Bishop William Winter
Celebrant
Lambing Lecture

On Sunday, April 17, Bishop William Winter was the celebrant for the annual Lambing Lecture. This year, the Catholic Historical Society sponsored a mass at St. Mary of Mercy to commemorate the first mass held at the Point 240 years ago. Inside this issue of Gathered Fragments, there is an article, written by Monsignor Francis A. Glenn, on the First Church and the First Mass held at the Point in 1754.

An Overview of Business of the Board

At the March meeting, the Board revised and approved of the Constitution. This new Constitution is available to all members by contacting the Catholic Historical Society.

Two members of the Board, Paul Dvorachek and Dr. Joseph Morice, have resigned from the Board because of conflicts. According to the Constitution, the President may appoint individuals to replace them. As such, Anthony Joseph has appointed Paul Demilio, Archivist for Duquesne University, and Burris Espelen, Archivist for the Diocese of Pittsburgh, to finish the terms.

The Society has received a commitment from the Diocese for the oral history project. The Society will begin working on oral histories, interviewing priests, religious, and lay persons involved in the Diocese.

The Society has also completed filing for its tax exempt status.

Nicholas Parrendo is a local artist designer. Parrendo apprenticed with the Hunt Stained Glass Studios in 1950 as an artist designer. Since 1987, he has been the President of the Studios. Parrendo has many liturgical, residential, and commercial works to his credit. Some of the liturgical works for which he has been responsible appear at such places as Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, St. Thomas More Church, Tree of Life Synagogue, First United Methodist Church, St. Ferdinand Church, and Mercy Hospital.

On Sunday, October 2, Parrendo will be giving a presentation on stained glass as liturgical art. The public is welcome to attend this presentation, which will be held at Synod Hall located in Oakland.
The First "Church" in Western Pennsylvania

In 1994, Western Pennsylvania commemorates the 200th anniversary of the first test of the Government of the United States. The so-called "Whiskey Rebellion" by the farmers of Western Pennsylvania was a regional revolt against the imposition of taxes by the central government.

Forty years before this local insurrection, Western Pennsylvania was the site of a more important historical event - the establishment of the first building dedicated to religious devotion in the Pittsburgh area. This was the Chapel of "The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin at the Beautiful River" at Fort Duquesne. The Indian word "Ohio" meant "Beautiful River".

Early in the 18th century, the strategic value of the jointure of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers, as they form the Ohio River, was recognized by the Colonists of Virginia and the French government in Canada. The Canadians were anxious to maintain the short route to the French colonies in Louisiana, so they had determined to send exploratory expeditions through this territory at ten year intervals. Such expeditions were conducted in 1729, 1739, and 1749.

In 1753, the governor of Virginia sent Major George Washington into Western Pennsylvania to warn the French that they were encroaching on Virginia territory. The French ignored Washington's warning, but they determined to make a more concerted effort to maintain control of the river valleys. George Washington had recommended to Governor Dinwiddie that a fort should be erected at "The Forks" of the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers, and early in 1754 he was assigned to follow his suggestion. Fort Prince George was just begun when a large French contingent under Captain Claude de Contrecouer drove the Virginians from the site and then erected Fort Duquesne.

Father Denys Baron was the Chaplain of this French expedition. As was the custom of French Chaplains, he would have offered the "First Mass" within the present City of Pittsburgh, on April 17, 1754.

Background on Father Denys Baron, O.F.M.

Born in France, Father Denys Baron was ordained a Recollect Priest in 1741. He was assigned to missions in Canada: St. Maurice in 1744 and Isle Au Coudres and Eboulement in 1750.

In 1753, he was appointed Chaplain to the detachment detailed for the defense of Western Pennsylvania. Father Baron's last entry in the "Register" is dated October 10, 1756. He must have left Fort Duquesne shortly after that date for he was stationed at Fort St. Frederick at Ticonderoga on Lake Chaplain in December, 1756, and there he died, November 6, 1758 - a few days before the abandonment of Fort Duquesne.

- Monsignor Francis A. Glenn

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Sisters of Mercy Celebrate 150 Years in the U.S.

From June 22-25, the Sisters of Mercy celebrated 150 years in the United States by holding a sesquicentennial festival, "Called to the Same Hope." More than 500 Mercy sisters and associates attended the four days of the festival.

The Sisters of Mercy first arrived in Pittsburgh from Ireland on December 21, 1843. The order quickly spread across the nation, providing service to the poor, sick, and uneducated across the land.

The sisters discussed the seven sisters who first came to Pittsburgh and the foundresses who came afterwards to other parts of North and South
America. They examined how all sisters of Mercy are "called to the same hope". Today, there are 6,700 Mercy sisters and 1400 lay associates throughout the Americas to carry on the work initiated by the original seven sisters.

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State Historical Markers Dedicated

On the blustery day of December 21, 1993, the Sisters of Mercy dedicated an Official State Historical Marker, which was placed on Penn Avenue. The text of the marker reads as follows:

SISTERS OF MERCY
Frances Warde and six companions from Carlow, Ireland, opened the first Mercy convent in the U.S. here. Founding date was December 21, 1843, and at once the sisters began to serve the city's poor, sick, and uneducated. From here, Mercy convents spread across the U.S.

On the brisk spring day of May 27, The Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh dedicated its Official State Historical Marker, which was placed on the lawn in front of the Hospital on Locust Street. The text of the marker is as follows:

MERCY HOSPITAL
Founded in 1847 by the Sisters of Mercy as Pittsburgh's first hospital. Medical internships began in 1848, and the nursing school in 1893. This was the first Mercy hospital worldwide, caring for all patients, especially the community's poor.

The State Historical Marker program originated with the establishment in 1913 of the Commission's precursor, the Pennsylvania Historical Commission. One of the major activities of the 1913 Commission was to mark significant sites within Pennsylvania. During its years of existence, this Commission dedicated nearly 150 markers.

In 1945, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission was established and took over this function of the previous Commission. Since then, more than fifteen hundred markers have been erected throughout Pennsylvania. These blue and gold markers commemorate persons, places, and events which are significant in the history of the Commonwealth.

Establishment of the Diocese of Pittsburgh

August 15, 1843, the Very Reverend Michael O'Connor, pastor of St. Paul's, Pittsburgh, and vicar-general of the Bishop of Philadelphia, was consecrated the first Bishop of Pittsburgh. Bishop Flaget had recommended that Pittsburgh should be a Diocese in 1825, and the Provincial Councils of Baltimore debated its necessity, and Father O'Connor had been sent as vicar-general in 1841, because of the urgency of having an administrator in Western Pennsylvania.

Bishop Michael O'Connor was one of the most brilliant minds in the Church in the United States. Archbishop J.F. Regis Canevin wrote of him: "During seventeen years the Catholics of the Diocese of Pittsburgh had enjoyed the advantages of an episcopal administration, all things considered, the most brilliant and the most successful in the history of the American Church."

-Monsignor Francis A. Glenn

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The Catholic Historical Society was sorry to see the passing of Bishop Vincent Leonard on September 28. From 1969 to 1983, he served as the ninth bishop of Pittsburgh. His loss will be felt throughout the Diocese.
Dioecesan History Published
The Diocese of Pittsburgh has recently published a history of the Diocese. *Shepherds of the Faith, 1843-1993: A Brief History of the Bishops of the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh*, written by Monsignor Francis Glenn is now available for purchase. Contact the Pittsburgh Catholic for more information on how to obtain a copy.

Great Steel Strike Marker
On Friday, September 23, there will be a dedication program of an Official State Historical Marker to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Great Steel Strike. The ceremony will take place in front of the Steelworkers Local 1219 union hall, opposite the Good Shepherd Church (formerly St. Michaels) on Braddock Avenue in Braddock. This will be held in conjunction with the Great Strike Symposium. The text of the marker will read: "St. Michael's Church was virtually the only place where workers in the Great Steel Strike of 1919 could 'legally' assemble. The Rev. Adalbert Kazincy, the pastor, challenged the 'steel trust' in his support of the strikers, who were defeated in 1920."

Duquesne University History
Joe Rishel, Ph.D. is currently in the midst of writing a history of Duquesne University. Publication for this book is tentatively expected in 1995 by the Duquesne University Press. Dr. Rishel will trace the University's development from its founding in 1878 to the present.

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Have you considered writing for the *Gathered Fragments* newsletter? Perhaps you know some piece of history about your parish, an individual from the Diocese's past, or an institution with Catholic affiliation. If so, you might want to submit a brief article to the *Gathered Fragments* newsletter at The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Synod Hall.