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Holy Ghost Fathers in the United States

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As early as 1847, before the union of the Society of the Holy Ghost with that of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, steps were taken by the Holy Ghost Fathers to open a community in the United States. In fact, a Father had already set out for the shores of America, but the ship on which he sailed was forced to return to port and the project was abandoned for the moment. Two years previous to that, Ven. Father Libermann had expressed a desire to send his missionaries to the United States to work among the Negroes. After the [1848] union of the two societies into what is commonly known as simply the “Congregation of the Holy Ghost,” at least twelve instances are on record between and of Bishops of the United States applying to the superior general for the services of the Holy Ghost Fathers. At length in when the *Kulturkampf* drove religious orders out of Germany, enough Fathers were at the disposal of the superior general to enable him to establish communities in the United States. To prepare the way, four Fathers sailed from France on November 7, 1872, and reached the shores of the United States the twenty-third of the same month.

Several works were undertaken in Ohio, but none of them proved permanent until, under the direction of Rev. Fr. Strub, the Fathers were admitted by Rt. Rev. Bishop Domenec to the Diocese of Pittsburgh. In April the Fathers took charge of St. Mary’s Parish in Sharpsburg, PA.

Historical Sketches of Foundations of the American Province of the Holy Ghost Fathers, 1875–1923. Vol. 1, page 2. Mimeograph