The property known as 61 TANNEHILL STREET (HILL DISTRICT), PITTSBURGH, PA 15219 is listed by the Allegheny County Recorder of Deeds as: 3rd Ward, Block 2-D, Lot #138. This property was originally purchased by the Most Rev. Michael Domenec, D.D., Bishop of Pittsburgh, for $9,636.10. There were some rock outcroppings which had to be graded on the property. Fr. Lambing notes in his book that Bishop Domenec expressed some dissatisfaction about the less-than-businesslike manner of awarding the contract for the building which would become St. Paul Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum. It seems that the contractor was paid for the work; and he made additional profit by quarrying and selling the stone on that property for building purposes. (See: "Foundations of a Great Diocese," p. 309, Rev. A.M. Lambing, Wilkinsburg, PA, 1914, private printing.)

Sunday, June 10, 1866, Bishop Michael Domenec, D.D. laid the cornerstone for St. Paul Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum at 61 Tannehill Street, Pittsburgh, Pa. This site was a short distance from St. Paul Cathedral (then on Grant Street, downtown; now on Fifth Avenue, Oakland). The Sisters of Mercy and the orphans under their charge - both boys and girls - moved into the building in December, 1867. (Note: In a document dated Nov. 8, 1862, The Sisters of Mercy struck an agreement with: "the Managers of St. Paul R.C. Orphan Asylum" to run the
orphanage for them. This agreement was signed by Sister Mary Rose Hostetter and J.J. Gallagher, Secretary of the St. Paul R.C. Orphan Asylum. [See Deed Book, Vol. 158, page 120 - Office of Recorder of Deeds, Allegheny County, Pa.]

St. Paul Orphan Asylum accumulated a series of debts over the years. This was due in large measure to the fact that it was dependent upon donations from the public, bazaars, picnic, fairs and money-making entertainments to pay its operating costs. The debts piled up and the creditors sought relief by attaching the property and demanding that it be sold so that they might be paid. R.H. Fife, the High Sheriff of Allegheny County, sold the property (Dec. 2, 1878) so that the debts could be paid. Fortunately, the Sisters of Mercy were able to purchase the land and the building. After some publicity throughout the region noting the needs of the orphans, the clergy and the people in the Diocese of Pittsburgh made a valiant effort to raise money in support of the orphanage. $14,000 was raised, the institution was redeemed and the orphans were not put out. (Deed Book, Volume 539, page 139. Also: "History of Sisters of St. Francis of the Diocese of Pittsburgh 1868-1938," pp. 163-167, by Sr. M. Clarissa Popp, O.S.F., Millvale, Pa.)

Feb. 26, 1886, the Sisters of Mercy (Sr. M. Sebastian Gillespie) sold the property at 61 Tannehill Street (Hill District) to St. Paul Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum for $6,000. At that time, the property consisted of 284 feet fronting on Tannehill Street; it was 313 feet from the front to the back of the property. On it was erected a large brick building known as St. Paul Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum. The President of St. Paul Roman Catholic Asylum at that time was the Most Rev. John Tuigg, Bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. (See Deed Book, Vol. 539, page 139).

In 1901 the orphanage moved out of the building at 61 Tannehill Street, Pittsburgh, Pa. The Sisters of Mercy and the orphans in their care took up residence in a much larger, newly constructed St. Paul R. C. Orphan Asylum in Idlewood (Crafton, Pa.). 61 Tannehill Street was unoccupied from 1901 until 1917.

June 3, 1917, at the request of the Most Rev. J. F. Regis Canevin, Bishop of Pittsburgh, the Sisters of St. Francis (Millvale, Pa.) remodeled the former orphan asylum and opened St. Rita's Home for Infants at 61 Tannehill Street. Mother M. Victoria was in charge of the program from the very beginning of that work of charity. The Franciscan Sisters operated their home for infants from June 3, 1917 until April 1, 1935 when they were forced to close because of the lack of funds.

61 Tannehill Street was empty and the object of much vandalism from April, 1935 until the spring of 1938. In March, 1938 Rev. Charles O. Rice and the members of the Catholic Radical Alliance sought and were granted permission from the Most Rev. Hugh C. Boyle, Bishop of Pittsburgh, to move St. Joseph's House of Hospitality into this structure. St. Joseph's House of Hospitality had begun a soup line to feed the hungry the previous year - July 20, 1937 - in a store front at 901 Wylie Avenue (Hill District), Pittsburgh, Pa. In March 1938, the House of Hospitality moved into the much larger building at 61 Tannehill Street and began feeding hundreds and sometimes thousands of men each day. The men lined up to receive a bowl of stew, some bread and coffee. When used clothing was available, that too was given to the men.
There were approximately forty (40) men who lived, more or less permanently, at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality. That number grew to 300 men who came to spend the night in the dead of winter during the late 1930's and early 1940's. Many of the men had to sleep on the floor.

Wm. H. Lenz of the Catholic Radical Alliance describes the building at 61 Tannehill Street as: "a three story structure that is long and narrow." There were 52 large rooms, ten bathrooms, a dining room, two kitchens, several showers, a small auditorium and a chapel. Joseph P. Faye, Chief of the Fire Prevention Dept. of the City of Pittsburgh, in his report issued May 7, 1962, indicates that the building at 61 Tannehill Street was a "...three-story brick structure with a capacity of 149 persons; 1st floor there were offices, sitting rooms, kitchen and dining room and a chapel. The 2nd and 3rd floors were dormitories. The basement had storage rooms, furnace room, laundry, shower etc." The more permanent residents at the House ate in the dining room. The transients, however, were fed at long trestle tables which were placed end-to-end down the center corridor of the building. Over the thirty-six (36) years that St. Joseph's House of Hospitality occupied this building, millions of meals were served to the hungry and homeless. There was never a charge to the transient guests who came seeking something to eat. In the mid 1950's, a small charge was instituted for the men who stayed the night so that the sheets could be procured for the beds in the dormitories.

The Founder and first Director of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality was Rev. Charles O. Rice (1937 to 1952). The second Director, Rev. Paul Bassompierre, served from 1952 to 1985. Shortly after Fr. Bassompierre took over the Directorship of The House in 1952, the Most Rev. John Dearden, Bishop of Pittsburgh, asked him to put The House under the auspices of the Society of St. Vincent De Paul, Council of Pittsburgh. This was effected through a committee of The Society. Both the House of Hospitality and The Society kept separate books, conducted separate fund-raising appeals and maintained separate checking accounts. The St. Vincent De Paul Society, however, covered any deficit The House incurred in the charitable work of providing for the hungry and homeless.

The Most Rev. John J. Wright (Bishop of Pittsburgh) was elected to the Board of Directors of St. Paul R.C. Orphan Asylum, and then elected President of the Board. During the tenure of his presidency, the decision was made to convey the building and property at 61 Tannehill Street, Pittsburgh, Pa., to the Diocesan Central Council of Pittsburgh - The Society of St. Vincent De Paul for one dollar ($1.00) at 10:45 a.m. October 31, 1960. (see Deed Book, Volume 3890, page 55)

St. Joseph's House of Hospitality continued to serve the poor at 61 Tannehill Street (Hill District) until September 5, 1974 when The House moved a few blocks away to the former Roselia Foundling Home, 1635 Bedford Avenue (Hill District), Pittsburgh, PA 15219. The building at
61 Tannehill Street was demolished in October, 1974. The land was sold to the City of Pittsburgh, Urban Redevelopment Authority, November 3, 1978. The land is undeveloped at this writing. At one time or another various projects have been proposed for this site but none have ever been executed.

Rev. James W. Garvey

Father Garvey was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Pittsburgh on October 23, 1976. Bishop Bevilacqua appointed him to serve as coordinator for the homeless in the Diocese June 24, 1984. In January, 1985, he was appointed Director of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality. He is presently serving as Administrator of Immaculate Conception Parish in Carnegie, PA.

HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN PRESIDENT

General William Starke Rosecrans, while teaching at West Point Academy, became a convert to the Catholic Faith.

In the spring of 1863, General Rosecrans turned down a proposal to make him the presidential candidate in place of Lincoln. Later when the Republicans met in convention in Baltimore, in 1864 and nominated Lincoln again as president, General Rosecrans was offered the second place on the ticket. His telegram of acceptance was intercepted by Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton who had developed a dislike for Rosecrans. When the telegram was not delivered to the convention headquarters, the Republicans nominated Andrew Johnson for the vice-presidency. When Lincoln was assassinated a few months later, Johnson became his successor.

SESQUI-CENTENNIAL

Researching historical data for a publication to commemorate the 150th year of the Diocese of Pittsburgh has been very inspirational. The lives and ministries of the persons who laid the groundwork for the Diocese, and the many who contributed to its development over the years, each in their own way, will win the admiration of all who learn of their accomplishments.

From Father Denys Baron to Bishop Donald Wuerl, there is always some contribution to the welfare of the Diocese, and to the members of the Diocese, which increases one's appreciation of the examples and the achievements that were attained.

The litany of personalities is exciting: Benedict J. Flaget; William F.X. O'Brien; Charles Bonaventure Maguire; Thomas Heyden; James A. Stillinger; John Nepomucene Neumann; Michael O'Connor; Michael Domenec; John Ambrose Watterson; Suitbert Mollinger; William Cunningham; Thomas Coakley; James R. Cox; Nicholas Fusco; James Delaney; and many others who built up the glory of the Diocese.

Notable converts like Peter Henry Lemke; Prince Demetrius Gallitzin; Thomas Becker; Harmar Denny; and Pollard Morgan, whet the appetite to learn more about their edifying lives.

The influence of immigration, educational institutions, and the diversity of industries, on the continual growth of the Diocese open up avenues of knowledge of their contributions to the development of the Diocese.

The first Hospital in Western Pennsylvania, the many health institutions, the numerous Religious Orders of women and men, and the contributions of the organizations of the laity, present a very
exciting story. For 150 years, the Diocese of Pittsburgh has an enticing story to tell. We can anticipate a great thrill as we learn the history of our Diocese.

Msgr. Francis A. Glenn

"EDITOR FOR DIOCESAN HISTORY"

Rebecca C. Mertz, formerly a reporter for the Pittsburgh Catholic, has been commissioned to write the history of the Pittsburgh Diocese for the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania.

Ms. Mertz is a 1989 graduate of Pennsylvania State University, University Park, with a BA degree in journalism. While attending Penn State she was awarded two academic scholarships and won first prize in the 1989 Katey Lehmann Awards for Journalism.

As a reporter for the Pittsburgh Catholic, Ms. Mertz covered local Catholic news and wrote feature stories on notable area Catholics.

Ms. Mertz is a member of Sacred Heart Parish in Shadyside.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

1991 will mark the centenary of the encyclical which initiated the modern era of the Catholic Church’s social teaching. In their message on the 100th anniversary of the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, the bishops of the United States, "urge parishes, dioceses, national organizations, education and other institutions to use this opportunity to share our social teaching and further integrate it into ongoing efforts."

The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania is proud to announce that its 1991 lecture programs will focus on social issues. The first lecture will be on March 3, 1991 by Msgr. Charles Owen Rice. He will speak about the role of Catholic social teaching in the formation of the Catholic Radical Alliance. Msgr. Rice along with Msgr. Carl P. Hensler and Msgr. George Barry O'Toole began this organization in the spring of 1937. As an organization it was short-lived, but it was the foundation for St. Joseph's House of Hospitality and for numerous activities in support of the rights of labor. St. Joseph's continues to serve the homeless from its base on Bedford Avenue and MARYHOUSE in Brookline.

The second lecture will be the Annual Lambing Lecture on April 14, 1991. Father Cyprian Davis, O.S.B., Professor of Church History at St. Menrad's in Indiana and author of recently published book "Black Catholics in the United States" will be guest lecturer.

ALL PROGRAMS ARE FREE TO THE PUBLIC and will begin at 2:30 p.m. in Synod Hall, 125 N. Craig Street, Oakland. For more information, call 261-5897 or 885-1046.
IN PRINT


*They Walked Before Us and Showed Us the Way*, compiled and edited by Clement Pavlick, CP, Pittsburgh, PA 15203, 1988, 80 p.


PROJECTS AROUND THE DIOCESE

**WORDS OF MERCY**, an "Oral History Project of the Pittsburgh Sisters of Mercy" is a project to provide a partial record of the history and legacy of the Sisters of Mercy. The project is under the direction of Sally Witt, C.S.J.

*Words of Mercy* is a small pamphlet containing excerpts from interviews with seven sisters. Over 20 interviews have been completed with more in progress.

**NOTE FROM THE EDITOR**

*Gathered Fragments* is intended to provide information about the history of the Diocese and Catholicism in Western Pennsylvania. Information about publications and events concerning the history of Catholicism will be published as space permits.

The *Newsletter* can be successful only if its readers provide information and articles. Frequency of its publication is dependent entirely upon your sending articles and news. Photographs, maps, and documents can be duplicated for publication, however, they can only be returned if you provide envelope with postage.

If you have something for next issue, send to:

Joseph T. Makarewicz
1137 Ridge Road
Baden, PA 15005

or call 869-9672 (home) or 648-7420 (work).

*Gathered Fragments* is a publication of the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. Joseph T. Makarewicz, Editor. The Newsletter is mailed to all members of the Society. Membership in the Society is $5.00 a year. Correspondence concerning the Society and Newsletter should be sent to Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, 111 Boulevard of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.