

Church of
St. John the Apostle
Dedicated
July 28, 1971





The Hands of Christ . . .

Our hands can touch, talk, point, push, build, or burn. They can be wrung in frustration, clenched in anger, or extended in friendship. They can work, make, break, beat, console, comfort, caress — or injure, or insult, or hold a pen, or a leaf, or a hammer, or a child, or a weapon, or a flower, or a rosary.

They might be rough, soft, hard, big, or small. And no delight is quite like that of a baby's hand wrapped tightly around our finger. Our hands can be instruments of love or hate. Folded in prayer they can praise God; clenched in a fist they can deny Him.

So expressive can hands be that in the windows of the new Saint Jude Church, the artist represented the fourteen events of Christ's journey to Calvary using only hands in various positions. The photograph on the opposite page shows a large masculine hand with a small, slender hand laid across it — it is the fourth station where Jesus met His Mother.

Every day of our lives Christ puts out His hand in friendship to us. We can ignore it or clasp it and follow Him. He no longer has hands here on earth, yet His Hands are always at work in our lives. He has no hands — HE ASKS US TO BE HIS HANDS.

Fr. Thomas E. Wagner



Church of



t. Jude the Apostle

Erie, Pennsylvania



A letter
from . . .

Bishop Watson



1864-1865

Diocese of Erie
401 West York Street
Erie, Pennsylvania 16501

July 18, 1975

The Rev. Francis D. Gallagher
Pastor, St. Jude the Apostle Church
2475 West Sixth Street
Erie, Pennsylvania 16505

Dear Father Gallagher:

My warmest congratulations to you and all your people on the completion of your beautiful new Church of St. Jude.

I extend my compliments and admiration to all who played a part in the planning and appointments of this striking edifice. It undoubtedly takes its place among the most graceful houses of worship in our community. I am particularly impressed that it is at once so spacious and so devotional.

I would add a word of commendation also to you, to Monsignor Thomas Griffin, the first pastor, and to all the parishioners for a splendid record of achievement since the parish was established in 1911. A church, school and rectory completed and in use in a short sixteen years is an unusual accomplishment. It bespeaks noble leadership together with loyalty and understanding cooperation on the part of thousands of good Catholic people.

Long into the future, St. Jude's Church and School will serve God's people and His children. Surely He will generously bless all who have taken part in this most worthwhile endeavor.

Very sincerely in Our Lord,

Alfred M. Watson
ALFRED M. WATSON
Bishop of Erie

My Dear Christian People:

Many of you will probably recall that introductory greeting, having heard it time and again in years gone by. It was used by Father D. Stephen Sheehan, Pastor of St. Andrew Parish, to introduce his Sunday Homily. In truth, he was way ahead of his time in using such a greeting and so I do not hesitate to use it now. You are Christian people in every sense of the word.

I feel that I have been singularly blessed in being given the opportunity of serving you, and my only hope is to serve you well for you deserve the best. Each day at Mass I offer a special prayer of gratitude to God for having the privilege of being with you. You have made my burden easy and my yoke light. For that I will be eternally grateful and ever in your debt.

Without fear of contradiction, I can tell you that I am envied by many of my fellow priests because of my appointment as your pastor. I must confess, being human, it is an envy that fills me with pride and joy; but still, at the same time, I am touched with a feeling of humility in that I have not deserved such a position. Be that as it may, I only hope that I will be able to serve you as long as God is willing and you want me.

When I boldly asked the late Bishop McManaman why it was that I was given the appointment as your pastor he told me that he felt that it was the ambition of every priest to build a church. Throughout his life, he always wanted to be able to do just that but God had other plans and designs for him. It has taken me a long time to appreciate fully what he told me; and even now, the full realization of his words has not registered on me. But, day by day, I am coming to appreciate what a privilege, both he and Archbishop Gannon had in store for me. However, one thing I did not reckon with in their designs was the fact that priests, even pastors, do not build churches: people build them.

You have built your House of God. It is yours in every sense and I hope that you will always love it, always cherish it, always use it. It is a monument to your Faith, to your Love, to your spirit of sacrifice. I only hope and pray that the generations coming after you will appreciate in some small measure what you have done for them, what you have given them. One day, this church will be able to tell a tale of faith, love, sacrifice, determination, and courage. One day, it will be able to tell a tale of generations cleansed by the flowing waters of Baptism; young souls nourished on the Bread of Life; young people strengthened in their Faith by the unction of Confirmation; all ages receiving comfort and forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation; young lives sanctified by Holy Matrimony; the sick and infirm strengthened by the healing power of the Sacrament of the Sick; an army of young men ordained to the priesthood; young women given to the service of God. It will be able to tell a tale of man (to use an old cliché) from the cradle to the grave and beyond the grave.

You have built more than a mere building, you have built a way of life; a way that leads man to his eternal goal. You have erected more than a building; you have erected a stairway to heaven and all that it promises. You have erected, for the passing stranger and wayfarer, a constant reminder of eternal verities. The lessons you teach through this Temple of God will pass from generation to generation.

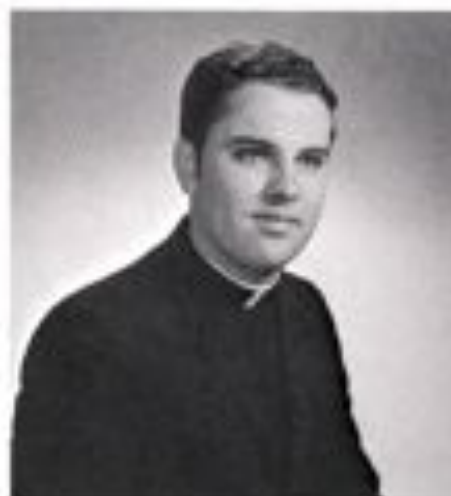
May God bless you always.

Fr. Gallagher

July 18, 1971



Fr. Francis D. Gallagher
Pastor



Fr. Thomas E. Wagner
Assistant Pastor

The history of St. Jude Parish, though brief, is an interesting and fast-moving tale. It had its inception in need, a need foreseen in the early fifties by the late Archbishop John Mark Gannon. Realizing that a large expanse of territory, some developed and some still open fields and farm land, existed between the parishes of St. Andrew and the recently founded and developed St. Julia, and that a growing Catholic population would need to be served, Archbishop Gannon purchased a valuable tract of land consisting of nine and a quarter acres between West 6th Street and West 8th Street with its eastern boundary at Lowell Avenue. The deed to the property was sealed on the 15th of August, 1955. Not wasting any time, Archbishop Gannon canonically established the new parish of St. Jude the Apostle on September 30, 1955.



How it all began . . .

He immediately appointed Father Thomas F. Griffin, now Monsignor Griffin, as the first pastor of the infant parish. Using his excellent qualities of persuasion, Father Griffin obtained permission of the Sisters of St. Joseph to use the Chapel of St. Joseph Home for Children as a temporary home for the new parish family. He organized a group of men of the parish to begin a parish census. It must have been rather disheartening to the new pastor, as well as the men, to find that many who lived within the geographical confines of the parish either did not care to join the new parish or adamantly refused to leave their former parishes. Undaunted by such unthought-of opposition, the pastor and the loyal faithful faced the challenge knowing that eventually they would win out over any opposition. And so they did. In the early days, Father Griffin again enjoyed the hospitality of the Sisters of St. Joseph who gave him residence in the new Villa Maria Academy. He resided there until a residence was rented for use as a rectory on Delaware Avenue. From that "power house" things began to move and the seeds of the new parish began to germinate.

On May 1, 1958, ground was broken for a new parish school on the property set aside by Archbishop Gannon, a portion of the old Algeria Farm. As the building neared completion, it was decided by Archbishop Gannon, Bishop McManaman, and the Diocesan Consultors, to form a jointure between the two parishes of St. Jude and St. Julia, and thus the first Diocesan consolidated school came into being. It opened in September 1959 as Our Lady's Christian School.

As early as July, 1959, the congregation of St. Jude moved into the school auditorium for the celebration of Mass and for other devotional purposes. This was a heartening stride forward for the infant parish. The auditorium continued to be used for church services until the Holy Saturday Easter Vigil Service of 1971.

(Text continued on page 18)





Top Photo:
School opened in September, 1959, with one wing still to be completed.

Right Photo:
First step toward new church was burning of mortgage on St. Jude's share of Our Lady's Christian School. Past presidents of the Family Guild took part, from left to right: Fran Strobel, Earl Wagner, Bob Joyce, Fran McConville, Fr. Gallagher, Bob Meiser, Hugh Shink, and Tom Mansfield.

Opposite Page Photo:
Construction of new church began in February, 1970. Fr. Amisucci, Fr. Gallagher, Fr. Wagner, and Ed Kern (architect) break ground.



Construction of the new parish facility began in February, 1970. Designed by architect Edward Kern, a member of the parish, the structure consists of a church seating 1000 people, a chapel seating 60 people, and a rectory. The church is connected to the rectory by a wing of five offices; the rectory has living accommodations for three priests and a housekeeper; there is a meeting room in the basement. Construction was completed in April, 1971.



How it progressed . . .

The photograph on this page shows a section of the extensive scaffolding that was required to support the wooden forms into which hundreds of tons of concrete were poured to form the massive arches of the main structure. In the photo at the top of the opposite page, the concrete is being pumped into the forms. In the lower photo, workmen grade the interior of the church before the concrete floor was poured. Bulldozer is approximately in the position where the altar is now located.







The Transition . . .

Final Sunday Mass in the school auditorium, which had doubled as a church for twelve years, was celebrated Palm Sunday, 1971. (Photo on this page)

The original construction schedule called for completion of the new church in January, but strikes and other delays caused the date to be moved several times. Finally, Easter was set as the final target date. Saturday morning found much work to be completed (Upper photo, opposite page), but by 7:30 that evening, April 17, 1971 the church was ready for the first service, the Liturgy of the Easter Vigil.

During the final weeks of construction, many parishioners volunteered their time doing whatever they could to help. In the photo on the opposite page, center, Hugh Shields and Primo Quadri clean up. In the lower photo, we have photographic proof that as a member of the parish, our architect Ed Kern did more than the drawings.







The Dedication . . .

July 18, 1971

The new church was blessed and dedicated on Sunday, July 18, 1971, at four o'clock in the afternoon. Bishop Alfred M. Watson officiated with the present pastor, Fr. Francis Gallagher, and the former pastor, Fr. Thomas Griffin assisting. Parish history on page 18 gives additional details. Photograph on this page shows Fr. Griffin, Bishop Watson, and Fr. Gallagher during the consecration of the altar. Candles and incense burn in the crosses carved in the marble altar.







Upper Left:
Dedication of the church began in the courtyard with all the people present. Bishop Watson reads the prayers of blessing.

Upper Right:
Fr. Griffin, Bishop Watson, and Fr. Gallagher enter the church to sprinkle the walls with holy water.

Center Left:
After the consecration of the altar, Mass was celebrated on it.

Lower Left:
Porch chairs carried out all the music for the dedication.

Lower Right:
Close-up of concelebrants shows Fr. Simmons, Fr. Gallagher, Bishop Watson, Fr. Griffin, and Fr. Fogarty.





Exterior view of new church showing rectory and office wing to the left.

The architecture of the church is designed to convey a feeling of ruggedness, strength, simplicity, and dignity. Exterior walls are a warm brownish-red brick both inside and out with vertical panels of boldly colored faceted glass windows. A continuous horizontal strip of clear glass extends around the perimeter of the church between the walls and the roof giving the feeling from the inside that the roof is floating and providing worshippers with a constant reminder of the world outside. The roof is of rough hewn cedar shakes supported by massive rough textured concrete arches which flow upward to form twin supports for the oxidized steel cross which peaks at 100 feet above the ground. The cross is of a special steel which will weather to a rich golden brown in a few years.

Stations of the Cross

The fourteen windows in the Nave of the church are primarily designed to inspire the worshiper with their innermost, rich colors and their dignified beauty. The windows also provide an opportunity for personal devotion by representing the Stations of the Cross. Because veneration of the stations is a personal and private devotion, the images are abstract. In this way the worshiper is left free to follow his own conception of the scene represented and not have one imposed upon him by the artist. All fourteen stations are represented with various positions of hands.



- I. The first station shows the hands of Christ tied together – **JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH.**



- II. The second station shows two hands upward in an accepting position – **JESUS BEARS HIS CROSS.**



- III. The third is **JESUS FALLING THE FIRST TIME.** We see a hand as it would be on the ground when Jesus caught himself.



- IV. Fourth is a large masculine hand with a small hand laid across it. The large hand is Christ, the small one his Mother: **JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER.** A beautiful thought conveyed here is that, contrary to many opinions, Mary was able to get close enough to her Son to touch him.



- V. Next we see two hands in the motion of lifting a burden. They are the hands of **SIMON HELPING JESUS CARRY HIS CROSS.**



- VI. Sixth are two small, slender hands. They are the hands of a woman – **VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS.**



- VII. **JESUS FALLS A SECOND TIME.** Again a hand as it would be on the ground after a fall.



- VIII. The eighth station, the first at the rear on the south wall, **JESUS REBUKES THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.** One hand is that of Christ; he is shaking his finger in reprimand at the women as he says, "Do not weep for me, but for yourselves and your children." The other hand represents one of the wailing women.



- IX. **JESUS FALLS FOR THE THIRD TIME.** Two hands of Christ on the ground.

- X. One hand in a downward position as it would be as **JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS.**

- XI. **JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS.** We see Christ's hand convulsed in pain as the nail is driven. A nail mark shows on his wrist.

- XII. A drooped, dead hand. "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." **JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS.**

- XIII. **JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS.** A lifeless hand, nail mark apparent.

- XIV. Two hands with nail marks crossed as they would be over a corpse. **JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB.**

- XV. The Way of the Cross does not end in the tomb. Three days later, Jesus rose from the dead giving meaning to all that went before. At St. Jude's, this is well expressed by the image of the **RISEN CHRIST** on the crucifix over the Altar of Sacrifice.



The theme of this window is **commitment**. Christ fulfilled His commitment to the Father by His coming on earth – specifically by His death and resurrection. So in the very center of the window is a large CHI-RHO, an ancient symbol representing Christ and composed of the two Greek letters for “Ch” and “R”, that is, the first three letters of the name “Christ.” (CHI is in light blue; RHO in yellow.) Directly under that symbol are wheat and grapes symbolizing the Eucharist.

Around Christ there are twelve crosses, representing the twelve Apostles, of which our patron St. Jude is one. The Apostles committed themselves freely to Christ. Ten of the crosses are in varied shades of red representing the martyrdom of the Apostles. One has a red border for John since he died of natural causes; it is nearest Christ because John was the beloved disciple. The twelfth is of gray for Judas the Betrayer; it is in the lowest position.

Ruby sweeps evolving from the CHI-RHO symbolize Christ’s love for all men. Blue water flows through the lower part of the window symbolizing the water of Baptism, the sacrament of commitment.

Christ asks us to commit ourselves to him and to his message, Love and Peace. In the window we find the words of Christ: on the right “Peace be with you”; on the left “That you love one another.” (Words not visible in this photo which shows only center three of the seven panels.)

Chapel of St. Jude





And Mementos from the Past



FOUNDING BISHOP

Archbishop John Mark Gannon established the parish in 1955



FOUNDING PASTOR
Fr. Thomas F. Griffin



July 27, 1956 - FIRST FESTIVAL
Fr. Griffin, Betty Traversa

Archbishop Approves \$400,000 Structure St. Jude Apostle Parish Unit to Be Constructed

Proposed First Edifice
For New Erie Parish of St. Jude



ST. JUDE & ASSOCIATES, architects and engineers, 1000 N. Broad St., Erie, Pa., has been selected by the Erie Archdiocese to design the first church building for the new parish of St. Jude the Apostle. The estimated cost of the \$400,000 building is \$400,000. The building will be located on the corner of 10th and Broad streets in Erie. The building will be a long, single-story structure with a central tower and multiple windows. The building will be designed in a modern style with traditional elements. The building will be completed in 1965.

The Erie Archdiocese has approved the design for the new St. Jude the Apostle parish church building. The building will be a long, single-story structure with a central tower and multiple windows. The building will be designed in a modern style with traditional elements. The building will be completed in 1965.



St. Jude The Apostle

St. Joseph's Home
1826 West 6th St.
Erie, Pennsylvania

TEL. 233-2111 - 233-2112 - 233-2113 - 233-2114 - 233-2115

SUNDAY MASS - 8:00, 9:00, 10:00, and 10:30
 WEEKDAY MASS - 8:00 A.M. WEEKLY - 8:00 P.M.
 RETIREMENT - 7:30 MONDAY BY APPOINTMENT
 CONFIRMATION - 8:00 - 8:30 & 9:00 - 9:30
 60 ST. JOSEPH'S HOME



1159, Broad Street, Erie, Pa. 16501
Erie, Pa. 16501

July 4, 1965

Reverend and Dear Father:

On the memorable occasion of the Dedication of the new St. Jude the Apostle Church, July 16, 1965, our Holy Father, Pope Paul VI, has graciously bestowed his Apostolic Benediction upon you, the clergy and religious associated with you, and upon the faithful and friends of the parish.

This blessing is granted in a token of the personal affection of His Holiness in recognition of the role of prayer and sacrifice that have made the new church possible, and as a pledge of heavenly favor for the years that lie ahead.

While conveying the message of the Holy Father, I wish to add my personal greetings and personal good wishes. With sentiments of esteem and increased felicitation, I remain

Very truly yours,

 Archbishop-Emeritus

The Reverend Francis D. Gallagher
 Pastor
 Saint Jude the Apostle Church
 Erie, Pennsylvania

Friday, September 24, 1965

**ST. JUDE'S ANNUAL
 COSTUME
 BALL**
 Saturday - Oct. 28
 at
Rainbow Gardens
 (New & Improved)
 Sponsored by St. Jude's
 Parish Guild
 Hosted by
 MRS. CHARLES and Mrs. Barbara
 O'Neil
 PRIZES FOR BEST COSTUMES
 \$1.00 per couple

NOVENA to ST. JUDE
 Order of the Possibility
**September 23 through
 November 13**
 Novena Devotion
 conducted each Sunday Evening
 at 7:30pm
 in the Chapel of
 St. Joseph's Home for Children
 1826 West 6th St., Erie, Pa.
 (Telephone Office of St. Jude Parish)
 Rev. Thomas F. Griffin

ST. JUDE THE APOSTLE
New Church Appeal
 SACRIFICE — GIVE 8 DAY'S PAY A MONTH
FUND DRIVE OFF TO A SUCCESS !!

History of Parish

According to the parish records the first child to be baptized in the new parish was Robert Faller II, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert F. Faller and the ceremony took place on October 16, 1955. Since that time, up to the present writing 930 others have received the Sacrament of Baptism. The first Marriage was contracted on August 4, 1956, in the Chapel at St. Joseph's Home. The first First Holy Communion was held on June 3, 1956. The first Confirmation was held in conjunction with St. Peter's Cathedral on May 20, 1956. The first death in the parish was that of Mrs. James Delaney, one of the pioneer founders of St. Julia parish, who along with her husband and family became members of another new parish, that of St. Jude, with its inception.

As time passed, Father Griffin was aided in his work with the parish by Father Richard Stack (now Monsignor Stack, Chancellor of the Diocese); Father Norbert Wolf of Gannon College; Father James Roggenbaum, the first official assistant. On Monday, April 30, 1962, Father Griffin was appointed as full-time Director of Charities for the Diocese of Erie and was succeeded by the Rev. Francis D. Gallagher as Pastor. The appointment was effective one month later.

In succession, Father Roggenbaum was followed by Fathers Richard Butryn, Daniel DeVillars, Jerome Simmons, and Thomas E. Wagner.

On December 18, 1957, the home and property at 2669 West 6th Street were purchased by the parish for use as a Rectory and offices, or should we say office. The location of the residence made it possible for Father Griffin to be right on top of the project of building the new school. The petition to purchase the new home was signed by William F. McCarthy Jr., Hugh J. Dulkan, and Paul T. Weithman, Members of the Church Committee.

In early October 1962, it was decided by the Church Committee, by then made up of former presidents of the Family Guild, that more income was needed if the young parish was to liquidate its debt. And so, a parish campaign was conducted by the men of the parish to this effect. It was so successful that large portions of the principle were able to be paid each quarter and in a period of less than three years the debt was dissipated. From that moment on all thoughts turned to an even greater project, a new house of worship.

Without hesitation, a building fund was started, and another and greater project was under way. As soon as the idea was broached to the parishioners an immediate

response was made by one of our families. On the next morning this couple came to the sacristy and presented the pastor with a check for \$2,500, and we were on our way. The Church Committee suggested a building fund campaign and within a relatively short time the drive was organized and completed. A goal of \$250,000 was set and a total of \$335,000 was pledged to the fund. Parish enthusiasm was never higher and impatience became a virtue. An architect, Edward A. Kern, a member of the parish, was selected and dreams began to find their way to the drawing boards.

The basic idea of the new house of worship was that it should convey the idea of a strong and rugged permanence, in keeping with our location and the troubled times being experienced by the Church. Slowly but steadily, plans began to materialize; ideas were put down and rejected, others adopted, until finally a complete structure began to form. No effort was made to follow other plans or to copy other buildings; it was to be ours, solely ours. It was to be simple, functional, and devotional. One of the unique developments came from an observation of our parishioners about how they loved to visit after Mass on Sunday; and so the protected and sheltered courtyard at the entrance. It was to serve as an adjunct to the church and a place for socializing after Mass, a place for developing community.

In time the plans were completed and the entire project was placed for bids to the contractors of the area. On January 27, 1970, the bids were opened, the contracts signed, and the new parish complex was underway. Without delay the general contractors, Hardner-Doyle Company, started work. The Easter Vigil of 1971 marked the first services in the new building, April 10, 1971. A week later, April 18, over 3000 people toured the new facilities during an open house.

The new church was blessed and dedicated on Sunday, July 18, 1971, with Bishop Alfred M. Watson officiating. A concelebrated Mass followed the consecration of the new altar with Bishop Watson as the celebrant; Monsignor Griffin, Fathers Francis D. Gallagher, Jerome Simmons, and James Roggenbaum as concelebrants. Father Thomas Wagner and Monsignor Richard Stack were masters of ceremonies. Seminarian John Weibel, a nephew of the pastor, read from Scripture at the Mass. The St. Jude Choir under the direction of Francis Strobel, accompanied by organist John Wolfe, sang the Mass, adding the final and perfect touch to the Day of Dedication.

Fr. Francis D. Gallagher

