

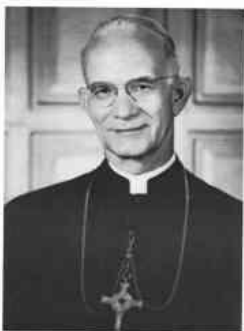
# Resurrection Parish Diocese of Yakima

## Zillah Catholic Church of the Resurrection

### Parish History



For many years Catholics on the East Side of the Yakima River in the Zillah area had no church of their own. Sunday worship for most meant traveling many miles every Sunday over highways, bridges and sometimes back roads, roads that could be dangerous in the winter with snow and ice. Most families shouldered this burden to fulfill their obligation for weekly worship; however, many did not participate in other events of neighboring churches because of the distance involved.



Resurrection Parish was established effective at noon on November 4, 1963 on the feast of St. Charles Borromeo, becoming the thirty-second parish in the Yakima Diocese. At that time Resurrection Parish was attached to St. Patrick's Parish of Granger.

The Parish was so named by the Most Reverend Bishop Joseph Dougherty, Bishop of the Yakima Diocese, from the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. This scripture informs us that the Apostles were commissioned to be witnesses of Resurrection of Jesus. The challenge to the members of this Parish is to reflect on how we too can be witnesses and proclaim the good news of the Resurrection.



The first pastor was Father Paul Flad, who resided at the time in Granger. Now the commuting was dispatched to the priest rather than the parishioners. The Parish Sunday and Holy Day Masses were first celebrated at the Orchardvale Grange building. Weddings and funerals were held at St. Aloysius Church in Toppenish. While this was an improvement the parishioners wanted their own resident priest.

In 1964 the Rev. Harold Adams of the Christ Episcopal Church offered his mission church to members of Resurrection Parish to celebrate Mass. An adjoining house was loaned as a rectory for Father Flad. This moved the parish home from rural Zillah to downtown on West Second Avenue. During Lent of 1964 Mass was celebrated three times a week. With the beginning of Easter Services in 1964, Sunday and daily Masses were now held on a regular basis.



1965 was a busy and important year for the Parish. At this time the Parish members began to work with the diocese officials in planning the building of our own Church. The Catholic Bishop's Corporation purchased a 40-acre parcel of land North of town on Schooley Road. Thomas Hargis Jr., a Yakima architect was selected to do the design. By August 1965 the Parish acquired a new rectory located at 1016 Maple Way. Father Flad stayed at the Maple Way rectory until the end of August. Father Flad was on loan to our diocese at the time and was recalled to his home Diocese of Lacrosse, Wisconsin.

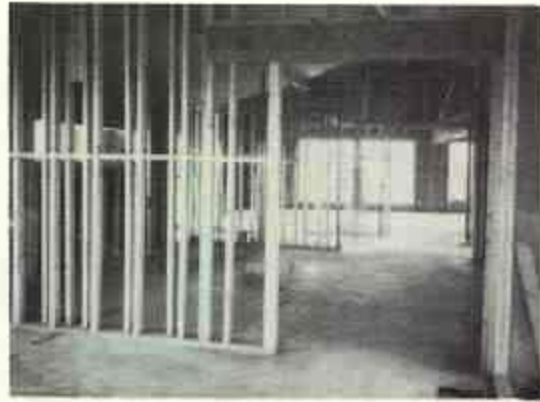


On 1 September 1965 Father Edward Wawrzynski was assigned as the pastor of Resurrection Parish.

On September 5, 1965, a ground breaking ceremony was held with construction beginning on September 10, 1965 on a church and attached hall. Although desired, an onsite rectory was not planned in this initial construction phase. Until a rectory at the church grounds could be built, the home on Maple Way would continue to serve our priest.



December 19, 1965



December 19, 1965



December 26, 1965



January 9, 1966



January 9, 1966



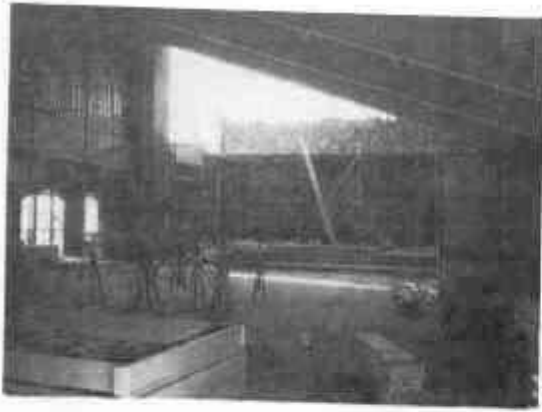
January 14, 1966



January 14, 1966



February 12, 1966



February 19, 1966



March 13, 1966



March 13, 1966



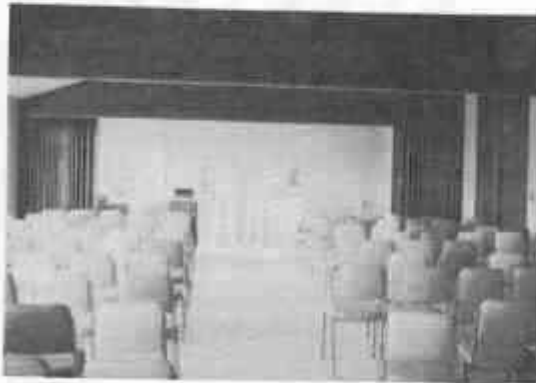
March 13, 1966



April 26, 1966



April 26, 1966



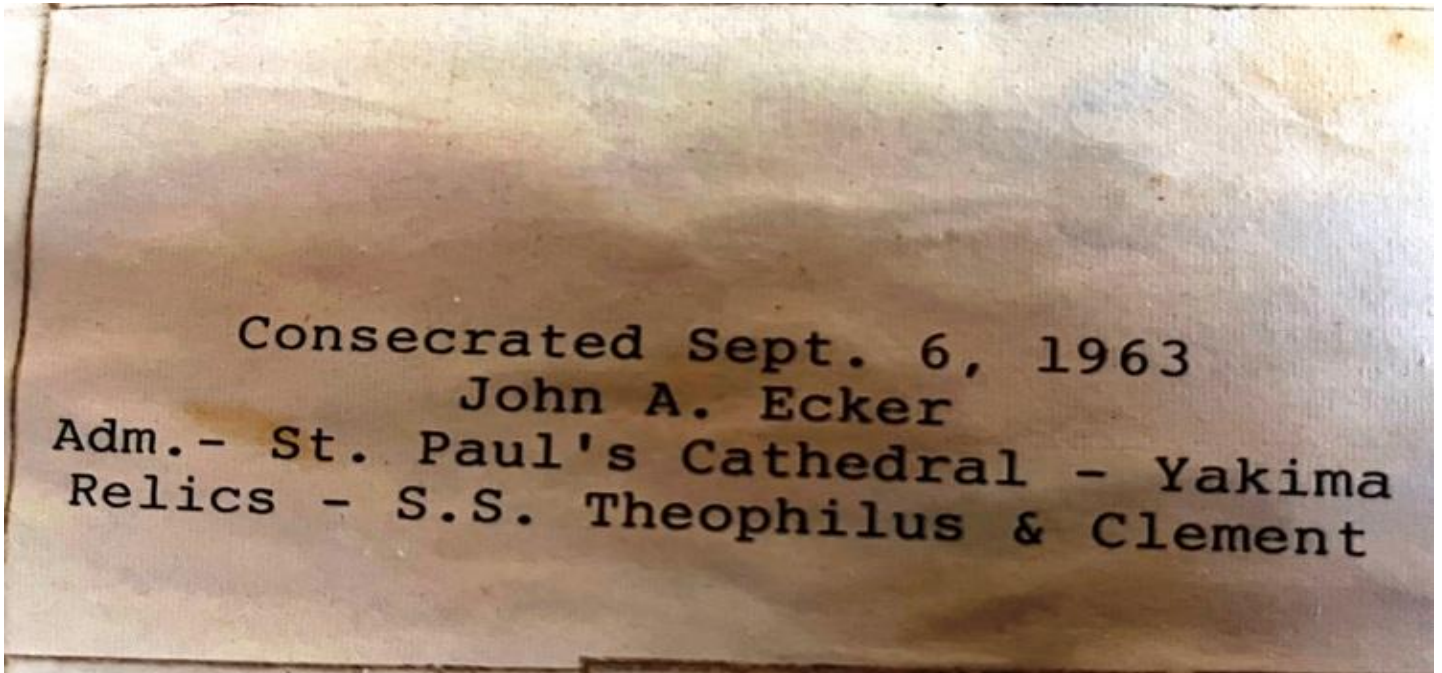
April 26, 1966



WORKERS ON THE JOB FROM THE BEGINNING:  
Joe Mitzel - Carpenter Tom Richardson - Electrician  
Biff Mann - Foreman Ted Bell - Carpenter



Seven months after construction began, the first Mass was celebrated on our own parish property. It was on Holy Saturday April 9, 1966 when the move from the Episcopal Church to our own church hall on the Schooley Road property was made for Mass. This was just in time to celebrate Easter, the Feast of the Resurrection of Jesus, for which our parish is named. On May 19, 1966 on Ascension Thursday the first Mass was celebrated inside the church. On Sunday June 26, 1966 an open house was held for all to view the now completed church and hall. Bishop Dougherty led a dedication Mass on October 7, 1966 for the new church and hall.



Our Church was awarded a Certificate of Merit from the Central Washington Chapter of American Institutes of Architects in March 1968 for its unique design features. The design of the church was meant to compliment the characteristics of the town and the surrounding farming industries. A rustic, yet modern and elegant building, it was considered one of the most beautiful in the lower Yakima Valley. The original hall was 25' x 73' x 13' and could be divided into four separate rooms by folding doors for meetings and CCD classes. The Church was 62' x 98' x 64', the sacristy 22' x 15' and a workroom of 10' x 16'. The design capacity of the church seating was for 400 people. The total cost of building construction was \$221,046.

In August of 1968 Father Wawrzynski was commissioned as an officer in the US Air Force to serve as a Chaplain. Father Arthur Waters became the next pastor of the Parish with a residency of seven years spanning September 1968 until 1975. During this time an annual autumn tradition of the "harvest dinner" sponsored by the Resurrections Women's club was held each November.



In 1975 the new pastor was Father Robert Shields. He served as pastor for nearly eight years when he was reassigned in 1983. During his term as pastor the rectory on Maple Way was sold and two single-wide mobile homes were purchased and placed on the south end of the church in 1978. One would serve as rectory and the other as a home for a housekeeper. During Father Shields tenure the original

mortgage for the church was paid off and mortgage-burning ceremony was held following a spring Mass in 1982. The original larger acreage was bought to support the formation of a Catholic School, but that plan did not come to fruition. The surrounding acreage that was owned by the Diocesan Corporation was sold to a private party in 1983.

With a shortage of priests in the Diocese, Father Shields was transferred in 1983 and the pastorship of the Parish was temporarily assigned to Father Robert DeSantis residing in Granger.

Father Paul Stecher arrived a few months later to lead our Parish. Father Stecher was in ill health but had still ministered with love and enthusiasm right up until his death only a little over a year later in 1985.



Following Father Stecher's death, Bishop William Skylstad assigned Father Bertrand Horvath as administrator of Resurrection Parish. Father Horvath was then serving in Yakima area hospitals and churches. He continued the Yakima assignments in addition to celebrating Sunday Mass, presiding at funerals and working with parish members to support normal Parish operations. Many Parish members stepped up to help in various ministries while Father Stecher was ill and continued their lay service under Father Horvath.



In July of 1985 Father Richard Queen was assigned as our new Pastor. Father Queen shared his concern that our parish needed to expand our operations and community outreach. He supported enlarging the hall and kitchen into a facility that would better serve our members. And while a new rectory was also brought forward for consideration, Father Queen insisted that the new hall and kitchen come first.

Father Queen worked on implementing many improvements in the parish as the pastor. Many new landscaping projects and flower gardens were planted under Father Queen's direction. A rose garden was planted in the circle between the two manufactured homes while a large tulip bed was planted just east of the parking lot. Flowers were also planted around the rectory and office (formerly the housekeeper's home) and around the church grounds. Lexan was placed over the interior of the stained glass windows for added protection and energy conservation. Ceiling fans were installed again to promote energy efficiency when heating and cooling the church. Interior and exterior lighting was improved.



Father Queen also arranged for a van to be donated by Pacific Power and Light to serve as a bus for children to be transported to the Wednesday afternoon Religious Education programs. Now parish volunteers could pick up children who did not have a ride to the church and hall for Religious Education classes.

A portable barbecue grill and "Chuck Wagon" (portable kitchen) trailer were acquired under Father Queen's leadership. Resurrection Parish was now more visible in the community. Parish members would cook and serve foods at functions such as community days, homecoming, and other celebrations and events in both the Parish and community.



Father Queen actively participated in many Zillah Ministerial Association functions. Father Queen added a Saturday Vigil Mass and

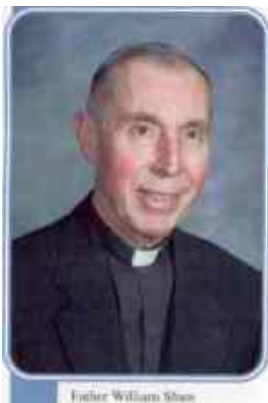
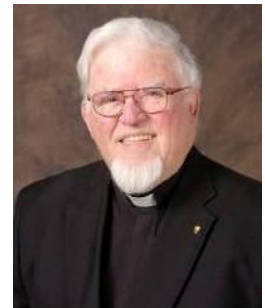
early Sunday morning Mass and a late Sunday night Mass bring the total of weekend Masses to four celebrated for the convenience of our growing church.

Father Queen served for four years, the final year battling the cancer that took his life in July of 1989. Father Queen refused to be removed from active ministry at Resurrection for fear that the shortage of priests would cause our Parish to be closed or converted to a mission status. Once gain the lay ministers and parish members were called on to assist our ill pastor. Father Queen provided his parishioners the Holy Sacraments eventually from a wheelchair and served Mass until the last weeks of his life.

Following the death of Father Queen, Father Walter Janer, S.J. was assigned as pastor for Resurrection Parish. At the time Father Janer was in residence at St. Patrick's Church in Granger and split duties and time between the two parishes. The weekend Mass schedule was reduced to the Saturday Vigil and Sunday morning offerings only.

In May of 1990 Father Donal Kennedy was assigned as pastor. His tenure as pastor was only five months when the needs of the diocese for a pastor at a larger parish caused him to be reassigned.

In September 1990 Father Ronald Patnode who was then pastor of St. Aloysius Parish of Toppenish was assigned as our new pastor in additions to his current duties at St. Aloysius. Father Patnode was forced to eliminate the Saturday Vigil Mass due to his limited time leading two active Parishes. While there was only one Mass on Sunday, Father Patnode continued to work with parish leaders and supported their efforts to carry on with activities and Religious Education housed in the Zillah parish.



After one year of having a to share Father Patnode with Toppenish, Father William Shaw was assigned to Resurrection Parish arriving in September 1991. He served until June of 2000 as our spiritual leader. Father Shaw will be remembered as our bicycling priest. He would literally ride his bicycle all over the Zillah area to visit members. Talk again surfaced about expanding the hall and kitchen and also to construct a more permanent rectory and office facility. Plans were discussed during Father Queens administration, but now Father Shaw wanted to see the plans turned into actual construction. Father Shaw placed the Parish Hall expansion project for the people ahead his comfort for and a new rectory was placed on hold.



In 1992 the Hispanic Lay Ministries group and a Spanish Choir were formed in our Parish as an outreach to the Spanish speaking families living in our community. Mass offered in the Spanish language was held in our church with Spanish speaking guest priests. Father Shaw also worked to bring in visiting Spanish speaking priests during the summer time to help serve the growing Hispanic population, a population that would often swell during the harvest season. In

August of 1992 a Parish Festival was held and continues to be held each summer.

Finally, in 1995 the long discussed and planed new hall and kitchen expansion project was completed. In 1995 the parish held a celebration to



open the facility. Then Bishop, later Cardinal Francis George held dedication of this expansion project.

Father Shaw worked to again establish a more visible Catholic presence in the community. He participated in many Zillah Ministerial Association functions and our Church was home to several ZMA community sponsored events. The Zillah Food and Clothing Bank became a focus of our Parish support. Father Shaw was seen daily peddling to the newly opened kidney dialysis center to pray with patients and bring communion to the sick.



Father Shaw encouraged annual retreats to be held in our Parish and worked to bring in guests to conduct these retreats, often at lent or advent for our members.

Father Shaw also started a week-long annual summer Religious Education program bringing in guest nuns in residence for the program. The guest nuns who would visit on Father Shaw's invitation, to talk of their missions, orders, retreats, religious life, good works, and programs enriched the Parish family.

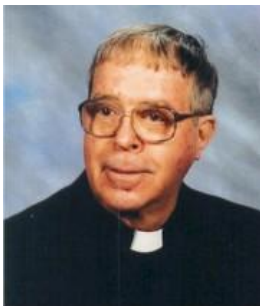
Bishop Sevilla began to place several Spanish only speaking seminarians in our Parish to help them learn English language and culture and to also add to our outreach of the Hispanic population.

In 1995 Resurrection Parish established a presence on the Internet by hosting a web page dedicated to sharing information about our church and faith to the entire world.

The summer of 1998 saw the old HVAC system of the church fail beyond repair. A new more reliable and energy efficient system was installed in 1999.



Our Bishop  
Carlos Sevilla, S.J.



In June of 2000 Father Emmett Sarsfield was named as pastor of Resurrection Parish. Father Jorge Granados was assigned as Associate Pastor in September 2000 and served as the leader of Spanish Ministries.

In November of 2000 Father Emmett and Parish members attended the Diocesan Eucharistic Congress and took up Bishop Sevilla's directive for parish outreach and evangelization. Father Emmett began an outreach which focused on those Catholics who have "wandered" from the church. He encouraged our members to make the church and its events more welcoming and forgiving and to invite family members and friends who may have been "away" to return. During Lent 2001 special wanders Masses were celebrated geared to inviting and welcoming back former members.



During his term as pastor, Father Emmett updated and aligned the liturgy which included a comprehensive review of the current GIRM (General Instructions of the Roman Missal) and full application of the GIRM's to our celebration of Mass.

The completion of the memorial featuring the Pietà was blessed in 2001. This memorial is seen on the left as entering the doors to the church. Father Jorge was called to service in other locations in the diocese after only a brief stay.

Special Masses took place in September 2001 following the attack of 9/11/01. A new memorial was dedicated in the hall to all the Parish veterans who served the United States of America, and each Veterans Day since Father Emmett had special Masses and flag dedications designed to remember our veterans.



In 2002 the new rectory became a reality with the move completed during the summer. Now the Rectory and Parish Office are housed in a new, modern, comfortable facility.

Deacon Bernie Alvarado was officially assigned by Bishop Sevilla to assist our faith community. Deacon Bernie has assisted with Mass, special holidays services, instruction and sacraments in baptism and matrimony. 2002 also saw refinement and expansion of both the Parish Stewardship Council of the Parish Spanish ministries. Over the next several years there was a tremendous growth among our registered Spanish speaking members and in their active involvement in Parish life.

Spring and summer now of saw the grounds around the rectory and church front come alive with Gods gift of flowers and other improvements to the church and grounds are on going.



The tabernacle was relocated to the center of the sanctuary behind the altar and new slate tile was added to the altar area of the sanctuary. Several murals were painted in areas of the church and hall and new slate tile was placed in the rectory and hallway. For Fall 2005 Father Sarsfield started the Sunday Afternoon Men's Football Club. Men of the Parish were invited to watch satellite broadcasts of NFL Football games after Mass and to enjoy food, beverages and fellowship.

A rosary/memorial garden including a bell tower was dedicated in early 2006. A vision of Father Emmett was to have an outside area on the church campus for small gatherings, outdoor prayer and contemplation, and a place to remember and pray over our beloved dead. Due to health concerns Father Emmett retired from Resurrection Parish August 1, 2006 to move closer to his family in South Carolina. Father Emmett died in South Carolina in 2010.

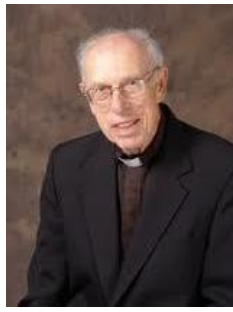


Father Argemiro Orozco was next appointed by Bishop Sevilla to be pastor of both St. Aloysius in Toppenish and Resurrection Parish in Zillah. On September 30 during the Vigil Mass, Bishop Sevilla officially installed Father Argemiro as pastor of Resurrection Parish. Father Argemiro was very familiar with Resurrection Parish having served our Spanish speaking community. With Father Argemiro as pastor we saw an increase in Parish activities. Attendance and participation increased dramatically. As an example our 2007 Ash Wednesday service saw the faithful fill the entire church, and then some. Father Argemiro in a short tenure has helped to unite and inspire our Parish family to a fuller life.

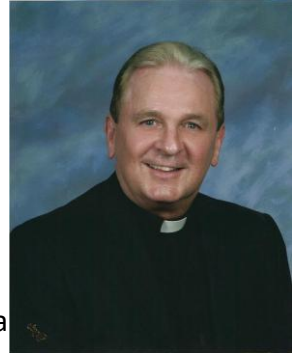


On March 3, 2007 Bishop Carlos Sevilla announced that Father Argemiro will be re-assigned to East Wenatchee. Our new pastor, which we continued to share with St. Aloysius was Father Francisco Higuera. Father Higuera was assisted in his ministry of pastor to two parishes by Father John Shaw (retired) and Father William Vogel S.J.

Both Father Shaw and Father Vogel were very active in our Parish spiritual life at Resurrection. In February 2008 it was announced that, due to health reasons, Father Francisco had been granted permission to relocate outside of the Diocese. On Sunday May 18, 2008 Father Francisco Higuera celebrated his last Sunday Mass and was honored with a farewell reception sponsored by the St. Anne's Guild.



Father Juan Flores was next assigned to replace Father Higuera at both Resurrection and St. Aloysius Parishes in May 2008. His first official act at Resurrection Parish was to give the welcome address to the Zillah High School Class of 2008 at the ZMA Baccalaureate service which Resurrection Parish hosted. Father Flores was in residence at St. Aloysius Parish in Toppenish and commuted to Zillah. Father John Shaw and Father William Vogel S.J. continued to minister to our parish as associate pastors.



In June 2008 Father William Vogel, S.J. was given permission to be a priest in residence in our rectory and to assist Father Flores in ministering to our Parish.

Resurrection Parish conducted a funding drive in the Fall and Winter of 2008 to purchase a life size portrait of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The dedication of the portrait was held on March 25, 2009 which was the Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord.



In 2010 exciting news was announced that as a parish family we had retired a large outstanding debit with the Diocese and that built up over the years.

Now that the debt was cleared, we were able to move forward with Hall renovation, improving the energy efficiency and increasing the attractiveness of that space.

In May 2010 we purchased an upgraded Kubota tractor to help with the grounds. The summer of 2010 saw a new roof installed which increased the energy efficiency of the Church and to better protect the interior. In the Fall of 2010, we were able to make an upgrade to the flooring in sacristy, sanctuary and main church.

Our Religious Education Program (REP) is was serving nearly 200 students in 2011. St. Anne's Guild purchased new Christmas decorations including trees and lights and also new banners for the liturgical seasons.

The new baptismal font was delivered October 28, 2011. It added elegance to the church and is a lovely compliment to this first sacrament received by Catholics.

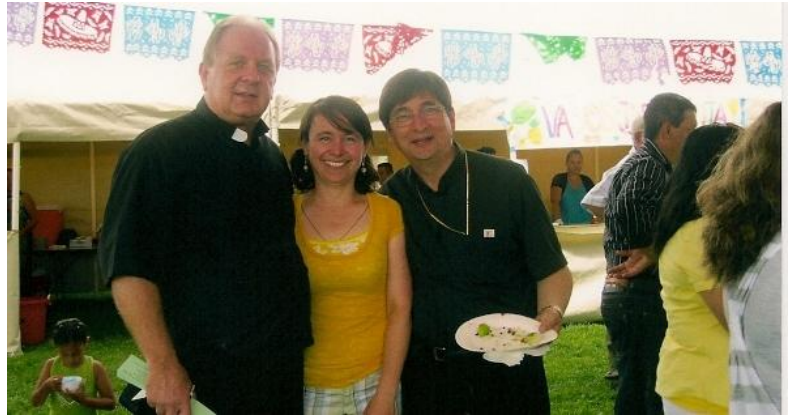


Later in 2011 an addition of a storage near the sacristy allowed us secure sound equipment, instruments and many of the seasonal decorations such as our Christmas trees, wreaths, lights, etc.

In November 2012 new energy efficient windows were installed in the sacristy, the Religious Education Office and the back sides of the sanctuary. At this same time the small "store" of religious articles was relocated from the vestibule to the office.

December 11, 2012, Bishop Joseph Tyson, with the blessing of Father Patrick J. Lee, S.J., Superior for the Oregon Province of the Society of Jesus, appointed Father William Vogel, S.J. pastor of Resurrection Parish in Zillah. Father Vogel had been in residence at the parish for the past few years.

For the past several years our annual Parish Festival in July continues to grow in participation. Pictured on the left are Father Vogel, pastor, Maria Rodriguez, Festival Leader and Bishop Joseph Tyson.



On October 16, 2016, a special celebration in commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the dedication of Resurrection Catholic Church was held. A wonderful dinner was prepared and served to an overflow crowd that filled the hall and surrounding tents erected in the courtyard. Below is the beautiful cake prepared for the celebration by the Deacon and Mrs. Bernie Alvarado.



Below are some photographs taken during the celebration.



Fidel Marquez entertains the diners with music on the organ.

Dancers and a Mariachi group also entertained the attendees.



Two of our “Grill Masters” prepared the hot dogs and hamburgers for the children who attended the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. (John Griffin, (left) and Mario Rodriguez (right)

In honor of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary a new entrance sign was purchased and installed on Schooley Road.



In January 2019, Father William Vogel S.J. was moved by the Jesuit Superior to a Jesuit wellness facility in California. Father Vogel's status was then changed to "Pastor on Leave."



Monsignor Robert Siler was named Administrator of Resurrection Parish and Father Felix Rodrigues was assigned to be in residence in Zillah as the Parochial Vicar by Bishop Joseph Tyson. Together Monsignor Siler and Father Felix work to keep the parish united, active and vibrant. One of their projects was to update the Parish Advisory and the Parish Financial Councils to align with the new directives of the Diocese.



Father Felix is quite the chef and has a tremendous amount of energy. He organized and cooked several special weekend meals as fundraisers for the ACA, Retired Priests and Seminarians Funds and other worthy projects here in our home parish and in the Diocese. Father Felix was very gifted as a decorator and the altar was always very beautiful and provided much joy to those attending services thanks to Father's talents. In late 2019 the Father Felix approved the upgrading of the church sound system.

In March 2020 public Masses were suspended in our state and diocese due the Covid-19 pandemic. Both Monsignor Siler and Father Felix worked within state and diocesan health and safety guidelines to allow Resurrection Parish members to celebrate the weekend Masses outdoors. Due to the pandemic, we were forced to cancel our annual Parish Family Festival in July 2020. The celebration of Mass inside the church resumed in September following safety guidelines. In September the Parish was able to purchase a new commercial mower. This allowed our ground crew to not only reduce the time to groom the lawn each week, but it also improved the appearance too.

Effective October 1, 2020, the team of Monsignor Siler and Father Felix were transferred to St. Aloysius Parish in Toppenish to operate our neighboring parish and provide for their spiritual needs.



Father Jacob Davis transferred from St. Joseph Parish of Kennewick and was assigned to Resurrection Parish as Pastor. Due to the pandemic the annual Harvest Dinner was canceled.

At that time of COVID precautions and restrictions, we were trying to keep the parish together and informed using our Resurrection Parish Website.

<http://www.resurrectionparish.us/>, our Resurrection Parish Facebook site:

<https://www.facebook.com/resurrection.Zillah/> and our Resurrection Parish Weekly News

via email (RPZ News) and Flocknote Message system. Father Jacob also produced a live streamed video of weekend and weekday Masses on Facebook and later YouTube as an outreach. After COVID restrictions were lifted Father Jacob continued to livestream and archive the Masses at Resurrection Parish.

In October 2020 the Spanish Vigil Mass on Saturday at 7:00 pm became a permanent Mass. Years before it was only offered during the harvest season.

Prior to the COVID pandemic we were planning a remodeling of our restrooms. Once things returned to normal Father Jacob continued to lead the parish in completion of the remodeling project including adding of a family friend restroom. The restroom project was blessed and opened to our people in the Fall of 2023.

In February of 2024 the Sunday Spanish Mass at 10:30 am was becoming overcrowded with some of the Masses were at 350+ faithful attending. In April of 2024 a Sunday Spanish Mass at 1:00 pm was added to relieve the overcrowding, which was successful in reducing the crowding in the 10:30.



After nearly 60 years the church exterior with the dark brown paint was showing it's age and exhibited UV ray damage from the sun. In September of 2024 a repair of the damaged siding and a complete repainting of the exterior of the church was completed. The lighter color should help minimize damage from the sun.



Father Jacob continued improvements to the building and grounds in 2025. Projects completed included:

- New automated irrigation system upgrade (completed in April 2025)
- Electrical and heating system upgrades for the Hall (January 2025)
- New drinking water fountain in hall (March 2025)
- Obtained through PP& L's Wattsmart program 4 programable

- wi-fi enabled thermostats for the main church, hall and rectory at no cost to the parish (March 2025)
- New entrance doors (replacing worn doors and hardware nearly 60 years old) (July 2025)

**.....and the next phase of our Parish story continues to unfold.**

*We encourage any parish member with a question to please visit our pages or call our office for assistance.*

*In loving  
memory*



**Deceased Priests & Deacons who served at Resurrection Parish.**

**“Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.”**

**In loving memory, we pray for:**

**Deacon Bernardino (Berney) Alvarado 1.4.1935 – 5.14.2024; Ordained 9.14.1996**  
**Most Reverend Bishop Joseph Dougherty: 1.11.1902 - 7.10.1970; Ordained 6.14.30**  
**Rev. Paul Flad: 11.5.1916 - 2.17.1987; Ordained 5-14-52**  
**His Eminence Cardinal Francis George: 1.16.1937 – 4.17.2015; Ordained 12.21.1964**  
**Deacon William (Bill) Hudson 3.27.1941 – 12.7.2019; Ordained: 3.1.2003**  
**Rev. Donal Kennedy: 7.2.1935 - 9.11.2002; Ordained: 6.12.1960**  
**Rev. Ronald Patnode: 7.23, 1935 - 11.24.2013; Ordained: 5.20.1961**  
**His Excellency Archbishop Cornelius Michael Power 12.18.1913 – 5.22.1997; Ordained 6.3.1939**  
**Rev. Richard Queen: 4.14.1919 - 7.20.1989; Ordained 5-31-1945**  
**Rev. Emmett Sarsfield: 5.28.1932 - 10.30.2010; Ordained: 6.7.1999**  
**Rev. Robert Shields: 5.30.1931 - 11.1, 2012; Ordained 5.23.1964**  
**Rev. Paul Stecher: 4.16.1923 - 2.27.1985; Ordained 5-29-1948**  
**Most Reverend Bishop Nicolas Walsh: 10.20.1916- 4.21.1997; Ordained: 6.6.1942**  
**Rev. Arthur Waters, 4.13.1936 - 8.28.1994; Ordained 6.12.1960**  
**Rev. Edward Wawrzynski: 5.10.1934 - 6.25.2008; Ordained 5.20.1960**