

A Reflection of Our Journey

Where did the time go?

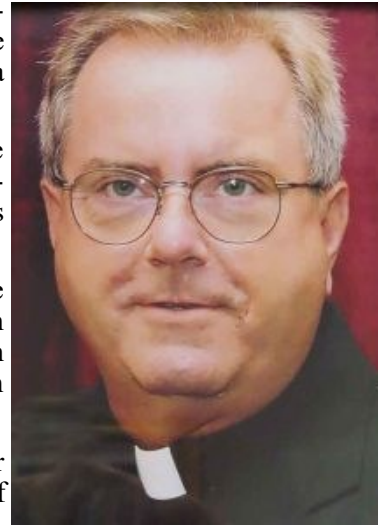
On September 30, 2006, Father Stephen Phillips celebrated the Sacrifice of the Mass in a conference room at, what was, Westgate Hotel, in front of 64 parishioners. That day St. Faustina Catholic Parish was born and a dream...and a journey... began.

On Saturday, February 4, 2023, Bishop John Noonan Blessed a new church building in honor of our patron saint, St. Faustina. More than 550 parishioners, family, friends, visitors, and surrounding community residents...many outside the church, some peeking in the windows... joined the Blessing Mass that saw the next step in the dream...and the journey...of St. Faustina Catholic Parish.

Shortly after Bishop Noonan's departure, Father Ramon celebrated the Sacrifice of the Mass at 4 pm, the parish's first regularly scheduled Mass, with 498 in attendance. Combined with the parish's four other scheduled Sunday Masses, a total of 2,239 were witness to the fact that Father Stephen's dream had become a reality.

Before the Blessing Mass, numerous photos were taken with the Bishop. However, the most meaningful photograph, at least to the parishioners who sat before Father Stephen in that conference room almost 16 and a half years ago, was when Michael Williamson from RD Michaels, the contractors that built the church building at 15551 N. Boggy Marsh Road, presented the keys to Father Ramon.

At the Blessing Mass, Bishop Noonan recalled the story of Exodus and the Jews' 40-year journey to the Promised Land. "Parishioners of St. Faustina maybe felt like the people of Israel," he said. "You have been wandering, searching for a home."



**Father Stephen Phillips
Our Founding Pastor**



Like that journey, not all our parishioners made it to the Promised Land. No doubt those who have been on the St. Faustina journey, who were present to realize the dream, shed a tear for loved ones who were watching from their Heavenly Home in God's Kingdom.

Bishop Noonan went on to thank and recognize the "dedication, participation, sacrifices, and steadfastness" that enabled St. Faustina Catholic Parish to finally obtain its own "spiritual home".

At the 4 o'clock Mass, Father Ramon, the fourth priest to lead the St. Faustina flock, gushed as he thanked all those who have contributed to the success and growth of the parish. He recognized those who were not with us physically, but in spirit, and he hinted at things to come now that the parish had its own permanent address.

This, however, is not the end of our St. Faustina parish journey. Plans are already underway to construct a larger church building to accommodate the rapidly growing communities that surround the parish. When will those plans become a reality?...only God knows.

However, our parishioners know, that through our parish's more than 16-year experiences, the answer to the question will be found when God is ready to reveal it.

Until then, the new church building celebrates all those parishioners, visitors, family, and friends, who have been on the journey, and those who will join it, as St. Faustina Catholic Parish continues to build its legacy as a parish that serves God through service to His people.

Where did the time go?

