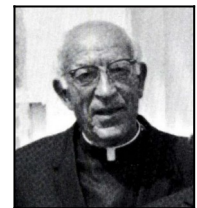


***I*mmaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church:**

A Brief History

On the Pajarito Plateau of Northern New Mexico, nestled in the Jemez Mountains, 37 miles from Santa Fe's St. Francis Cathedral and 5,837 miles from Rome, Italy, was a small community known as Alamos.¹ The year was 1941. Hispanic homesteaders, the Los Alamos Ranch School for Boys, and Anchor Ranch occupied this area.² The historical and deep influence of Catholicism surrounded this region like a security blanket on the shoulders of a child. The names given to the nearby villages and the natural beauty that surrounded them were a reflection of their faith. To the east were the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, which, translated, means Blood of Christ. Neighboring villages included San Juan, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, and San Ildelfonso, all named for patron saints that were undoubtedly called upon to protect and bless the families of the faithful. The most recognizable village was La Villa Real de la Santa Fe de St. Francisco de Assisi - the Royal City of the Holy Faith of St. Francis of Assisi, the city of Santa Fe, home to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.³

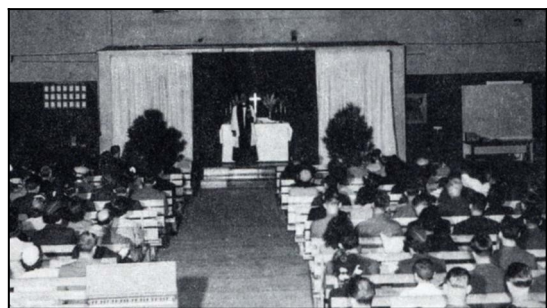
The population in Alamos was small and the Roman Catholic faithful were few in number, not nearly enough to sustain a parish. The group of worshipers belonged to one of 23 mission churches of Santa Cruz de la Canada and their patron saint was San Antonio.¹



Once a week, Fr. Jose Cubels would make the long trek from Santa Cruz to the ranch school on the hill. There, he would celebrate the mass and administer the sacraments.⁴ The Archbishop of Santa Fe was the Most Reverend Rudolph Gerken, DD, and the Holy Father was Pope Pius XII.⁵

As early as December 1942, the US government determined that this area would no longer be of small consequence to the world. Because of the need for

an isolated location to perform scientific research, roughly 54,000 acres were acquired. Approximately 8,400 acres of that land were owned by the Los Alamos Ranch School for Boys, Anchor Ranch, and the Hispanic homesteaders.⁶ The *Santa Fe New Mexican* (09/13/43) reported that the sale of the Los Alamos Ranch School was completed that year and the US government turned the area into a military reservation. A small group of scientists headed by Dr. Robert J. Oppenheimer arrived in this remote area in 1943.² The area became known as Los Alamos and Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory was established.



The town's history is well documented, but what of the Catholic faithful that began to arrive daily? What is their story? The community was made up of people from many parts of the globe. English was the primary language spoken, but many different accents could be heard in conversation. The majority of the Catholic faithful worshiped in Latin. When they arrived, there was no church in which to worship. There were no art or religious artifacts to admire, nor chapels in which to say daily prayers. Instead, they worshiped in the local theater on Sunday mornings. The theater was known simply as Theater #1.² The Protestant and Jewish faiths, also without churches, held their services in Theater #2.

Throughout the week, the theatres were used for staging amateur theatrical productions, variety shows, movies, and dances. Come Sunday morning, they were used for church services. It was not unusual to find the clergymen sweeping up beer cans and candy wrappers off the previous night's dance floors in preparation for worship.²

The Bulletin, a wartime publication, showed that in 1943 Catholic services were held in Theater #1 every Sunday at 8:30 a.m. Unfortunately, Theater #1 was in a technical area of the Lab. To attend church services, or any other

activity, residents had to show their security passes to the military police.² Pope Pius XII was still the Roman Catholic's beloved pope, and the Most Rev. Edwin Byrne was now Archbishop of Santa Fe. ⁵ Father Clarence Schoepner, then stationed in Santa Fe, was the first priest named by Archbishop Byrne to minister to the Catholics in Los Alamos. After Fr. Schoepner's tenure, Santa Fe's Franciscan priests would make the trip to Los Alamos ("the Hill") to minister to the faithful.⁴

By 1946, the population of Los Alamos had grown. It was this year that Archbishop Byrne established a parish in Los Alamos and consecrated it to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Father Bernard Burns was the first resident pastor and, because there was no church or rectory, lived in one of the local dormitories.⁴

Although the faithful of all denominations needed a place to worship, it seemed a low priority to some in charge. In 1946, the town's council highly recommended a chapel be built, but the Commanding Officer, Colonel H. C. Gee, balked at the request: "Until this post has passed the present crisis in housing of all types, I do not propose to permit the construction of miscellaneous community conveniences to interfere with the prompt solution of the housing problem. The temporary arrangements for the conducting of religious services must continue until we have eliminated the substandard housing now in use, the quarters which constitute definite fire hazard, and all facilities which constitute a hazard to health for this community."² The council supported his decision in placing housing construction above all else, but they did take exception to his classifying the proposed chapel as a "miscellaneous community convenience" (*Los Alamos Times*, 10/18/46).²

A few weeks later, after some debate, the town council won a major victory. Major General Leslie R. Groves, the commanding general of the Manhattan Project, came from Washington, DC, to the Sandia base in

Albuquerque. Following a conference, the general authorized Col. Gee and Laboratory Director Norris Bradbury to construct a chapel. Its design would reflect those being used by the War Department in numerous military installations (*Los Alamos Times*, 12/06/46).²

Six months later, the Bruns' Army Chapel in Santa Fe was dismantled, hauled up the winding hill road, and pieced back together to become the community's first church building; the United Church of Los Alamos became a reality (*Newsweek, Inc.*, 1949).² [7](#)

On May 2, 1947, the chapel was dedicated and was used by many denominations. The chapel had in its membership 50 Jews, 650 Roman Catholics, and 500 Protestants representing 18 denominations (*Newsweek, Inc.*, 1949).² The first Roman Catholic mass was celebrated at 10 a.m. Father Francis X. Campbell, who had been serving as pastor since his arrival in April, was the celebrant (*Los Alamos Times*, 05/02/47).⁸ A general Protestant service was held later that morning. Finally, there was a place for all faiths to worship.³ [7](#) Sunday and Holy Day masses were offered in the main room of the chapel, with daily mass and confessions in a small wing of the building. This wing, built strictly for Catholic use, contained the pastor's living quarters, as well as the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

During the late 1940s, Fr. Campbell was instrumental in starting the local council of the Knights of Columbus in Los Alamos and was an active guardian of the Altar and Rosary Society.⁸

The 1950s

The number of Catholics had doubled in Los Alamos, mainly because of the increase in the population. With this growth, Fr. Campbell identified the need for a separate Catholic church. With the Archbishop's permission, land was leased

from the US Atomic Energy Commission. In October 1950, the construction of a new Catholic church began.⁶ Using Army barracks with southwestern architectural lines, a church, chapel, and rectory were built at a cost of \$100,000. [410](#)



On May 6, 1951, the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) Catholic Church opened its doors, with more than 450 parishioners present. Archbishop Byrne delivered a special morning dedication and mass and prayed for peace to come to the world. “You here in the Atomic City,” he said, “must work and pray for peace.”⁹ Father Campbell announced that, beginning the following Sunday and continuing throughout the summer, Sunday masses would be held at 7, 9, and 11 a.m. ⁹ IHM parishioners finally had their own place to worship.

During this time, Fr. Campbell began the Monday evening devotions. The faithful would fill the church on this night of the week to pray for the spiritual well-being of IHM. Although there are several rosary groups at IHM today, the rosary group that meets in the IHM Chapel on Monday evenings ties back to the original prayer group that began well over a half century ago. In September 1951, Fr. Campbell left Los Alamos because of poor health. Archbishop Byrne then appointed Fr. Francis Schuler as the new pastor. The town and the population of all faiths continued to grow. [8](#)

It was important to Fr. Schuler that a specific crucifix was purchased for the sanctuary of the new church - he wanted it to represent Christ as Priest of the Most High and the Risen Savior of our faith. Christ would be wearing white vestments. The Altar and Rosary Society had bake sales and other fund raisers to help purchase the crucifix. That very crucifix now hangs on the west wall of St. Joseph’s Church in White Rock.



During the 1950s, many parents worldwide felt that a parochial school provided a better education for their children, and many IHM parishioners hoped to one day have such a school in Los Alamos. In 1956, the parish hall was built as a school gymnasium in hopes that a Catholic school would later be built.⁴

The 1960s

The catechism of the Catholic Church was essential for the youth in the parish. Catechism classes were



held for all grades and were taught by local parishioners. Catholic nuns Sister Susanna and Sister Elaine would journey weekly to IHM to teach the younger children about the love of God, mortal sins, and the importance of faith. They

helped prepare the children for their First Holy Communion. A typical communion class was that of 1961: 109 children received this sacrament from Fr. Schuler.¹¹

As the parish grew, so did the duties of the priest. Father Peter Hill would come from Santa Fe to help Fr. Schuler with confessions and masses. Jack Jones, a local parishioner, helped Fr. Schuler in any way he could. There were no deacons at the time, but Jack served in that role. He eventually became a priest, with his own parish in Texas.

Between 1963 and 1964, many changes came to Catholic faithful worldwide, including those in New Mexico. Blessed Pope John XXIII died and Pope Paul VI was appointed his successor. Archbishop Byrne also passed away and the Most Rev. James P. Davis, DD, was selected as the new Archbishop of Santa Fe. In 1964, Fr. Schuler, who had been the only resident priest since 1951, finally had more help when Fr. A. K. Biczak joined IHM.⁵

In the early '60s, the archdiocese encouraged the building of a parochial school here.¹² Parishioners were pleased that their children might have a Catholic education. The Archbishop sent the superintendent of Catholic schools to meet with IHM parishioners. He proudly informed the crowd that this new parochial school would have no more than 35 students per classroom. The parishioners looked baffled - their children were now in classrooms of 20 children or less. They were also told that, because fewer women were entering the convent, there were not enough nuns to teach. The church would likely have to pay higher wages for certified teachers. Parishioners knew Los Alamos already had some of the country's best teachers in its public schools.

The delegate also spoke of the need to transport children from White Rock and Barranca Mesa in Los Alamos, so the purchase of buses would be essential. That news caused the parishioners to hesitate once again, as they knew the

county already provided transportation for our students. The parishioners realized that the advantages and economics of a parochial school didn't add up. The parochial school was voted down. The superintendent went back to Santa Fe to inform the Archbishop that a parochial school in Los Alamos had been rejected.

Naturally, the Archbishop was disappointed and soon came to Los Alamos to check the situation himself. Although his original mission was to review the parochial school issue, he witnessed that at each of the five Sunday masses, every pew was full and the extra folding chairs placed up and down the aisles were taken as well. Parishioners stood in the back and overflowed to the outside and up the steps - there was no room left inside. The Archbishop also witnessed that the church was unbearably hot and some Catholics holding to their fast were fainting. He realized that a new church building represented a greater need than a parochial school. In 1965, designs for a new church began.¹²

The mid 1960s brought more pastoral changes to IHM. Father Benito Caraballo replaced Fr. Biczak as the second priest at IHM. Then, after more than 13 years as IHM's pastor, Fr. Schuler was reassigned to San Clemente parish in Los Lunas. He had guided incredible change in the parish during those many years. When Fr. Schuler came in 1951, there were about 325 families in the parish; when he left, there were about 800 families.



In April 1965, Fr. Clay Dennis became the new pastor of IHM.⁵ He, too, brought change to IHM. His busy schedule meant the end to priest involvement in the Monday night devotions, but he held retreats to help with the spiritual growth of IHM parishioners.

The construction of the new IHM church began in 1967. Because of Vatican II, this was also a time of major restructuring of the Roman Catholic

Church worldwide. Vatican II introduced significant changes to the more traditional practices of the Church. For example, statues, candles, and other means used by worshipers to strengthen their faith were no longer called for. When IHM was dedicated in October 1968, it did not have a crucifix.^{4,12} There were also no kneelers or stations of the cross. The congregation would now stand as a community in prayer, with eyes focused on the altar. It was in late 1969 that Don Williams hand-carved the large crucifix that hangs above the altar of IHM today. That crucifix was the only sign you were in a Catholic church.

Once the new church was completed, the old church and parish hall were used for catechism classes. A new rectory had not been built with the new church and therefore the old rectory, built in 1951, was still being used by the resident priests. At this time, Fr. Clay Dennis was the pastor and Fr. Richard Borgmann was his assistant.⁵

The 1970s

The Archdiocese archives show that in 1970, Fr. Alan Cushing served as pastor at IHM; Fr. Spencer Stopa was his assistant.⁵ It was under Fr. Stopa's leadership that the Christian Concern Committee (CCC) was started at IHM. Originally, it was set up to help organizations help others. Today, CCC is a dynamic outreach program that benefits Los Alamos and its neighbors in Northern New Mexico.

In 1972, having two priests at IHM became a thing of the past. Father Ronald Bruckner became the new pastor of IHM and Fr. Stopa eventually became director of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe's Diaconate program. (The Diaconate program allows deacons to serve as assistants to the priests.) The first deacon class in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe began on September 24, 1971, with 23 candidates. The first deacons for the Archdiocese were ordained by

Archbishop Davis one year later.³ In 1973, IHM had its first deacon, Chester Kazek. In March 1974, Deacon Anthony Porto was ordained.¹³

In 1974, while Fr. Bruckner was pastor, St. Joseph's parish hall in White Rock was built. Archbishop Davis died that year and the Most Rev. Robert Sanchez was named his successor.⁵ New Mexico Roman Catholics were proud that Rome had appointed one of their very own as Archbishop. Sanchez was the first New Mexico-born priest to become Archbishop of Santa Fe and was among the youngest priests in the US to be named to this position. He was a strong, dedicated, and much-loved pastoral leader.⁷

During 1978, the world saw dramatic change in Rome. First, Pope Paul VI passed away. John Paul I was selected as the Church's new leader but died soon after. The cardinals met once again and the world awaited the sign of the white smoke from the Vatican's chimney. This time, John Paul II, a humble man from Poland, was named the leader of the Roman Catholic faithful.

In May 1978, Charles Pacheco was ordained a deacon, joining Deacons Charles Frantz, Chester Kazek, and Tony Porto as part of the spiritual leaders at IHM.¹³ In 1979, a much-needed rectory was built and completed next to the main church.¹²

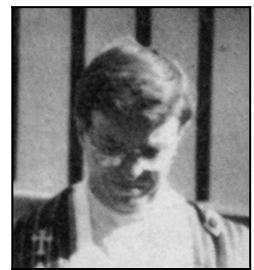
The 1980s

Father John Conway was then assigned by the Archbishop as the new pastor of IHM.⁵ In addition to being a spiritual leader, Fr. Conway was a big sports fan. Parishioners say that, in the cold months, you could spot him outside of church wearing the jacket of his favorite baseball team, the Boston Red Sox. He also took it upon himself, to meet and lead those interested, in the Liturgy of the Hours Morning Prayer.

Deacon Gerald Langner was ordained in June 1981. Church records show that Deacons Langner, Pacheco, Porto, and Donald Dickman served the parish at this time.¹³

In 1984, Fr. Conway was reassigned and Fr. Augustine (Auggie) Abeywickrema was assigned to IHM. Father Auggie was from Sri Lanka. He spoke English but had a thick accent that was hard to understand. In any homily, if he said something that the parish understood, he would get excited and repeat the sentence over and over, pleased that he finally got his message across.

In 1987, Deacon Dickman was reassigned to the Las Cruces diocese and Raymond Alcouffe was ordained a deacon at IHM. This year also brought Fr. Charles (Charlie) Brown to IHM as the new pastor. Father Charlie became aware of the needs of IHM and saw to it they were met head on. He was instrumental in advancing a plan for some major expenditures: to upgrade St. Joseph's parish hall and add classrooms; to build a multi-purpose building; and to upgrade IHM's parish hall. The renovations to St. Joseph's were completed in 1989.



The 1990s

The IHM parish comprised 1000 families. Archdiocesan records show that 516 students were registered in the CCD religious education program.⁵ Catechism classes were held in the old church and the parish hall, neither of which was very conducive to learning. Father Brown, realizing the need for a multipurpose building, led the effort to have one built. In September 1992, Archbishop Sanchez blessed the new 7,000 sq. ft. Catholic Center. Today, it is known as the St. Thomas More Religious Education Center.¹¹

At the time of the Center's completion, two-thirds of the construction debt was paid through donations, raffles, and church funding. In December 1992, to raise the final third of the money, the old church and rectory, located eastward up Canyon Road, were sold. The property was listed at \$399,000, and the money raised paid the debt to the Archdiocese for the new building. The remaining money went into a savings account to help pay for the renovation of the parish hall.¹⁵

In 1993, IHM was ready for the hall's refurbishment. Plans included a new roof, new bricks and siding, new windows and glazing, handicap accessibility features, and updating of the kitchen and restrooms.

Unfortunately, there were more serious problems needing attention in the Archdiocese at that time. Allegations of sexual misconduct by priests in the Archdiocese had begun to surface in the late 1980s, but now Archbishop Sanchez's name was included in the allegations and his continued leadership was being questioned. His resignation in March 1993 shocked and dismayed both Catholics and non-Catholics alike.¹⁵

Bishop Michael F. Sheehan was appointed apostolic administrator of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe on April 6, 1993. He served in this capacity until he was appointed Archbishop of Santa Fe on August 17, 1993.¹⁵

Meanwhile, Fr. Charlie continued to focus on strengthening the IHM community. Renovations to the parish hall were completed and other projects were being addressed. Deacons Alcouffe, Langner, Pacheco, Porto, and new deacons Donato Lucero and Robert Villareal (ordained in 1993 and 1996, respectively) helped Fr. Charlie meet the spiritual needs of the parish.⁵[13](#)

In 1996, "The Immaculate Heart of Mary" bronze sculpture by artist Linda Daboub, installed at the front of the church, was dedicated on December 8,

1996.¹⁵ During the next few years, the bell tower was erected and chimes were installed. This was an expensive addition to the parish, yet an anonymous IHM parishioner graciously covered the cost. IHM now had church bells to call the faithful home.



A new century begins: 2000

In May 2000, the inner strength of all residents in Los Alamos was tested. It was a time when those who believed in God relied heavily on their faith. It was the time of the Cerro Grande fire, which roared through Los Alamos and the surrounding forests, destroying ~48,000 acres. When Los Alamos was evacuated, the Blessed Sacrament and the sacramental records of IHM were moved to St. Joseph's Hall in White Rock. When White Rock was evacuated early the next morning, they were moved to the safe haven of Deacon Lucero's Ranch near Las Vegas, New Mexico.

Approximately 429 Los Alamos families lost their homes to the fire.¹⁶ Even before a cry for help could be heard from Los Alamos, our neighbors from all over the state and particularly here in Northern New Mexico, gave the community their support. Homes and school gymnasiums were opened to those in need of shelter; clothing and food was donated; and even stables and homes were made available to animals large and small.

Archbishop Sheehan went to the evacuation shelters to offer comfort to those who gathered there. Father Charlie held a special mass on Mother's Day at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Pojoaque, which gave spiritual comfort to his weary community. Every parish in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe prayed for Los

Alamos and special collections were taken. The Archdiocese raised \$325,000, which was distributed through Catholic Charities.

It was not only the Archdiocese of Santa Fe that helped. Financial aid came from parishes and monasteries throughout the country. Churches of every denomination and from every corner of the country prayed as well as gave spiritual, emotional, financial, and physical aide. The outpouring of love and support was overwhelming and much appreciated.



One of our parishioners, Mary Patton, took a special interest in helping the families affected by the fire. She realized that in five months, when the Christmas season came, many of those who had lost their homes would not possess a single Christmas ornament to display. She sent an email to fifty of her friends and relatives asking them to send one hand-made Christmas decoration for this special cause. Those fifty forwarded the email to their friends, and a long chain of giving began. The worry of whether enough ornaments would be available soon vanished; the ornaments started showing up daily. As the Christmas season neared, over 10,000 ornaments from all over the world began arriving. Every person who had lost their home and wanted Christmas decorations received them, and this spiritual season took on an even more special meaning.

Sixty-two IHM parishioners lost their homes in the fire. Father Charlie, the deacons, a special IHM Fire Relief Committee, and many parishioners helped offer support to these people. During the reconstruction, Fr. Charlie and the deacons also blessed land on which new homes were to be built, were under construction, or had just been completed.

During this period of rebuilding, a number of IHM organizations and other supporting agencies provided support to community members affected by the

fire. These included the Elizabeth Ministry, the Christian Concern Committee, and the Interfaith Recovery Network.

Not only was this a time when Los Alamos was rebuilding, but so was St. Joseph's Hall in White Rock. No longer would it be just a parish hall for the faithful in this small Los Alamos suburb, but it would be gutted and totally refurbished into St. Joseph's Catholic Church. On June 3, 2002, Archbishop Sheehan dedicated St. Joseph's as a mission church to IHM.

In 2002, Fr. Charlie retired from IHM. Before he did, it is reported that one day at mass, he looked at the back of the church and realized that the number of brick-paneled sections on the back wall equaled the number of Stations of the Cross. Shortly afterwards, Fr. Charlie commissioned Miguel Perez to carve the Stations of the Cross and Robert Martinez to custom frame each hand-carved station.

That summer, Fr. John Carney, our next pastor, came to Los Alamos from Holy Child Parish in Tijeras, outside of Albuquerque. Father John, a 100% Irishman from New York City and a 20-year Army veteran, has brought with him a wealth of life experiences and strong spiritual and moral convictions. The rights of the unborn and pro-life issues have been two of his passions.¹⁵ Another passion outside of his priestly vocation is his love of sports. He's a big fan of the New York Yankees, NASCAR, and golf. Oh, yes, and he loves anything to do with the University of Notre Dame.

Father John has been busy since arriving at IHM. In 2003, he oversaw the installation of the new pews with kneelers, as well as the Stations of the Cross. Fr. Charlie returned to Los Alamos and, alongside Fr. John, helped dedicate them.

In 2004, the sanctuary received much-deserved attention. The placement of the Tabernacle in the newly renovated sanctuary was dedicated and blessed by Archbishop Sheehan. In addition, the statues of Mary and Joseph, which were hand carved in Italy, were donated by parishioner Pat Van Sloun and now adorn the altar. In August, Fr. John went on sabbatical for four months. Fr. John Futrell, a Jesuit priest, arrived from Denver to celebrate the mass and administer the sacraments. On Christmas Day, to the joy of all, Fr. John Carney returned as celebrant and pastor of IHM.



IHM has taken an active role in praying for loved ones who serve in the war in Iraq and sending them care packages, which includes specific requested needs, as well as cards, prayer books, and hand crafted rosaries made by our parish youth. One of the favorite gifts sent by IHM parishioners are the popular Girl Scout cookies.

In the continued spirit of giving, IHM is now a tithing parish. As a result of tithing and the generosity of our parish, many good things have happened. The 2004 tsunami victims in Indonesia were helped financially, as well as the 2005 victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Many needed but neglected repairs, replacements, and renovations of capital improvements at IHM have also been met because of the tithing program. We have also helped a convent in Mexico with financial aid and gifts of used computers and vehicles still in working order. And, for the past several years, IHM has spiritually and financially supported Our Little Brothers and Sisters Orphanage in Honduras.

In August 2005, Fr. Joshua Nailon Nyoni from Zimbabwe, Africa, came to our parish as a guest priest for three months to help Fr. John. Although he says

he doesn't know how baseball is played, he does have a passion for soccer and his quiet ways and humbleness disappear when he plays it.

Each year Fr. Joshua returns to us during the Christmas holidays for some rest and relaxation in our "typical" American town. IHM provides financial support for the St. Augustine Seminary in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, at which Fr. Joshua is the Rector.

At the beginning of Advent 2006, IHM began Perpetual Adoration in the IHM chapel. Thanks to the efforts of Christie and Jeff Janke, IHM has been blessed with continuous Adoration of our Lord since that time.

On April 13, 2008, the IHM chapel was dedicated to the Divine Mercy. The IHM Chapel of Divine Mercy is part of an International Registry established by the Eucharistic Apostles of the Divine Mercy at the National Shrine in Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

In 2007 the John Paul the Great Center was added to the IHM campus. Located behind the main church it provides a location for the teen and adult formation office and ministry.

The 2010s

In 2010, members of our parish's Polish community, began a campaign to build a memorial to our Blessed John Paul II. They commissioned a statue of our beloved pope to be made in Poland and delivered to IHM. On May 1, 2011, a cold and snowy afternoon, Archbishop Michael Sheehan and Father John Carney dedicated the JPII Memorial. The memorial is just north of the main church. The nearby Ten Commandments monument was also





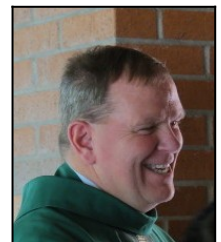
dedicated that day. The Polish couple who designed and produced the statues of Pope John Paul II and two students were able to attend the dedication along with the the Director of Culture from the Polish Consulate. The memorial provides a quiet place to sit and meditate for all who pass by.

On June 25, 2011, IHM received four new deacons, ordained by Archbishop Michael Sheehan, Deacons Mick Irving, John Krepps, Jim O'Hara and John Sutton join Father John and the other deacons in serving the spiritual needs of the IHM community.

Sadly in November 2011, we unexpectedly lost Deacon Jerry Langner. His service completed here on earth, he went to be with our Lord. Then just a month later, Deacon Emeritus, Tony Porto also died after a long and fruitful life of service.

In September of 2013, Father John Carney, our Shepherd and Pastor for 11 1/2 years, was reassigned to be the Pastor of the Church of the Incarnation in Rio Rancho. During his time at IHM he brought new vigor to spiritual life at the parish and enhanced the beauty of the church facilities and grounds. His care for the young and the elderly, the sick and the dying, the joyful and the suffering inspired the entire community of Los Alamos.

Father Glennon Jones was assigned as our new Pastor and came to us from St. Francis Xavier parish in Clayton, NM. Father Glenn grew up in Snyder, TX. A captain the the US Marine Corp



and a petroleum engineer he decided to pursue his calling to the priesthood. He was ordained in 2008 after receiving an MA in Theology.

An new focus on adult formation was initiated and several sessions of the Alpha program were offered followed by an IHM developed program called LYFE U (Live Your Faith Everyday University).

Unfortunately during this decade IHM lost several more deacons. In 2017 Deacon John Krepps accepted a new job at Oak Ridge National Laboratory and moved his family to Knoxville, TN. The following year Deacon Mick Irving retired from the Los Alamos National Lab and moved to Lubbock so he and his wife could help raise their granddaughter.

Sadly in March of 2018 Deacon Roberto Villarreal passed way after valiant battle with illness. He served IHM faithfully for almost 22 years.

In 2018 IHM was blessed with three men discerning a vocation to the diaconate with a possible ordination date in 2023.

After a little less than six year Father Glenn Jones was asked to join the diocesan office as Vicar General. The current Vicar General at that time was Father John Daniel who became our Pastor in January of 2019.

Father John Daniel grew up in Albuquerque and holds a bachelor's degree in History and a master's degree in Theology. Ordained in 1992 he has served in several parishes throughout New Mexico.



Fr. John Daniel guided IHM through the difficulties of the COVID-19 pandemic using innovative ideas to keep our parishioners engaged with their faith in spite of the difficult restrictions that had been imposed on public gatherings. Some of the innovations included employing Zoom for meetings and prayer groups, streaming Masses, drive up communion

and even Masses outside in front of the church. As a result, IHM continued to thrive during the pandemic. After the pandemic many new families moved to Los Alamos to support the growth at Los Alamos National Lab and IHM benefited with an influx of new families young and older

The 2020s

In 2023 Archbishop John Wester ordained two men from IHM to the permanent diaconate. Deacons Jim Dinkel and Rogelio (Roger) Anaya. Deacon Anaya was subsequently assigned to Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Albuquerque.

Our parish is again blessed with another man discerning a vocation to the permanent diaconate.

Yet another blessing for our Parish is one of our own, Jacob Romero, who grew up in Los Alamos, was ordained to the priesthood in May of 2024.

We continue to pray for more such blessing on our Parish.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, located on the Pajarito Plateau of Northern New Mexico, in the community of Los Alamos, is spiritually alive, well, and growing daily through the grace and love of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



Pax Nobiscum
Dies Mercurii xxviii September MMV

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18. *Cerro Grande Fire, Canyons of Fire, Spirit of Community, 2000-2001*, The Regents of the University of California

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Trust in Jesus: "We must trust fully in God, and the more lively and perfect our confidence in him is, the more will the Lord have a special providence over us."

—St. Francis de Sales