

THE ROAD TO 125

A Journey Through St Benedict's History 1901 - 2026

The Shepherds of the Flock

Did you know?

A former pastor was called to his Heavenly Home while residing in the upper rooms above the sacristy?

Foundation, Educational & Expansion Leaders

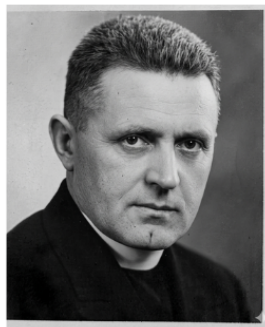


Father Wenceslaus Sholar, O.S.B. 1900-1904

As the first pastor, he suggested naming the church St. Benedict to honor the Benedictine fathers serving the community. He also arranged for the church's construction; by the fall of 1901, the basement was finished and the cornerstone was laid.

Father Fridolin Hornick, O.S.B. 1905-1913

When Father Fridolin arrived at St. Benedict, the congregation was predominantly Slovak. To better serve his parish, he immediately began studying the Slovak language so he could preach the word of God and hear confessions. Deeply invested in education, he successfully acquired property from the local school board and transitioned it into a Catholic school in 1906. This original school—a small, two-story wooden structure—was eventually torn down in 1924 following the completion of a newer school building.

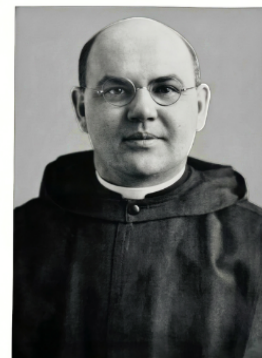


Father Basil Balko, O.S.B. 1917-1924

Born in Hungary, Father Basil spoke several languages, which allowed him to assist his parishioners in numerous ways during his seven-year tenure as pastor. In response to the school's enrollment growing to 200 students, he initiated the construction of a new brick school building in 1923, though he was transferred before its completion. Earlier, under Father Balko's leadership, the Blessed Virgin Sodality was organized and canonically established on June 5, 1922.

Father Maurus Macey, O.S.B. 1924-1948

Shortly after arriving in 1924, Father Maurus Macey oversaw the completion of the parish school's construction. His early years as pastor proved challenging when a local mine shutdown plunged many families into severe hardship. Guided by the maxim "God helps those who help themselves," Father Macey worked tirelessly to find innovative ways to assist those in dire need. Because the parish lacked a rectory at the time, Father Macey lived in two modest rooms remodeled for him directly above the sacristy. Through careful stewardship, he eventually managed to clear all of the parish's debt. To celebrate this milestone, the parish was formally dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus on September 20, 1936, marked by the unveiling and blessing of a bronze Sacred Heart statue. Father Macey served the community until his peaceful passing on March 16, 1948, when he was unexpectedly discovered by a student in his quarters above the sacristy.



Father Maurus Macey, O.S.B.



Father Jordan Burick, O.S.B. 1948-1956

Upon his arrival at St. Benedict, Father Jordan's most pressing challenge was the inconvenience of living above the sacristy. To address this, construction on a new parish home began within a month of his arrival, and with the dedicated assistance of local parish men, the rectory was completed in just one year. Father Jordan then turned his attention to the church itself, remodeling and redecorating the interior in preparation for the Golden Jubilee celebration in 1951. His next major initiative was to improve the school's facilities, which included adding a new office and installing indoor plumbing.

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Modern Era & Parish Establishment Shepherds (Late 1990s–Present)



Father Stephen Honeygosky, O.S.B. 1996-2001

During his time at St. Benedict, Father Stephen oversaw renovations that included building a new narthex and driveway, significantly improving accessibility for individuals with special needs. On November 7, 1999, the late Bishop Anthony G. Bosco celebrated a special Mass and blessed the new narthex and baptismal font, with Archabbot Douglas R. Nowicki and Father Stephen R. Honeygosky, then administrator, participating in the service. Shortly after, on March 10, 2001—coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the Diocese of Greensburg—Bishop Bosco officially established St. Benedict Church as a full parish within the diocese. This landmark decision concluded the church's 99-plus year history as a mission of St. Vincent Basilica Parish, and Benedictine Father Stephen officially became St. Benedict's first formal pastor.

Father John F. Murtha, O.S.B. 2001-2004

A native son of the Marguerite community who returned to serve as pastor in August 2001, overseeing the parish's centennial anniversary celebration. Fr John attended St Benedict school for his final three years of elementary education under the tutelage of Dr. Elizabeth Halula, his teacher and friend. As a Benedictine monk he served in many capacities at St Vincent Archabbey and as president of St Vincent College for ten years (1985-1995).



Rev. Nathan J. Munsch, O.S.B. 2004-2008

Fr Nathan was a monk of Saint Vincent Archabbey and professor at St Vincent College before he was assigned to our parish. During his time at St Benedict, he was involved with the Capital Campaign to raise money for the Construction of Parish Center 2007.

Father Martin R. Bartel, O.S.B. 2008-2013

Fr. Martin was involved with the construction of the new Parish Center and improvements to the festival grounds. As a Benedictine monk, he has served in many capacities at St. Vincent Archabbey, including President of St. Vincent College (2000–2005), and was elected Archabbot of St. Vincent Archabbey in 2020, serving through the present.



Father Daniel L. Blout 2013- 2025

Fr. Dan began a fresh chapter for our church with the remodeling of the sacristy and enhancements to the church interior. Additional structural enhancements were undertaken, featuring a new metal roof and wall-stabilizing tension rods.. Like several of our previous pastors, Fr. Dan served as a teacher and administrator at Greensburg Central Catholic High School before being assigned to St. Benedict.

Father Kenneth G. Zaccagnini 2025-present

Fr. Ken has enriched parish life at St. Benedict by establishing daily Mass and delivering engaging, heart-centered homilies. To honor our departed, he created a remembrance wall in the Narthex featuring memorial crucifixes. Every November on All Souls Day, a dedicated Mass will gather grieving families to pray, commemorate their loved ones, and receive their memorial cross.

