

Holy Family Church



Religious Tradition: Roman Catholic

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Originally the Catholics that lived in the Westvale area of Syracuse were serviced by priests from St. Joseph's Church in Camillus. On July 3, 1935 Reverend J. Lynch became the first mission pastor of Holy Family Mission Church. The first masses were held in a dining room at the Green Gate Inn, and then masses were held on the second floor of Kauh! Grocery Store. The population of Catholics increased in Westvale, and on July 26, 1939 excavation began for the new Holy Family Church. The first mass in the new church was held on



November 5, 1939. Then in 1954, Holy Family Church was enlarged to hold up to 650 people. In 1957, the elementary school was added to the church. Finally in 1994, the parish population had grown so much that it was decided to build a

new and larger church. They broke ground for the new church in June 15, 1996, and on March 21, 1997 the new Holy Family Church was dedicated.

The organizational structure of the church includes a Board of Trustees, a Parish Pastoral Council, and a Finance Committee. The Board of Trustees is run by a president, vice president, and treasurer. The Parish Council sets the goals of the church and oversees the parish programs. It works together with members



Stained Glass Windows

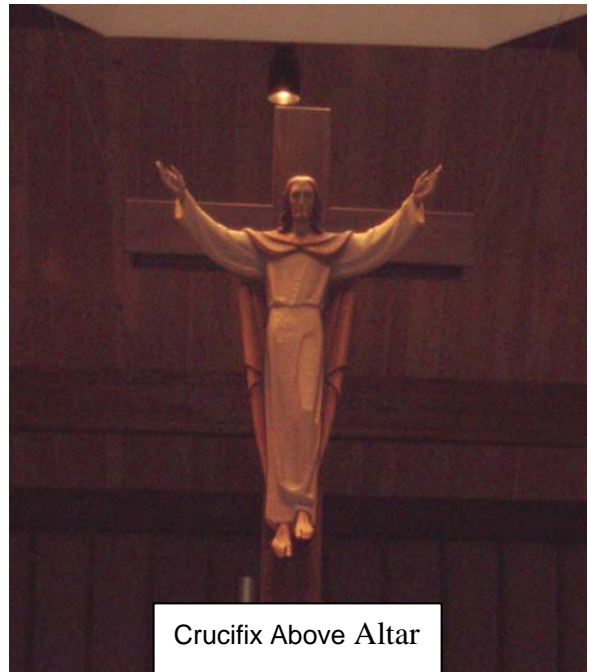
of the church community to lead the church. There are various positions on this council, including: Director of Religious Education, Director of Music, Director of Human Development, and many other positions. The Finance Committee works to be sure that there are sufficient funds in the parish.

The church has about 3500 families and about 5000 people attend church there on the weekend. The church consists of mainly Caucasian members who speak English as their

first language. There is a large range in ages in the parish community, from young babies and children to elderly members. Sermons are given in English. There is no specific seating pattern for the members of the church.

The needs of children of all ages are addressed in this parish. There are religious education classes for young children on both Sundays during mass and during the week nights. For high school children, there are confirmation classes that are held. As a part of the Confirmation program, there are many other activities for kids to participate, such as retreats. There are also youth masses for teenagers every Sunday at 4:00 pm. This mass features upbeat and lively music, and has a sermon that is usually geared toward a younger audience that addresses issues that concern teenagers and their faith.

The service was officiated by the priest. However, members of the church, both men and women, participated in the mass through being lectors for the two readings from the Bible and serving as Eucharistic Ministers. The mass can be split into two main parts: The Liturgy of the Word and The Liturgy of the Eucharist. The first part includes three readings, a psalm and the priest's sermon. In the second part, bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ.



Crucifix Above Altar

The music was sung by a small choir and the congregation was encouraged to sing along. The music types vary from mass to mass. At the 7:30 am Sunday mass, there is no music. However, all of the other masses do contain singing. The 4:00 pm Sunday mass features upbeat music geared towards teenagers.

The priest gave the sermon after reading the Gospel. He related the Gospel to the world today and gave insight into how people are called to follow in Jesus' footsteps and live as he did. The theme varies depending on the readings from the Bible at each mass. During the sermon, the members of the church sit quietly and listen to the priest talk.



Baptismal Font

The Catholic Church includes many rituals involving water. The major ritual involving water is the sacrament of baptism. Baptism is usually performed when a person is a baby. Holy water is also used to bless the members of

the church.

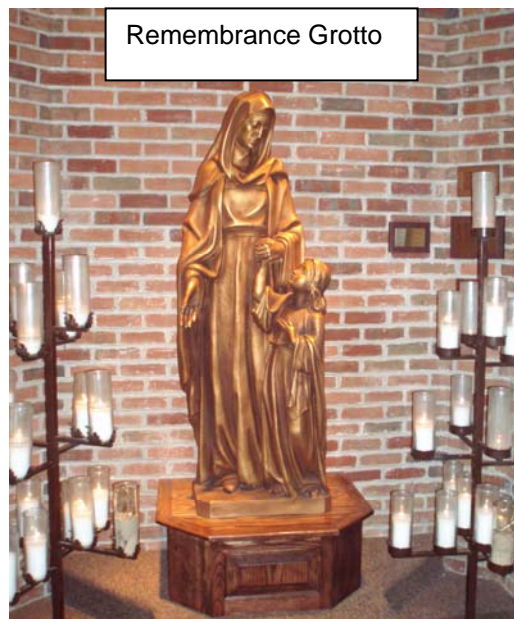
There are many activities at this church. There are programs for kids, such as Religious Education, The Confirmation Program, CYO Basketball, and many other events. There are also programs for adults who want to strengthen and learn more about their faith. These activities include Bible Study, as well as the many volunteer opportunities available. There is also a Senior Group that meets and has many events throughout the year.

Sample Schedule:

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18:

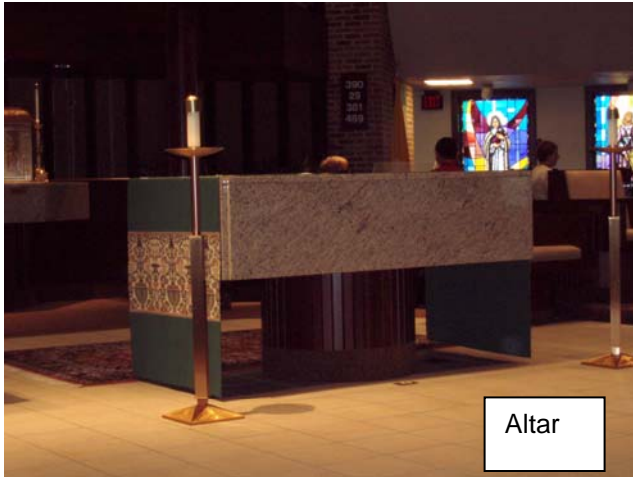
- 7:15 AM Men's Prayer Group
- 3:00 PM Divine Mercy Novena
- 6:30 PM Religious Ed
- 7:00 PM Adult Choir
- 6:30 PM Core
- 7:00 PM Charismatic Prayer Group
- 8:00 PM AA

Holy Family is involved in the community in many ways. It has a weekly bulletin which announces the different events for the week that the church will be holding or participating in. The church also has a food pantry, where food is donated by members of the parish and then given to those in need. The church also makes it possible for those who are unable to attend church



Remembrance Grotto

because of illness to receive the sacrament of communion through volunteers who bring communion to the local hospitals and nursing homes. The church also participates in the Crop Walk and the Heifer Project. This year it is also working to raise money for Helping Hands Medical Missions. Another way in which the church participates in the surrounding community is through the school. Holy Family School (Pre-K through 6th grade) is attached to the church and presents other opportunities to get involved in the community.

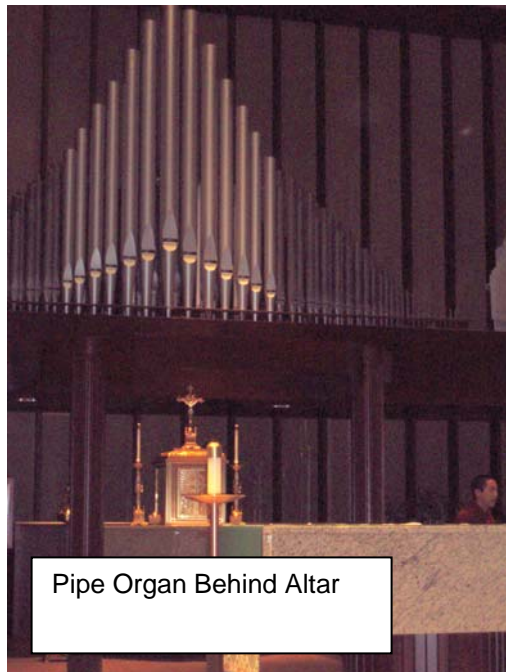


Altar

The church is built in a more modern style, with the altar in the center of the front of the church and the pews surrounding it. The pews come out in a semicircle pattern around the altar. There is a large pipe organ behind the altar, and there is a baptismal font to the right of the altar. There is a crucifix hanging from the ceiling directly above the altar. On the sides of the church there are many stained glass windows, and in between these windows there are plaques

that depict the Stations of the Cross. Also in the church there is a small grotto with a statue of Mary surrounded by candles to light in remembrance of loved ones. From the outside the church appears fairly circular in shape and has a distinctive copper roof with a cross in the center. Attached to the church is Holy Family School, which matches the brick construction of the church.

For those visiting Holy Family Church, there is no specific dress code; however nice clothes are appropriate.



Pipe Organ Behind Altar



Stations of the Cross

References:

Albino, Joseph. The History of the Church of the Holy Family. 2005

<http://holyfamilysyr.org/>

interview with Father Phil Brockmyre on October 7, 2006