciliation in the grillwork above the oak panels.

The locations of the old confessionals now contain shrines to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph, St. Anthony and three saints of the Church in America — St. John Neumann, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini. The hand-carved wooden statues of Mary and Joseph previously were located at the altars on the sides of the main altar.

Other shrines that formerly were in side altars also have been relocated. The shrines to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, St. Theresa and the Infant of Prague now are in the entrance-way in front of the west transept and the shrine of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is in the entrance-way between the east transept and the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. The memorial to the Suffering Souls in Purgatory is in the lower sacristy.

By now, we had made our way to the central reason for the Cathedral's existence: the Altar of God. It stands five steps above the floor so that the sacred liturgy can be seen and heard from all corners of the great church. The altar itself is a massive piece of marble resting on four sturdy columns, also of marble, that extend to the terrazzo platform. A fifth column, directly below the central portion of the holy table, holds the Cathedral's four relics, those of St. Agnes, St. Elizabeth Seton, St. John Neumann and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini; in a lighted transparent container. Above, the great crucifix, outlined in red and gold, reminds us of the Holy Sacrifice that is commemorated on this altar every day.

To the left of the altar is the ambo, or pulpit, also made of marble. On its front are tiles with symbols representing the four evangelists — Sts. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The tiles were originally sealed in the floor of the sanctuary. To the left of the pulpit is the new baptismal font and, in the wall, the repository for the sacred oils that are blessed by the Bishop on Holy Thursday.

In the center of the sanctuary is the *cathedra*, or Bishop's chair, literally and figuratively the seat of the diocese. On the upper portion of his new chair is the seal of Bishop John R. McGann, incorporating his motto: "Serve the Lord with Gladness." When the Bishop is not present, a crozier remains by the chair as a symbol of his episcopal authority. The seal of Bishop Walter P. Kellenberg, the founding Bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, is situated in the wall of the archway on the east side of the sanctuary. With the altar moved forward, the sanctuary area in front of the Bishop's chair has ample space for the large numbers of participating concelebrants in the many special ceremonies in the Cathedral; it can accommodate up to one hundred fifty people.



The repository for the Holy Eucharist now is the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, which is accessible from both the sanctuary and the east transept. The presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the bronze tabernacle beneath a wooden canopy is indicated by a lighted sanctuary lamp before the archway leading into the chapel (this archway was built during the original construction of the church but later was covered to provide a back wall for St. Joseph's altar; the archway was rediscovered during the renovation work). The marble base for the tabernacle matches that of the new altar and baptismal font. The oak wainscoting of the chapel originally encompassed the main altar area, and its wooden ceiling has been restored to its original beauty. The stained glass window in the chapel illustrates the life of St. Dominic, a reminder that this once was the Sisters' Chapel for the Dominican nuns who have been a part of the St. Agnes community since 1917, when Mother Petra and five other nuns first came to teach in the parish school.

Our tour of the old but new Cathedral nears a close. The doorway just west of the baptismal font leads to a new but long-needed facility: a rest room. It is especially equipped for use by the handicapped, who also have access to the Cathedral by the ramped entry nearby, but also is available for use by other visitors as well.

Within the sacristy, a new stairway leads down to a new and very much needed all-purpose room, named in honor of Msgr. Quealy, that spans virtually the entire north side of the Cathedral. It incorporates space formerly occupied by the Cathedral's heating plant (heat now is supplied from the central plant in the rectory). Although primarily intended for parish use as an all-purpose room, it will also be fitted for use as a major sacristy for visiting priests and other participants in special ceremonial occasions.

Back upstairs, in the original sacristy where for almost fifty years the priests of St. Agnes have prepared for Mass, little has been changed. It too is a reminder that there still is much of the past amid the newness. Separating the sacristy from the stairway to the Msgr. Quealy Room stands the wrought iron grille that formerly stood outside the old baptistry, and above the oak vesting case in the frieze over the round stained glass window depicting the Lamb, there remains the old inscription:

*Introibo ad Altare Dei . . . I will go to the Altar of God.*

-John J. Abele



*St. Agnes Cathedral 1982.*

- Long Island Cat



*Episcopal Ordination of Bishops Daly and Ryan, May 1977*

# UNTO THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST:

## A CHURCH RENEWED

*"You form a building which rises on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone. Through him the whole structure is fitted together and takes shape as a holy temple in the Lord; in him you are being built into this temple, to become a dwelling place for God in the Spirit." (Ephesians 2.20-22)*

As St. Paul uses a holy Temple of God and its construction as one of his several images for the Christian community, so too the renovation and rededication of St. Agnes Cathedral serves as an appropriate central event for our diocesan twenty-fifth anniversary celebration, "Unto the Fullness of Christ." Every church stands for the believing community in shelters, and a cathedral not only symbolizes the shared life of faith of the people whom it serves as a parish Church but is also a sign of the unity of all the diverse people, parishes, services, ministries, and institutions which form that portion of God's people entrusted to a bishop as his diocese.

A cathedral can be such a symbol because it is the bishop's church, and the individual bishop "is the visible principle and foundation of unity in his particular church." (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church [DCC], 23) Through the bishop the local church is united to the successor of Peter, the visible sign of the unity of all the bishops and of the whole body of the faithful. United to their bishop in Word and Sacrament by the power of the Spirit, the people of a diocese constitute "a particular church in which the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative." (Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church, 11)

If the cathedral signifies the unity of the diocese by being the bishop's church, the renovation of St. Agnes Cathedral recalls forcefully the era of the Church's life in which our diocese has lived its first twenty-five years. All can see that St. Agnes has not simply gotten a fresh coat of paint and new wiring. It has been dramatically altered as a place of worship. These external changes reflect a renovation of the Church's thinking about itself. The holy temple is still taking shape. If we as Roman Catholics have discovered anything in the past two decades, it is that the Church is always "work-in-progress." In age after age new battles are fought and won, new ideas emerge and are evaluated, new spirits arise and are discerned. But every time the Church settles down to relax with its evening paper, as it were, the Lord knocks at the door to interrupt its relaxation and demand an opening to his Spirit.

Our diocese had hardly been born when the Second Vatican Council decisively manifested the power of the Spirit to enter the life of the Church in our own day "to root up and to tear down, to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant." (Jeremiah 1.10b) The most astonishing feature of this dazzling work of the Spirit was the combination in the Council of total fidelity to what



*A moment of teaching . . . Bishop McGann vesting for a First Communion before an engrossed audience.*



*Golden Wedding Couples are congratulated by Bishop James J. Daly. - Long Island Catholic Photo*



*Bishop Gerald J. Ryan at the St. Joseph's Day Mass. - Long Island Catholic Photo*

has been built from age to age on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with a dramatically new vision of how the Church should see herself and be seen by the world for whose redemption she exists. The fathers of the Council were made by the Spirit like to "the head of a household who can bring from his storeroom both the new and the old." (Matthew 13.52b)

As with a person aroused suddenly from sleep by a loud noise, the Church has lived through two decades, dazed, reeling, heart-pounding, adrenalin-flowing, suddenly exhilarated. The Body of Christ has received a jolt to its system, and perhaps it is only just beginning to absorb in calmness of heart the manifold impact of the cascade of the Spirit poured over the Church from 1962 to 1965. The theme of our diocesan jubilee, "Unto the Fullness of Christ: a Call to Growth and Unity," bids the people of the local Church of Rockville Centre to a renewal which is both ecclesial and personal; to a spirit of thanksgiving for all that has been given to the local Church and the universal Church in these past two and a half decades; to a rededication not of a building alone but of a people to the service of God in the years to come; and, above all, to developing that unity of heart and mind which reveals us to the world as the disciples of Christ.

St. Paul describes the task before us as the faithful of our diocese and of the Church throughout the world in a passage which contains the metaphor of bodily growth: "There is but one body and one Spirit, just as there is but one hope given all of you by your call. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all who is over all, and works through all, and is in all." (Ephesians 4.4-6) Diverse roles of service exist "to build up the body of Christ, till we become one in faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, and form that perfect man who is Christ come to full stature." (Ephesians 4.12-13) Professing the truth in love we grow up into Christ our Head through whom "the whole body grows, and with the proper functioning of the members joined firmly together by each supporting ligament, builds itself up in love." (Ephesians 4.16)

We are called to grow in unity of mind and heart because we have been chosen by God not as individuals for our personal merit but freely and graciously to be part of a people. "It has pleased God, however, to make men holy and save them not merely as individuals without any mutual bonds, but by making them into a single people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness." (DCC, 9) The Church arises not especially from people's natural tendency to be social but most of all from its divine call to make present to the world the One of whom it can be said simply, "God is love." (1 John 4.16)

We are urged to love one another because it is the sign we are begotten of God (cf. 1 Jn. 4.7), and thus, "Beloved, if God has loved us so, we must have the same love for one another." (1 Jn. 4.11) If one hates one's brother and yet claims to love God, that person is a liar (cf. 1 Jn. 4.20). The only debt we should owe is the debt that binds us to love one another for love of neighbor fulfills the whole law (cf. Romans 13.8). Jesus' last command to his disciples is to love one another as he has loved us (cf. John 15.12). His last prayer for His disciples is that they may be one as the Father and Son are in each other (cf. John 17.21). The world



*Sister Maclene, OP, and  
Sister Aloysia at Easter  
Vigil Mass.*

- James O'Neill Photo



*Hundreds attend annual ACIES ceremony honoring the Blessed Mother – left to right,  
Msgr. Melton, Bishop McGann and Rev. John J. Fee.*

- Long Island Catholic Photo

*First Holy Communion is  
administered to "newly"  
baptized parishloneer by  
Bishop McGann.*

- James O'Neill Photo



will believe the Father has sent Jesus by the unity of his disciples (cf. John 17.23), and it will believe we are Jesus' disciples by our love for one another (cf. John 13.35). This love is not an abstract concept but a real commitment to the welfare of our fellow believers. "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me." (Matthew 25.35) "Love is patient; love is kind. Love is not jealous, it does not put on airs, it is not snobbish. Love is never rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not prone to anger; neither does it brood over injuries." (1 Corinthians 13.4-5) "The community of believers were of one heart and one mind. None of them ever claimed anything as his own; rather, everything was held in common." (Acts 4.32)

We grow unto the fullness of Christ by growing in love for his Body the Church and in unity with the other members of the Body. The Church we love is not to be some invisible ideal nor a fantasized society of the past or the future. It is the people God has chosen in this moment of history to make up his Church. The struggle to build a transcending unity from so many people of differing social and personal histories is the sign by which the Church serves the world. The Church does not seek and rejoice in its love and unity for itself alone. "Established by Christ as a fellowship of life, charity, and truth, it [the new People of God] is also used by Him as an instrument for the redemption of all, and is sent forth into the whole world as the light of the world and the salt of the earth (cf. Mt. 5.13-16)." (DCC, 9) Unity in the Church offers the world a vivid, concrete alternative to all the countersigns which drive people to divisiveness, mutual hatred, prejudice, and violence. "By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind." (DCC, 1)

It is marvelous and frightening to have the Lord say to us, in effect, "If you want to know whether you love me and my Father, then answer these questions honestly, 'Do you love the brothers and sisters I have given you in baptism; do you care for the Catholics of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, and are you willing to help them in their need; do you want their good more than your own comfort and happiness; do you love the Catholics all around the world, and do you want to work with them to bring all people to me?'" The test is too real, too immediate, too unconditional. Perhaps we would rather display the strength of our faith, our willingness to give all we have for the poor, our acceptance of suffering. Without authentic love, however, these great deeds are no witness at all (cf. 1 Corinthians 13.2-3).

As we celebrate our twenty-fifth anniversary as the local Church of Rockville Centre and rededicate St. Agnes Cathedral, it is the acceptable time for us to rededicate ourselves, to ask for a deepening of that love by which Christ has first loved us. Now is the time to beseech the Father for a fuller measure of the Spirit to instill in our hearts a longing for deeper communion with one another. It is the time to pray that we be empowered to live here in our island diocese as a community of people always ready to give an account of the hope that is within us (cf. 1 Peter 3.15), as a community which consoles the sorrowful, lifts up the down trodden, frees the bound, unburdens the weary, enriches the poor, reconciles the alienated, and witnesses the Resurrection.



United through our bishop to the universal pastor, the college of bishops, and the multitude of the faithful and truly "catholic" in our outlook, on this twenty-fifth anniversary, the Church of Rockville Centre deepens its awareness that it contributes "through its special gifts to the good of the other parts and of the whole Church. Thus through the common sharing of gifts and through the common effort to attain fullness in unity, the whole and each of the parts receive increase." (DCC, 13) May our hearts always be uplifted by the Council's profound description of the Church on pilgrimage to the Lord:

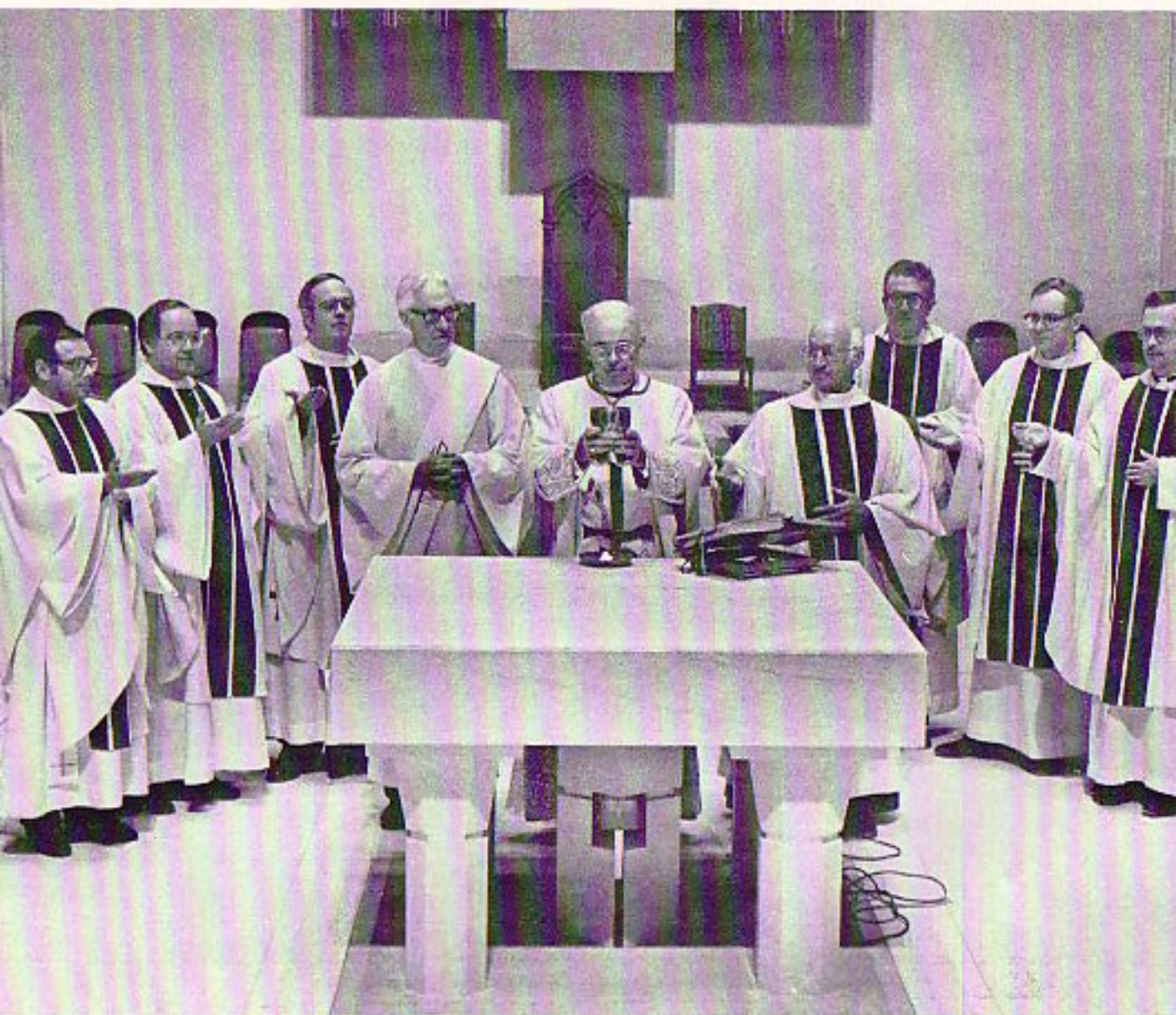
While she transcends all limits of time and of race, the Church is destined to extend to all regions of the earth and so to enter into the history of mankind. Moving forward through trial and tribulation, the Church is strengthened by the power of God's grace promised to her by the Lord, so that in the weakness of the flesh she may not waver from perfect fidelity, but remain a bride worthy of her Lord; that moved by the Holy Spirit she may never cease to renew herself, until through the cross she arrives at the light which knows no setting. (DCC,9)

-Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Maniscalco



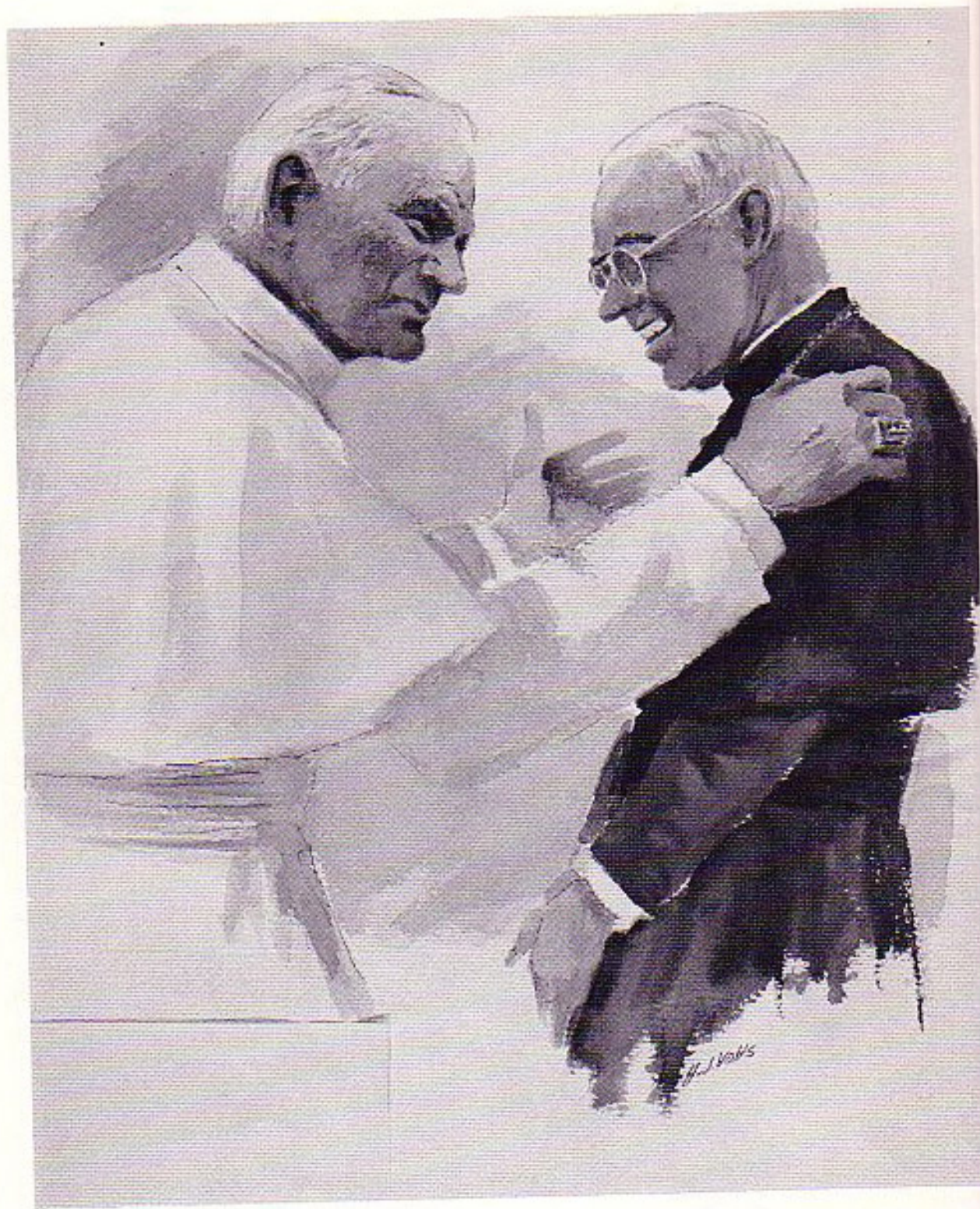
*Bishop McGann at the Easter Vigil Mass renewal of Baptismal Promises.*

- Frank McHugh Photo



*Current Cathedral staff flanking Bishop McGann: l to r, Rev. Daniel A. Picciano; Rev. Joseph C. McComiskey; Rev. John J. McGeever; Deacon Robert J. Poh; Bishop McGann; Rev. Msgr. Edward L. Melton, Administrator; Rev. Edward G. Sullivan; Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Maniscalco and Rev. Msgr. John F. Bennett.*

*- Thomas Moloney Photo*



From an original photo by Thomas Malone  
Negative reduction by Chamblade High School

Here on Long Island, we are wonderfully blessed. Ours is a land of great natural beauty; ours, a people wonderfully advantaged. Our schools, our industry, our homes, offer marvelous opportunities for a good life. However, these blessings have not yet come to all. It will be our task to bring the great social teachings of the gospel to all men. With great respect for human dignity, we will be concerned for the poor, the underprivileged, those in need of housing, and all who carry the burdens of injustice. During its nineteen years, the Church of Rockville Centre has labored hard to keep the Charity of Christ alive. Much has already been done. Much remains to be done. To do this, I need you—all of you—the priests, religious and laity of our Diocese, the dear good friends of other communities and of the Jewish Faith, the strong moral leadership of those in public office. Correspondently, we can do much to restore hope to our troubled world, as we strive daily to . . .

**“ . . . serve the Lord with gladness.”**

*from the homily of Bishop McGann's  
Installation Mass  
June 24, 1976*

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

with prayerful gratitude from Rev. Msgr. Edward L. Melton

Architects: . . . . . Wiedersum Associates, P.C., Hauppauge, New York  
Construction Manager: . . . . . Dominick Milone, Inc., Rockville Centre  
Liturgical Designer: . . . . . Rambusch Associates, New York, New York  
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