

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Ukrainian Culture

Holy Trinity Ukrainian Church

O.H. 1804

MONSIGNOR LEO ADAMIAK

Interviewed

by

Frances Martin

on

November 10, 1975

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INTERVIEWEE: MONSIGNOR LEO ADAMIAK

INTERVIEWER: Franses Martin

SUBJECT: Holy Trinity Ukrainian Church

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M: This is an interview with Monsignor Leo Adamiak by Frances Martin. It is November 10, 1975.

M: Are you the pastor here?

A: Yes, I am the pastor.

M: How long have you been here?

A: I have been here for over twenty-five years.

M: As pastor?

A: Yes, as the pastor.

M: Are you from Youngstown originally?

A: No. I am originally from the parish in Campton, New Jersey. In 1950 I came to Youngstown.

M: Are you from Ohio, the East?

A: Yes. I was born in Algin, Pennsylvania in 1920. I attended the elementary school. In 1937 I went to St. Rachael's prep school in Stamford Connecticut. I graduated from the prep school and entered the seminary college. I went to St. Charles seminary school for a year. Then I returned to Stamford Connecticut seminary college and that school. I graduated from there and in the following semester school year I enrolled in the University of Washington D.C. in 1943. I completed my studies by going in the summer-- there by completing a four year studies in three years. I graduated and ordained July 12, 1946 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. My first assignment was secretary to the Bishop, in Philadelphia. I worked there for a number of years and I also took care of a parish in Campton, New Jersey, St. Michell's where I was assigned in 1947. I was there until 1950 and

and then I came to Youngstown. This was in August 1950 and I have remained here ever since, to the present, 1975. In 1958 I was titled a monsignor by Pope Pius XII.

M: About when was the Holy Trinity Parish founded?

A: The Holy Trinity Church started to form in 1909 with a few people that were interested in founding a church. Some of these people were attending a Byzantine rite church that was located on Saul Spring Road in Youngstown Ohio. But as more of the Ukrainian People came to this country or came to this locality, they wanted to have their own church with their own identity as Ukrainians. So they began the organizational preliminaries efforts of forming a parish back in 1909. This whole desire and attempt to start a building came about in 1911 when a number of the parisheners got together at a meeting under the first resident pastor, Father Basile Sadocolli, now deceased who was instrumental in helping to draw up the plans for the church. The priest was also a well known architect. He not only did much of the planning but some of the physical work and building along with his parishoners and contracting some of the building teams that they could not do themselves. The immigrants started to come and the membership expanded until the first World War was over. More immigrants came and of course associated themselves with the parish of the Holy Trinity.

M: Did these people have the same social standard as the earlier immigrants?

A: The people that first came to this country at the beginning of the century were predominately of the peasant stock. They were people who farmed the land and were from the villages. Because of the economic hold or conditions in the Western Ukran, that later was part of Poland, the people came and took jobs in the varies physical work that was offered by steel companies and industries. Particularly in Youngstown because they needed employees. So these people came up and worked hard and established themselves. They became home owners. I would say they were the pioneers that helped to strengthen and expand our industrial complex in this area and the other areas in which the immigrants came to live and make their homes. They didn't have the education. Very few people were educated, however, they saw to it, made all effort to give the education to their children. So they were not only interested in that but also to have a firm footing here, becoming homeowners and independant. They contributed to the great wealth that was accomplished through the years by the industrial movement that swept the country in the beginning of the century.

The second immigrants came after the second World War. These were the people that had political status. They had the opportunities of better education, and so through the Communist takeover they were driven out. Some left fearing their lives for their political beliefs. They left their native Ukran, Western and Eastern to become immigrants in other parts of the world. Many settled in United States. Others settled in Canada, Australia, South America or where ever the countries accepted immigrants. They were also concerned with education for themselves and their children. Most of them not only completed their secondary education but a large percentage attended college. They have established their homes in the area and contributed to the stability. These are people of discipline and values. They were also spent money wisely. So they were able to accomplish much more then perhaps those who have been here through the years.

M: You mentioned that the parish sponsored something? When did they do that?

A: In the very beginning, the government had a program in which various organizations and individuals, including churches, that could sponser the immigrants. A large group of these stayed in Germany, in what they called displaced camps. This church of Holy Trinity sponsored between 15 and 100 in the early part of the 50's when the movement of immigration was taking place.

M: Is it similiar to the Vietnamese situation now?

A: Yes. It is very similiar except the circumstances then were different. We were involved in a kind of a global war and repatriation of the people from Communist countries. It was pressured by political consideration which opened the doors of America and let thousands of immigrants settle in this country.

M: Did you have this property on this site?

A: The church is now located on West Rayon. This the orginial spot where the church was established in 1911. First it was a house where the rectory is now situated. This is where they had their services. But soon they began to make efforts to build the church that now faces West Rayon Avenue on the North side of Youngstown. This now becomes a landmark and the church is built occuring to the Byzantine style architecture. It consists of three domes which is identified with the Byzantine rite church. There is a screen that separates the church proper from the sanctuary.

M: When was the building across the street built and what was it's purpose?

A: Across the street from the church you have a building that

was built a few years later, after the church was built. This was a social hall and then became a place where the children could learn the language, the Ukrainian language. It was a place where the people could meet for their various conferences and meetings. During that time there was a great desire and trend for people to get together, much more then today. They had socials and it was a fater-nal spirit among people who had many things in common. Since they were all immigrants at that time it was through their language and customs that they found this together-ness that was an important part of their lives. So the hall became a center for all of this activities that were of this nature.

M: So would they have dances and lectures in this center?

A: They would have dances, plays, concerts, and meetings. The church societies would have meetings. Church related soci-eties would also have meetings. They would all take part in utilizing the property for their specific needs and social gatherings.

M: You have this building across the street and the church. Do you have any other properties?

A: No. We had bought back in 1915 on the north side about 15 acres of land. It was for the social and financial help for the parish and is known as the Burkely Grove picnic area. During 1915 it was used for dances, money projects, and for recreation in general. We also bought at the end of the 50's about eight acres on the south side and this was designated for the possible expansion of the religious needs for the people that lived in the area of the city. This is located in the Boardman area of Mahoning County. Then in 1960 we bought on the west side of Youngstown, in the township of Austintown, some thirty-five acres of land and this again was designated for the religious needs. This was to be a church and a school that would be established as the population shifted from the inner city to the subur-ban areas.

In 1965 after a year of planning we built a complex that consists of a school with ten classrooms, a chapel that accomadates over six hundred people and an administrative section in the complex, plus a social hall that accomadates over six hundred people that has a kitchen facility. That same year that the complex was completed( over one year later ) we started the parochial school with sister servants from Philedephia coming in , plus lay teachers. We began the first four grades of school. Then each year we increased

or added a grade untill we had eight grades of schooling. Then in the last four or five years we added a kindergarten. The church has a home for the sisters, a convent. Then later we bought another piece of property joining this large area. We bought a house so that it may become the rectory or residence for the priest. The property also contains a acre of spring fed water and for a long time it was known as Rose Lake. Prior to the church purchasing this property many people in this area went swimming there. We used that facility for a number of years but in the last two years due to the high cost of maintaining we had to abandon it to public use. The church, the entire complex of St. Anne's was a stage of a mission, administered from Holy Trinity until March of 1975 when the Arch Bishop made it a parish. Since that time it is now a parish in the full sense of the term.

M: That was really an accomplishment to build a church and a school.

A: It was a church and school and all the furnishings. So it was over a million dollar project. The property is perhaps about a million and a half.

M: When the services started were they all in Ukrainian or were they in English? How did they start?

A: When the first parish started and for many centuries the Ukrainian people along with the Slovak were of the Eastern rite and they used the old unspoken language which at one time, goes back about a thousand years when it was a spoken language like the Latin in the Roman rite. As time went on especially after the Second Vatican Council, they consented that the people could use their own language in the services. Ukrainian was use in the service. As time went on the new generations that didn't understand the mother tongue of their parents and grandparents had a service in the American English. This was a slow movement. This was appreciated by the younger generation and the people that could not understand the Ukrainian language. So the services as of this date, we have in our church both Ukrainian and English. At this time we have three divine services or masses at this church. We have two of the three in English and the one in Ukrainian.

M: What size is your parish here?

A: Holy Trinity consists of approximately three hundred parishoners. The parish consists of many mixed nationalities or mixed religions and ethic groups. This is part of the American dream of everybody living in peace with one another.

M: In the building of your various buildings there has been mention of the Providence Association.

A: O.K. The Providence Association is a national fraternal organization that did establish the first Bishop of the Ukrainian rite people. He came to the United States in the turn of the century. It was formed to help the new immigrants..It was to give them some insurance security and as it grew and developed it also became a lending institution, primarily to be an organization with in the parishes. They would give them a loan and encourage them to build and expand. Holy Trinity used this loan to purchase land for futher expansion and for the building of their facilities and expanding their physical facilities in the years past. Are newest loan came for the renewal and renovation of Holy Trinity Church where the residents or priests live.

M: How long ago was that?

A: This was two years ago, back in 1973. The project was completed in 1974. The loan was for the amount of one hundred thousand with an interest of six percent.

M: Then the church pays back the loan?

A: Yes. The church pays back the Fraternal organization in a monthly regular amounts. This last loan will be payed back in fifteen years. The money is given by the parishioners in a voluntary accessment , plus any of the money projects that are initiated by the parishioners organizations of the parish.

M: Does your parish sell food to eat?

A: Yes. One of the financial help that the parish has is selling pirochi-- these are potatoes or sauerkraut wrapped in dough and cooked and then buttered with onions and eaten with sour cream. They serve these on Friday in the winter months beginning in September and till the end of May. They also sell frozen one's so that people may enjoy them at home. In this way the church is able to raise funds.

END OF INTERVIEW