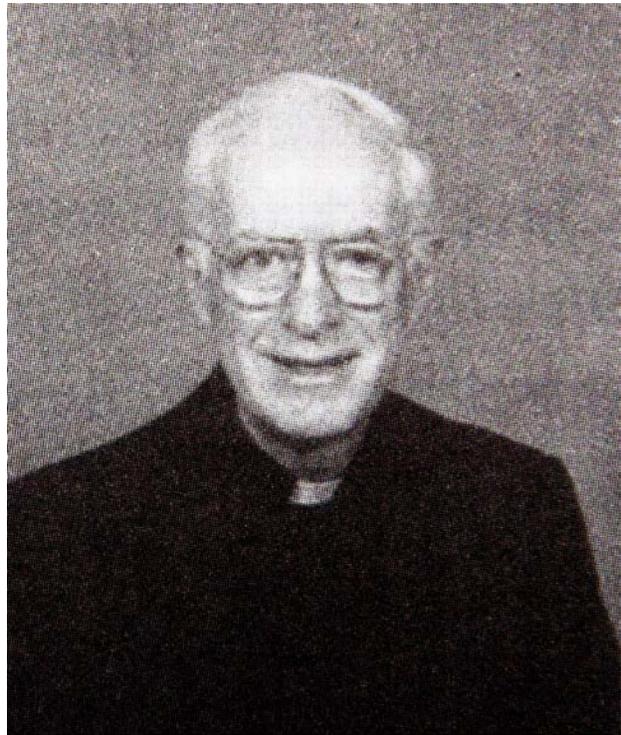


History of St. Joseph Parish continued.

1925 – 2003

Father Matthew Connolly 1964 - 1970

Little is known about Father Connolly's pastorate, He is remembered as being shy. The Women's Guild reported that in a talk to the Guild he had asked them to "put your hand to the parish rope and pull together." He also explained the five reasons for the Guild as being social, spiritual, financial, edification and personal development. Today, Father is an expert on Canon Law in the Orlando Diocese. Although now confined to a wheelchair, he serves as judicial vicar, overseeing annulments in his chancery office. During his time the St. Vincent de Paul Society was formed.



The local conference of the Society was formed in 1968 by Joe Rooney, Don Blaser, C.A. Hydron, Jim Waters and James O'Hara. Don Blaser was still active in the Society in 1982 and Gus Hydron is still an active member. The Society operates solely on contributions from benefactors and members, and all funds are used for assistance to the poor with the exception of the cost of the telephone and printing supplies. Members cover the phone calls daily and then visit the poor who have requested help. The members carefully research each situation before they

give help. They assist the needy with food, medicines, medical treatment, transportation, lodging, clothing, utilities, simple advice and sometimes, simply a sympathetic ear. All of this is in keeping with the person-to-person service desired by the founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, and its patron, St. Vincent de Paul.

The Society is now the St. Joseph-St. Matthew Conference with membership from both parishes. This Conference is affiliated with the District, Regional and United States Councils of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Meetings are held weekly in the St. Joseph Family Life Center.

Father Nicholas H. King was the first associate pastor at St. Joseph and was assigned during Father Connolly's tenure. He would remain when Father Smith came to the parish. He would return to St. Joseph when Father Smith was away for extended periods of time.

Other priests who served St. Joseph before assistants were assigned were priests from St. Leo Benedictine Abbey near Dade City and the priests of Many Help of Christians from their school in Tampa. One of these who visited often was Salesian Father Daniel O'Donovan.

