

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF ST. ALOYSIUS PARISH WITHIN THE LARGER HISTORICAL CONTEXT

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I COLONIAL ERA 1492-1775

1492 Columbus comes to the Americas. Church established in Puerto Rico. In 1542 Fr. Juan Padilla is killed in what would become Kansas. He is the first person to be martyred in what would become the U.S. In 1565 Church established in St. Augustine, Florida. It is believed to be the oldest church in continuous operation in the U.S.

1607 English settle at Jamestown

1610 Sante Fe Founded.

1620 Colony at Plymouth, Massachusetts is established.

1625 first French settlement in U.S. (Maine)

1634 founding of Maryland

1671 Maryland Assembly passed act “encouraging the importation of Negroes & slaves.”

“On the day of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, in the year 1634, we celebrated on this island the first Mass which had been offered up in this part of the world. After we had completed the Sacrifice, we took upon our shoulders a great cross which we had shaped out of a tree and advancing in order to the appointed place, with the assistance of the Governor and his associates and the other Catholics, we erected a trophy to Christ the Savior, humbly reciting on our knees the Litanies of the Holy Cross with great emotion.”

1634 March 25 The Feast of the Annunciation With the above words Father Andrew White, S.J. memorialized the founding of Maryland and the first celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice in the English-speaking colonies. There were roughly one hundred and fifty men, women and children present when the cross was raised on St. Clement’s Island.

Founding of St. Mary’s City A few days after the Mass and cross raising ceremony on St. Clement’s Island the expedition sailed back down the Potomac a few miles to establish a settlement where a natural harbor provided an easily defensible site. Used Indian hut for first chapel

1637 Governor Leonard Calvert granted the Jesuits permission to build a wood chapel in St. Mary’s City to replace the hut they had been using.

1638 Jesuits & Lord Baltimore in Conflict. Under his charter, Lord Baltimore had sole authority to erect chapels. Additionally, news that the Jesuits were openly building churches in his colony would have undermined his position in England. Lord Baltimore demanded that this chapel in St. Mary’s City be sold to him although the Jesuits continued to use it to celebrate Mass for the community when they came up from their base at St. Inigoes.

1639 From their base at St. Mary’s City, the Jesuits established a second mission on the Patuxent River at Mattapany in 1639 on land given to them by the Indians. This property was at the center of their conflict with Lord Baltimore and was seized by the Proprietor in 1640.

In June, 1639 Father White established a third mission at Kattamaquindi and baptized the local chief of the Piscataway Indians, Chitomachon, and his wife in the spring of 1640. The Jesuit’s annual letter for that year indicates that this ceremony took place in a chapel made out of bark which Chitomachen had erected for the occasion. This chapel was the first such building to be erected in what is now Prince George’s County and was the forerunner of the present parish of St. Mary’s in Piscataway. Soon after Chitomachon’s conversion, Father Ferdinand Poulton converted the chief of the Ancostans.

1641 The Maryland Jesuits reported that of the roughly four hundred persons then in the colony, one hundred were Catholics and forty more had been converted. Lord Baltimore threatened to expel all the Jesuits and replace them with secular priests.

1643 Agreement between Lord Baltimore & the Jesuits. The Jesuits accept his conditions and in turn are given same

rights to land ownership as other gentlemen.

1634-1645 Eight of the fourteen Jesuits sent to Maryland died, almost all of disease.

1645 Elements hostile to Lord Baltimore's rule over Maryland, aligning themselves with the Parliamentary faction in England's Civil War, rebelled against the Calverts. The Catholics in the colony were also violently attacked and the chapel at St. Mary's City destroyed. Governor Leonard Calvert, Father Roger Rigby and Father John Cooper were among those Catholics who escaped to Virginia. The two Jesuits died there of disease the following year. Father Bernard Hartwell, the superior at St. Inigoes went into hiding and also died in 1646. Father Thomas Copley and Father Andrew White were put in irons and taken back to England where they were tried and banished

1646 "Newtowne Hundred" established as a civil division in the County representing colonists settled in the Breton Bay & St. Clement's Bay areas.

1647 The Calverts reasserted their rule over Maryland by early 1647 and Father Copley returned the following year with another Jesuit priest, Lawrence Starkey. However, by the time of the Jesuits' return most of the Indians they had hoped to evangelize had been driven out of Maryland or had died from disease. Only a few Indian converts remained.

1648 Reacting to the success of the rebellion and charges that he had favored Catholics, Lord Baltimore appointed a Protestant, William Stone, governor and shortly after invited to Maryland several hundred Puritans from Virginia who were being persecuted for their beliefs.

1649 The "Act Concerning Religion" of 1649. Composed by both Catholics and Protestants the Act is a landmark document on religious toleration as the first legislative act on religious freedom.

1650 Catholic chapel established at Medley's Neck

1651 Parliament commissioned a group of the Calverts' enemies to insure the colony's obedience to Parliament. Once in control of the colonial government, the Protestant commissioners repealed the Act of Religion of 1649 and replaced it with a new ordinance which gave religious liberty to all Christians "provided that this liberty not be extended to popery..." The anti-Catholic penal codes of England were now enforced in Maryland and a number of Catholics were prosecuted.

1654 County Court established at house of John Hammond which was in the vicinity of present day St. Mary's Ryken High School. Hammond was also granted a liquor license and operated a ferry on the Newtowne River, now known as Breton Bay.

1655 The two Jesuit priests in Maryland, Father Francis Fitzherbert at St. Inigoes and Father Lawrence Starkey who attended to the outlying missions, came under direct attack. The Jesuit residences and property at St. Inigoes, south of St. Mary's City, and St. Thomas Manor near Port Tobacco, having been destroyed, Fitzherbert and Starkey were forced to flee to Virginia.

1658 Father Fitzherbert returned to Maryland when the English Council of State restored to Lord Baltimore rule of the colony. However, turmoil continued and the Calverts only regained full control of Maryland after the restoration of the monarchy in England in 1660.

1660 Charles II and the Stuarts restored to throne. The population of Maryland stood at approximately 8,000 in 1660 swelled to 15,000 by 1675. In the years following the restoration of the Calverts' rule in Maryland the number of Jesuits also grew gradually although at this period there were never more than five priests in the colony at one time.

1661 William Breton of Newtowne deeded an acre and a half for a church and cemetery to serve the "zealous Roman Catholik inhabitants of New Towne and St. Clements' Bay." A small wooden church was built here in 1662 within the boundaries of the current cemetery.

1668 The Jesuits purchased Bretton's entire estate at Newtowne.

circa 1660-1667 The brick chapel erected in St. Mary's City under the patronage of St. Ignatius,

1660-1690 In 1690 sheriffs assigned to report on Catholic activity noted that there were nine churches and chapels then in existence in Maryland. In addition to the chapel at St. Mary's City, other chapels constructed in these years included those at the Jesuits' three manors of St. Inigoes, Newtowne, and St. Thomas, as well as three chapels around Newport and one at Matapany. These early churches were forerunners of the church of St. Ignatius at St. Inigoes and the parishes of St. Francis Xavier and St. Nicholas in St. Mary's County. (St. Nicholas became the base chapel when Patuxent Naval Air Station opened in 1942). The other chapels mentioned were in Charles County and were forerunners of St. Ignatius at Chapel Point and St. Mary's in Newport.

1677 The Jesuit Fathers, succeeded in opening a "school of humane letters" at Newtowne.

1688 There were approximately 25,000 residents of Maryland and 32,000 by 1700. although there were few towns and neither St. Mary's City or Providence (Annapolis) had more than a two hundred residents.

1689 James II, the last Catholic king of England, was driven from the throne, the Calverts' opponents rose up in April, 1689. Once again using religion as a pretext, and feeding on absurd fears of popish plots and Catholic collusion with the Indians, the opposition formed "An Association in arms for the defense of the Protestant Religion," asserted their support for the new Protestant monarchs, William and Mary, and took control of the colony. The new monarchs assumed control of the colony while leaving Lord Baltimore his lands and certain revenues.

1694 The colonial capital was changed from the Catholic center of St. Mary's to Providence (Annapolis).

1699 The "Test" oath was imposed on all office-holders. Since this oath specifically denied the doctrine of transubstantiation in regard to the Eucharist, it effectively barred Catholics from holding positions in the Provincial government, although some were retained by Lord Baltimore to manage his holdings.

1702 The Church of England was officially recognized as the state church of Maryland and all taxpayers, regardless of their own beliefs, were obliged to support it financially. The following year Catholics were denied the right to worship publicly.

1704 Governor Seymour commanded that the brick chapel at St. Mary's City, which was understandably a source of pride to the Catholic community, be forever closed and it was. Shortly after, with Seymour's encouragement, the assembly passed the "Act to Prevent the Growth of Popery" which closely resembled similar laws recently passed by the English Parliament prohibiting Catholics from teaching or proselytizing, and forbidding priests to celebrate Mass even privately. The Act, if enforced, could have destroyed Catholicism in Maryland by ending the celebration of the Eucharist. As a result, all Catholic chapels, including the church at Newtowne, were ordered to be closed. The assembly later relented its severity and Catholic worship in private homes was permitted. Thus, for the next seventy years the Catholics of Maryland were only able to celebrate Mass in small "house chapels." The same legislation also prohibited the operation of Catholic schools, so the school at Newtowne was forced to close. Until the American Revolution parents seeking a Catholic secondary education for the children had to send them to Europe and, given the difficulties of ocean travel in the eighteenth century, it is surprising how many Catholic families made this choice.

CATHOLIC POPULATION IN 1708

1708 The governor ordered that a census be taken of all the "Papists" in the colony. According to this census, conducted by the local sheriffs, there were 1238 Catholics in St Mary's County. They constituted approximately 31% of the County's total population and 41% of all the Catholics in Maryland. The next largest concentration of Catholics was found in Charles County where 709 Catholics constituted approximately 22% of the total population and 24% of the total Catholic population of Maryland. Thus 2/3 of the Catholic population of Maryland was concentrated in Charles and St. Mary's Counties. The total number of Catholics in Maryland was 2974 which amounted to just 7.2% of the total population. (See Beatriz Hardy, "Papists in a Protestant Age: The Catholic Gentry and Community in Colonial Maryland, 1689-1776" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1993)p.96.)

1708 “Seymour Town,” named for Royal Governor, John Seymour, was established as a port of entry by the Colonial Assembly. The name of the town was changed to Leonard Town in 1728 to honor the colony’s first governor, Leonard Calvert.

1710 It is assumed by local historians that since Catholics were numerous in St. Mary’s County there must have been Catholics in Seymour Town-Leonardtown. It is further assumed that these Catholics must have gathered in a house chapel for Mass which would have been offered by one of the Jesuit priests who lived at Newtowne. Thus, for some time now, the establishment of the parish has been dated to around 1710.

1714 The period of royal control of Maryland ended in 1714 with the conversion of the fourth Lord Baltimore, Benedict Leonard Calvert, to Protestantism. While a few Maryland Catholics followed the new Proprietor and the changed political winds into the Protestant church, the vast majority continued to practice the faith of their fathers despite the discrimination.

1718 All Catholic voters who refused to take various oaths that denied Catholic teaching, including the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist were disenfranchised. Also at this time the tax of twenty shillings per servant imposed in 1704 to restrict the immigration of Irish “Papists” was doubled.

By 1720 Maryland’s Catholics were forbidden the right to hold office, to vote, to teach their children or to worship either in private or public. Lacking any political support and making up only ten per cent of the population, they accepted the status quo. But still, they clung to the faith.

Mid 1700s As anti-Catholic sentiment ebbed the laws against Catholics worshipping were rarely enforced. Consequently, throughout the middle 1700s the network of house chapels in the homes of the Catholic gentry grew. Catholics would even gather quietly in small, disguised churches they had built. In the first decade of the eighteenth century there were ten such chapels where Catholics could worship. By the 1740’s the number had risen to thirty-four, twenty-three of these were in St. Mary’s, Charles and Prince George’s counties. A number of Catholic communities which first gathered at these chapels later evolved into full fledged parishes. For example, the Slye family chapel in Bushwood, c.1734, became the parish of Sacred Heart.

By the 1740s the number of priests in the colony had risen so that to an average of twelve were active in Maryland during each year of the decade. Even so, the Catholic population had also risen from approximately 3000 in 1710 to 8000 in 1740, which meant that there were roughly 650 people per priest.

1756 Two years after the outbreak of the French-Indian War the assembly proposed and Lord Baltimore agreed that Catholics, who were rumored to be aiding England’s enemies, should be taxed twice as much as everyone else to support the defense of the colony. Although the amount of the tax was not large, Catholics were indignant over the principle involved and that despite all they had done to contribute to the founding and development of Maryland, they continued to be considered potential traitors. Maryland’s Catholics were especially disappointed that Lord Baltimore had not stood up for them when they had always been supportive of the Calvert family. This seeming betrayal by the Calverts disillusioned the Catholics and they no longer supported the Proprietor’s rule. In fact, some leading Catholics like Charles Carroll, whose family had always been loyal to the Calverts, seriously considered leaving Maryland. Carroll actually went to France in 1757 in order to buy land on which to settle in Louisiana, but the deal fell through.

1765 Maryland Catholics reacted with understandable alarm when in 1765 news reached them that officials in Rome were considering sending a vicar-apostolic or even a bishop to lead them. Two-hundred and sixty leading Catholics, including Charles Carroll of Annapolis, Henry Darnall and Ignatius Digges, signed a petition stating that the move would give their enemies who were “bent on our ruin, a stronger handle than anything they have hitherto been able to lay hold on, and consequently terminate in the utter extirpation of our religion.”

1766 First written evidence of the existence of St. Aloysius Church. At that time, Fr. Joseph Walton, the Jesuit superior at Newtowne, recorded in his diary that a wooden church was near completion and Fr. James Beadnal was serving the community there.

The first church of St. Aloysius was located approximately one mile north of the current church on the north side of Route 245 at the end of cemetery road. The land for the church and cemetery were donated by a widow, Mrs. Ann Thompson. There are no surviving pictures or drawings of the church. However, Fr. Walton's diary also sheds some light on activities in the parish. An entry from about 1776 lists the names of fifty-five women who were members of the Sodality of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

By the 1770s Catholics in Maryland were thoroughly alienated from the Calvert family and the colonial assembly, in which they no longer had much influence.

1773 Due to the political situation in Europe, the Society of Jesus was officially suppressed by Pope Clement XIV. The approximately twenty, now ex-Jesuit priests in Maryland soon reorganized themselves as the Corporation of Roman Catholic Clergy.

II THE AGE OF JOHN CARROLL 1773-1815

1775-1783 The American Revolution

1768 BL. JUNIPERO SERRA EST. FIRST CALIFORNIA MISSIONS 1789

George Washington inaugurated president. French Revolution

DIOCESE OF BALTIMORE ERECTED.. JOHN CARROLL FIRST BISHOP

1790 District of Columbia set up as site of new capital.

1803 Louisiana Purchase

1812-1814 War of 1812 Washington burned.

1815 JOHN CARROLL DIES

1775-1783 The American Revolution At the time of the American Revolution St. Mary's County already had seven well-established Catholic communities which regularly gathered for the celebration of the Mass. These were St. Inigoes (1638), St. Francis Xavier (1662), St. Nicholas (c.1662), St. John's (c.1698), St. Aloysius (1708), Our Lady's (1766) Sacred Heart (1770) Another church was added around 1795 when the great builder, Father Joseph Walton, S.J., erected the first church of St. Nicholas at Mattapany. This church served the Catholics in the area that heretofore had heard Mass in various family chapels.

1782 birth of Benedict Joseph Fenwick, future founder of Holy Cross College and bishop of Boston.

ST MARY'S COUNTY POPULATION 1790-1890

YEAR	TOTAL	%CHANGE	WHITE/%	NON-WHITE/%
1790	15544	n/a	8216 52.8%	7328 47.2%
1800	13699	-11.8%	6678 48.7%	7021 51.3%
1810	12794	-6.6%	6158 48.1%	6636 51.9%
1820	12974	+1.4%	6033 46.5%	6941 53.5%
1830	13459	+5.2%	6097 45.3%	7362 54.7%
1840	13224	-1.7%	6070 45.9%	7154 54.1%
1850	13698	+3.6%	6223 45.4%	7475 54.5%
1860	15213	+11%	6798 44.6%	8415 55.4%
1870	14944	-1.8%	7218 48.3%	7726 51.7%
1880	16934	+13.3%	8244 48.7%	8690 51.4%
1890	15819	-6.6%	8153 51.5%	7666 49.5%

1790-1810 Migration of Maryland Catholics to Kentucky. In this period the population of St. Mary's County decreased

from 15,544 to 12,794. A large portion of this population loss can be attributed to the migration to Kentucky where land was cheap and economic opportunities were seemingly better.

1812-1814 War of 1812 St. Mary's County was raided several times by British forces who patrolled the Chesapeake during the war. In July 1814 British forces plundered Leonardtown. In November 1814 the British raided the Jesuit residence at St. Inigoes..

1814 Death of Fr. James Van Huffel, a secular priest who had ministered at St. Aloysius since 1792. It is probable that his grave is in the "old" cemetery.

1818 Archbishop Marechal of Baltimore visited St. Aloysius' Chapel. Marechal recorded in his diary. "Saw St. Aloysius Chapel, a wooden building, large and in tolerable order."

1824 Archbishop Marechal visited St. Aloysius a second time and confirmed eighty persons. In his diary he recorded: "Church is repaired, large and well disposed. Altar and throne adorned with taste."

III THE CHURCH OF THE EARLY IMMIGRANTS 1815-1866

1820 Missouri Compromise on extension of slavery
1821 ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON goes to Heaven.
1828 Andrew Jackson elected President
1834-35 PHILADELPHIA SCHOOL RIOTS
1835 ROGER BROOKE TANEY CHIEF JUSTICE OF SUPREME COURT
1836 Texas Wins Independence from Mexico
1846 IRISH POTATO FAMINE BEGINS
1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act. The last compromise on slavery issue.
1856 Republican & "Know Nothing" Parties strong in pres. election. A
1860 Lincoln elected. Secession begins.
1861-65 Civil War

c. **1830** St. Michael's in Ridge which was established to serve the Catholics who lived south of St. Inigoes

1838 Jesuits sold the slaves they owned in Southern Maryland

1830 Jubilee Mission. Fr. Stephen Dubisson recorded , "An admirable spectacle here was to see a colonel of the militia in the crowd...for nearly three hours before the confessional, waiting his turn, and afterwards kneeling at the Holy Table. There was not a Catholic of any class who did not make the Jubilee..."

1844 Native son, Bishop Fenwick visited Leonardtown and wrote in his diary: "repaired first to Leonardtown, which is now a handsome village, having a number of houses. Made arrangements for late dinner and set off for what was once my Father's Plantation, which is now the property of my nephews and nieces. Took St. Aloysius in our way, for I was curious to see what was formerly my parish church in which I was baptized . Sed quantum mutata ab illa! Instead of the compact beautiful edifice I formerly knew, I beheld but a ruin! A building ready to fall for want of repair..."

1846 September 1 Cornerstone laid for new St. Aloysius Church at present location within Leonardtown. The church was built on land donated by James and Ann Blackistone who were Episcopalians. Designed by Vincent Camalier, the church would serve the parish for over a hundred years.

1851 St. George's parish was established in 1851 on property donated by John Shadrick, a non-Catholic. Thus, by the time of the Civil War, there were ten Catholic churches in St. Mary's County. Of these ten, all but St. Ignatius at St. Inigoes, and St. Nicholas at the Patuxent Naval Air Station, are now active parishes in the Archdiocese of Washington. During Civil War most Southern Marylanders sympathetic to the Confederacy and Point Lookout was used as a prison for

Confederate soldiers..

IV IMMIGRATION AT HIDE TIDE 1866-1918

1866-77 Reconstruction

1866 SECOND PLENARY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE

1869-70 FIRST VATICAN COUNCIL. DECLARES PAPAL INFALLIBILITY.

1894 Pullman Workers Strike

1898 Spanish-American War

1898-00 "AMERICANISM CONTROVERSY" IN THE CHURCH

1914 Beginning of World War I. Both Irish & German Catholics support U.S. neutrality.

1916 Woodrow Wilson re-elected.

1917 U.S. enters War in April

Bolshevik Revolution in Russia

1918 ESTABLISHMENT OF NAT'L CATHOLIC WAR COUNCIL

Armistice signed in November

Slow growth in St. Mary's County, which already had ten Catholic churches at the time of the Civil War required the erection of only two more parishes in the nineteenth century, Immaculate Conception in Mechanicsville (1876) and Holy Face at Great Mills (1879), plus one mission, St. Francis Xavier on St. George's Island (1893).

Shortly after the end of the war, during the pastorate of Fr. Joseph Enders, the church was enlarged by thirty feet and a bellow tower was added.

1868 The Jesuit residence was moved from Newtowne to Leonardtown. Initially, the Jesuit fathers lived at White Hall which once stood at the corner of the main street and___. Not long after the Jesuits exchanged this property for the Dillow house and five acres across the street. The Jesuits's residence was then immediately adjacent to the church. The front of this residence still stands and serves as a garage.

1877-78 Under the direction of Fr. Vicinanza, the church was covered in stucco.

1882 fr. Charles K. Jenkins became pastor and remained for twenty-one years, the longest tenure of any pastor so far.

1885 The first Catholic school in the County to endure, St. Mary's Academy in Leonardtown, came about through the providential convergence of lay generosity, pastoral leadership and religious zeal. In 1884 Mrs. Mary Miles, a convert, and former teacher, donated to Father Charles Jenkins, S.J, pastor at St. Aloysius, the recently purchased Rose Hill farm, with the provision that he was to give the property to any religious order that was willing to establish a Catholic school on the site. After eleven unsuccessful attempts to enlist an order of religious women to run the school, Father Jenkins' perseverance paid off when the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Kentucky accepted the challenge in 1885 and opened St. Mary's Academy. As the co-foundress of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth was the Charles County native, Mother Catherine Spalding, it was fitting that her congregation would take the lead in establishing Catholics schools in Southern Maryland. Devoted to addressing the educational needs of the Catholic community, the Sisters of Charity were remarkably flexible in their administration of the Academy. At various times in its ninety-six year history the school operated on both the elementary and secondary levels, admitted boys as well as girls, and maintained a residence for boarders. That same year the Jenkins family presented a 1100 pound bell to the parish. The bell was later placed in the new church and is still heard to this day.

1890 The St. Aloysius Beneficial Society was established by black parishioners to provide for the social welfare of its members.

1900 The County’s population reached 17,182 but then fell by 1,000 over the next twenty years. Still with more priests available, four more churches were added during this period. The multiplication of churches not only reduced traveling distances in the days before the automobile, it also facilitated evangelization.

Population of St. Mary’s County 1900-2006

YEAR	TOTAL	%CHANGE	WHITE/%	NON-WHITE/%
1900	17182	+8.6%	8926 51.9%	8256 48.1%
1910	17030	-5.4%	9726 57.1%	7304 42.9%
1920	16112	-6.2%	9674 60.0%	6438 40.0%
1930	15189	-5.7%	9597 63.1%	5592 36.9%
1940	14626	-3.7%	9901 67.6%	4725 32.4%
1950	29111	+99.0%	-----	-----
1960	38915	+33.6%	-----	-----
1970	47388	+21.7%	-----	-----
1980	59885	+26.8%	-----	-----
1990	75974	+26.8%	-----	-----
2000	86211	+13.4%	-----	-----
2006 est.			98854 +14.6%	White 81.3% Black 14.4% Asian 2.1%

1904 St. Peter Claver in Ridge, was established in 1904 at the request of blacks in the region who rebelled against the segregationist policies then in practice at St. Michael’s.

1909 Leonard Hall opened by the Xaverian Brothers. The Jesuit Fathers purchased property not far from St. Mary’s Academy in 1908 for the purpose of establishing a secondary school for boys in the County. Unable to staff such an institution themselves the Jesuits succeeded in recruiting the Xaverian Brothers to open the new school, called Leonard Hall, which they did the following year.

1910 The Knights of Columbus establish St. Mary’s Council in Leonardtown.

1911 A two- story wooden school was erected at St. Michael’s in Ridge.

1912 The chapel of St. Mary’s at California was established in 1912 a few miles south of Hollywood and was tended to by the priests serving St. John’s until it was closed in 1955.

1914 Our Lady of the Wayside in Chaptico. At the time of its establishment Chaptico also became the Jesuit residence and base of operations in the western part of the County.

1915 St. James parish, near St. Mary’s City, was begun in 1915 as a mission of St. Michael’s in Ridge. This parish, along with St. Peter Claver, was served in the first part of the century by two Jesuits, Father John LaFarge, S.J. and then Father Horace McKenna, S.J., who were renowned in the County and beyond for their efforts on behalf of racial justice.

1915 August St. Mary’s citizens vote to ban the sale of alcohol. Fr. Lawrence Kelly, S.J., pastor of St. Aloysius, was prominent leader of “dry” movement in the County.

1915 The first St. Mary’s County Fair was held under the sponsorship of the Xaverian Brothers

1916 A school for the black children of the St. James’ parish, called St. Alphonsus, operated from 1916 until 1922. Concurrent with the opening of St. Alphonsus, St. Peter Claver school was opened in a two room building for the children of that parish.

Under the administration of Father LaFarge, classes were offered at the church of St. James in Dameron.

1918 Mrs. David McCarthy of Washington donated funds for the establishment of a free standing school for St. James, which was given the name, "St. David's.". Initially, all four of these small schools were conducted by lay women.

V 1919-1945 A MATURING COMMUNITY

1919 N.C.W.C BECOMES NAT'L CATHOLIC WELFARE COUNCIL

1920 Women given the right to vote with 19th Amendment. All lose the right to drink with the 18th.

1924 National Origins Act passed to end immigration.

1928 GOV. AL SMITH, DEMOCRAT FROM NEW YORK FIRST CATHOLIC NOMINATED FOR PRESIDENT BY MAJOR PARTY. IN CAMPAIGN MARRED BY ANTI-CATHOLIC BIGOTRY, SMITH GETS 41% OF VOTE AGAINST HERBERT HOOVER AND CARRIES ONLY 8 STATES

1929 October Stock Market Crash. On-set of the Depression.

1932 FDR Elected. Prohibition Repealed.

1939 ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON ESTABLISHED. MICHAEL CURLEY OF BALTIMORE NAMED FIRST ARCHBISHOP

August, Stalin & Hitler sign non-aggression pact Sept. Invasion of Poland
DECEMBER MYRON TAYLOR SENT TO VATICAN AS FDR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE TO POPE PIUS XII.

1941 Pearl Harbor attacked. U.S. enters World War Two

1945 On-set of Cold War

1922 The Sisters of St. Joseph of Hartford, Connecticut came to Ridge to take over the operation of St. Michael's and St. David's, consolidating the two schools ten years later. The Sisters of St. Joseph would go on to operate other schools in the County, notably St. John's and Little Flower at Great Mills. Indicative of their influence, twenty young women from St. Mary's County joined the order.

1923 St. John's School opened staffed by the Sisters of Charity. Initially the fifty students attended classes in the church itself. Through the efforts of Father Joseph M. Johnson, S.J., a native of St. Mary's and pastor of St. John's from 1922 to 1953, the parish was able to open a four-room school in 1924.

1924 The Cardinal Gibbons Institute opened. Originally conceived by the Jesuits as a secondary vocational school for Blacks, the school, with the financial support of the Knights of Columbus, opened in 1924 under the administration of Victor and Cora Daniel. Although championed by Father LaFarge, Archbishop Curley and Thomas Wyatt Turner of the Federation of Colored Catholics, the Institute struggled, especially as a result of the Depression. Revitalized in 1938 under the leadership of Father Horace McKenna, S.J., the Cardinal Gibbons Institute was an important educational institution for Blacks until the end of segregation brought about its closure in the late 1960's.

1924 The Oblate Sisters of Providence came from Baltimore to operate St. Peter Claver School. During their approximately fifty years in St. Mary's County, the Oblate Sisters were a guiding presence among Black Catholics and received more than twenty vocations. In addition to their work at St. Peter Claver School, the Oblates made significant contributions to the operation of the Cardinal Gibbons Institute.

1924 Our Lady's Church in Medley's Neck and St. Joseph's in Morganza both opened schools, with forty students at Our Lady's and sixty-five at St. Joseph's.

1926 Sacred Heart, with seventeen students, and Holy Angels, with eighty-five students, both opened their schools under the Sisters of Charity.

1927 St. Joseph's parish opened its "Colored School" under the direction of two lay teachers.

193? Current rectory at St. Aloysius was built under leadership of Fr. Knight.

1942 Pax River Naval Air Station opens. The population of St. Mary's County in 1790 was 15,544 (W-8216, B-7328).

By 1940 it had gone down to 14,626 (W-9901, B-4725). Then in April, 1942 Construction of Base at Cedar Point began and the population began to grow rapidly. In 1950 it was 29,111. In 1980 it reached 59,895

VI THE POST WAR YEARS 1946-1963

- 1947 ARCHBISHOP RITTER OF ST. LOUIS DESEGREGATES SCHOOLS
- 1948 ARCHBISHOP PATRICK O'BOYLE OF WASHINGTON BEGINS DESEGREGATION OF ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOLS.
- 1950-53 Korean War
Era of "McCarthyism"
- 1954 Supreme Court Declares Segregation Unconstitutional.
- 1958 POPE JOHN XXIII SUCCEEDS PIUS XII AS POPE.
- 1960 JOHN F. KENNEDY ELECTED PRESIDENT. MARKING ACCEPTANCE OF CATHOLICS IN AMERICAN SOCIETY???
- 1962 SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL OPENS
- 1963 JFK Assassinated

1946 Centennial of St. Aloysius Church. Fr Ryan, in his history of the parish, stated that there were 11,036 Catholics in the County out of a total population of 14,626. If accurate it would mean that 75% of population was Catholic.

1947 Fifteen hundred persons from all over the County participated in a May procession in Leonardtown

1951 First attempt at integration of Catholic schools in the County. Except in Ridge, whites and blacks attended the same churches, although Blacks were relegated to the back or the upstairs lofts. The Catholic schools remained strictly segregated with only two schools which would accept Black children. These schools were in Morganza and Ridge. Initial attempts at educating local Catholics on the injustice of segregation made by the Jesuit priests at Ridge in 1951 were resisted. The resistance became especially fierce after an effort to gather white and black children from the separate schools together for Mass. The following year the Archdiocese urged area pastors to give occasional sermons on the subject of racial justice and to disseminate educational materials.

1954 The Supreme Court declared segregation unconstitutional.

1955 Father Andrew White School opened.

1955 Beginning in September 1955 sermons on the Church teaching on race relations were delivered in each parish in Southern Maryland on a monthly basis.

1956 on Pentecost Sunday, the announcement was made that the Catholic schools would be integrated in the fall. This was met with vehement opposition and through the summer diocesan officials, including Archbishop O'Boyle, met with various groups to explain the new policy.

1956 September integration was achieved peacefully. As in the District and northern counties, the process of integration did not change the racial situation in the schools overnight. It took time before the principle of integration was accepted in practice by both whites and blacks.

1956 Ryken High School for boys opened by the Xaverian Brothers.

1956 St. Aloysius Social club established for black parishioners.

Steeple of old church removed for safety reasons.

1959 The old church was condemned as unsafe after beams in the ceiling crack. Parishioners attend Mass in the gym for FAW school. Integrated seating for the first time.

1962 March 18 The new church was dedicated by Archbishop O'Boyle. The old church was demolished.

VI THE RECENT PAST 1964-

1964 Civil Rights Act

1965 SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL ENDS

Beginning of large scale commitment of U.S. troops to Vietnam.

1968 Tet Offensive. LBJ retires. H.L. King & RFK assassinated.

July-"HUMANE VITAE" issued by PAUL VI.

1973 SUPREME COURT ISSUES ROE V. WADE LIFTING RESTRICTIONS ON ABORTION

1974 Watergate. End of War in Vietnam.

1970s LARGE SCALE IMMIGRATION OF HISPANICS BEGINS

1978 POPE JOHN PAUL II SUCCEEDS PAUL VI

1979 POPE JOHN PAUL'S FIRST VISIT TO THE U.S.

1980 Ronald Reagan elected President with significant share of Catholic ethnic vote

1981 UNITED STATES AND THE VATICAN ESTABLISH FORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

Solidarity Movement in Poland brings beginning of the end for Communism in Eastern Europe.

1989 Fall of Berlin Wall-End of Cold War in Europe.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN U.S. CELEBRATES BICENTENNIAL

2002/3 Clergy Sex Abuse Scandal

2004 Catholic candidate, John Kerry, receives only 48% of Catholic vote & loses election

2008 POPE BENEDICT VISITS THE U.S. INCLUDING WASHINGTON

Economic Recession/Depression begins

1964 The Jesuits relinquish pastoral care of St. Aloysius and were replaced by diocesan priests.

1972 The Xaverian Brothers gave up the administration of Leonard Hall in 1972.

1974 St. Cecilia in St. Mary's City replaced the older parish of St. James in Dameron.

1982 Ryken and St. Mary's Academy merge as a result of a lack of teaching sisters and brothers, and reduced enrollments.

2002 Parish purchases 21 acres of the former St. Mary's Academy property from the Sisters of Charity.

2008 Parish Tercentenary Celebration begins.

2009 Jesuits sell their remaining lands at Newtowne and St. Inigoes to the State of Maryland. The state bought 1,761 acres in St. Mary's and two other properties in Charles and Cecil counties. The Newtowne Neck property is 776 acres south of Compton between Breton and St. Clement's bays. Kitts Point is south of Webster Field in St. Inigoes between St. Mary's River and Smith Creek.