

# Polish Heritage

## Center at

## Panna Maria

Visitor Experience, #18 in Series

## Holy Trinity Church, Falls City, Texas

History of Holy Trinity Church, Falls  
City, Texas

*By Roger Moczygamba*

The town of Falls City started in 1884 as a Silesian-Polish settlement named Breckenridge. On April 20, 1886, Marcian and Mary Pollok sold to the San Antonio Aransas Pass Railroad all the land needed for the townsite. The railroad built a track from San Antonio to Breckenridge which made this a trading and shipping hub for the entire area. Then on November 28, 1893, the town's name was changed to Falls City. This occurred because another





**OLD CHURCH WITH ROWS OF HORSES AND BUGGIES**

town named *Brackenridge* in North Texas was causing postal mail issues due to the similarity in the towns' names. During this time, Falls City numbered over one hundred Silesian-Polish families from the surrounding communities. The town eventually had a number of retail stores, cotton gins, lumber yards, saloons, livery stables, hotels, banks, and a Chevrolet dealership.

The largest possession of wealth belonged to **Mary Rzeppa Schulz**, a Silesian-Polish widow, from Panna Maria. She moved to Falls City when the railroad was built.



*The original building was constructed by Alex Gabrysch, John Szczepanik, Lawrence Swierc, Domin Gabrysch, and A.T. Morawietz. The main altar was purchased, while the side altars were designed and built by Anton Horeczy.*

In 1902, the parish of Holy Trinity was established, and a church was built. Great credit is due to **Peter Kowalik**, the proprietor of the lumber yard, and **Mary Rzeppa Schulz**

through whose efforts (particularly the building plans) were completed. Holy Trinity's first pastor was **Father Stanislaus Przyborowski** who was also the pastor of Czestochowa. He took care of the Falls City parish from 1902 – 1906. Between 1905 and 1907, the Holy Trinity School and parish rectory were built. During this time, the **Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word** took charge. The **Franciscan Sisters** also began teaching in the parish school until 1913. Then the **Sisters of Incarnate Word** continued teaching in Falls City and St. Stanislaus School which was 5 miles west of the town.

During the early 1930s, the Falls City parish, young as it was and comprised of one hundred twenty families, had the unusual honor of nine daughters entering religious life. **Sister Theresita (Doris Schulz)**, member of the Divine Providence, and the other eight belonging to the Incarnate Word of the Blessed Sacrament sisters in Victoria. These included: **Sister Charlotte (Margaret) Moczygemba, Sister Vivian (Lillian) Hale, Sister Edith (Helen) Mzyk, Sister Constance (Gertrude) Kapitza, Sister Gabriel (Hedwig) Huehlefeld, Sister Jane Marie (Cecilia) Sczepanik, Sister Aquinas (Marcela) Janacek, and Sister Theofane (Regina) Sprencel.**

IMAGE COURTESY OF ROGER MOCZYGEMBA

Victoria, Texas, in 1932

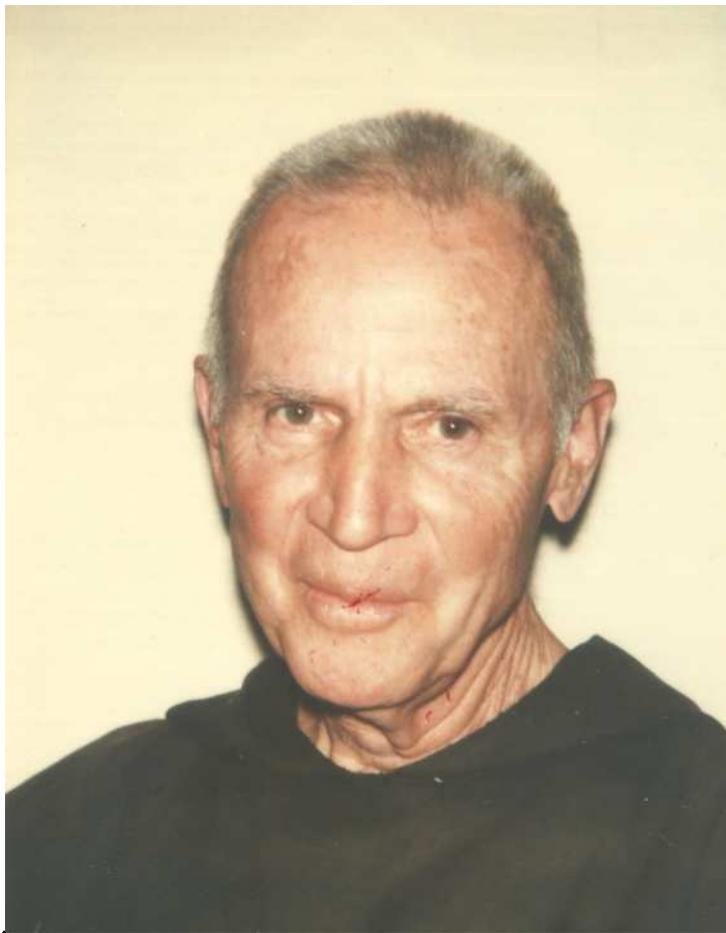


Later other religious vocations from the parish were nuns: **Sister Leocadia Sturm (IWBS), Sister Dorothy Moczygamba of the Felician Sisters** (founded in Poland 1855), **Sister Stephanie Marie Martinez (IWBS), and Sister Maria Goretti (IWBS).**

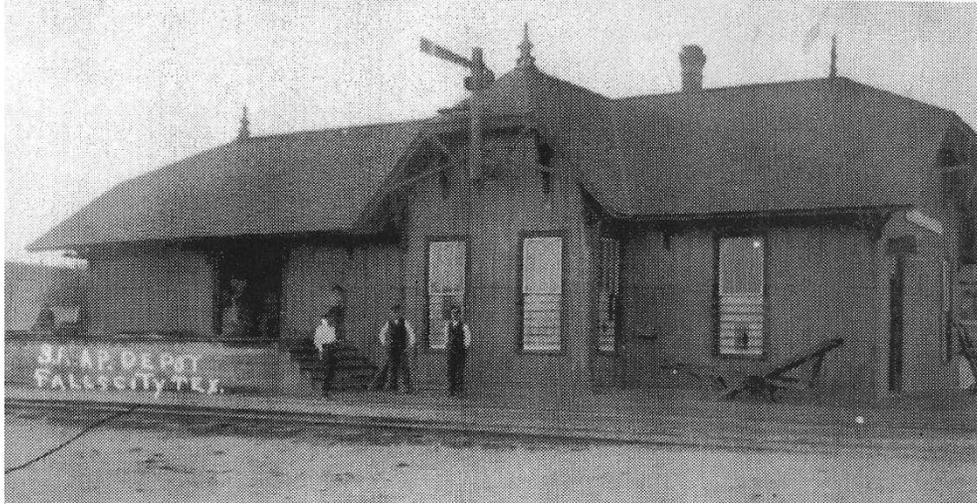
The priestly vocations were **Rev. Msgr. Casimir (Casey) Jarzombek, Rev. Lawrence Swierc (Trappist), and Brother Leo Kapitza (Trappist).**

### *Trappist Monk*

**Thomas Swierc** was born to **Joseph and Salomea Kyrish Swierc** on April



*30, 1907, Falls City. He entered the Trappist Monastery at Our Lady of Gethsemane in Kentucky on July 28, 1926, at the age of 19. He was ordained to the Priesthood on February 24, 1934, and took the name **Lawrence**. In 1946, the Monastery of Our Lady of the Holy Spirit was built in Conyers, Georgia. He spent 79 years in monastic life as a Trappist monk, longer in than anyone in the USA. He died on September 26, 2005 in Conyers, Georgia.*



**FALLS CITY TRAIN DEPOT**

During the early 1930s, unfazed with the stock market crash, the bank in Falls City still remained very solvent. During these hard times businesses closed, and the population went on a decline which continued through the late 1930s. In the early 1940s, oil was discovered near Falls City, and that brought back a surge of new activity to the area and the opening of new jobs.

Falls City was incorporated in 1946. Also, the school system doubled in size and became an accredited high school. The first senior class to graduate from Falls City High was in May 1950 and included 13 students.

In the 1950s, uranium was found about 8 miles southwest of the town, and production continued for about twenty years.

In 2014, Falls City Independent School District voted a bond to build a new school K through 12. It is now located at a new site across the road from the old school. The new, beautifully designed school is in one complex covering K through 12. It opened at the beginning of the



***IN EARLY 1902, PLANS FOR BUILDING THE CHURCH WERE FORMED. AT THE TIME, THOSE SERVING ON THE COUNCIL INCLUDED: J.W. MOCZYGEMBA, PETER KOWALIK, PETER PAWLIK, RAMUALD KYRISH, AND URBAN KOTZUR.***

2016 school year with an enrollment of 365 students. The new school can accommodate all the new technology that is required for our students and the future of our community.

The community thrived on our Catholic Polish ancestral roots from the beginning until today. Each generation kept this special bond with our faith. Even today, we have a Polish priest who still hears confessions in Polish. Polish hymns are sung at weddings,

funerals, and birthday celebrations. The Holy Trinity Catholic Church Picnic which was begun on the banks of the San Antonio River is still thriving today, and it is the main fundraiser for our church. Rest assured, the future of Falls City will remain deep in our Polish roots.

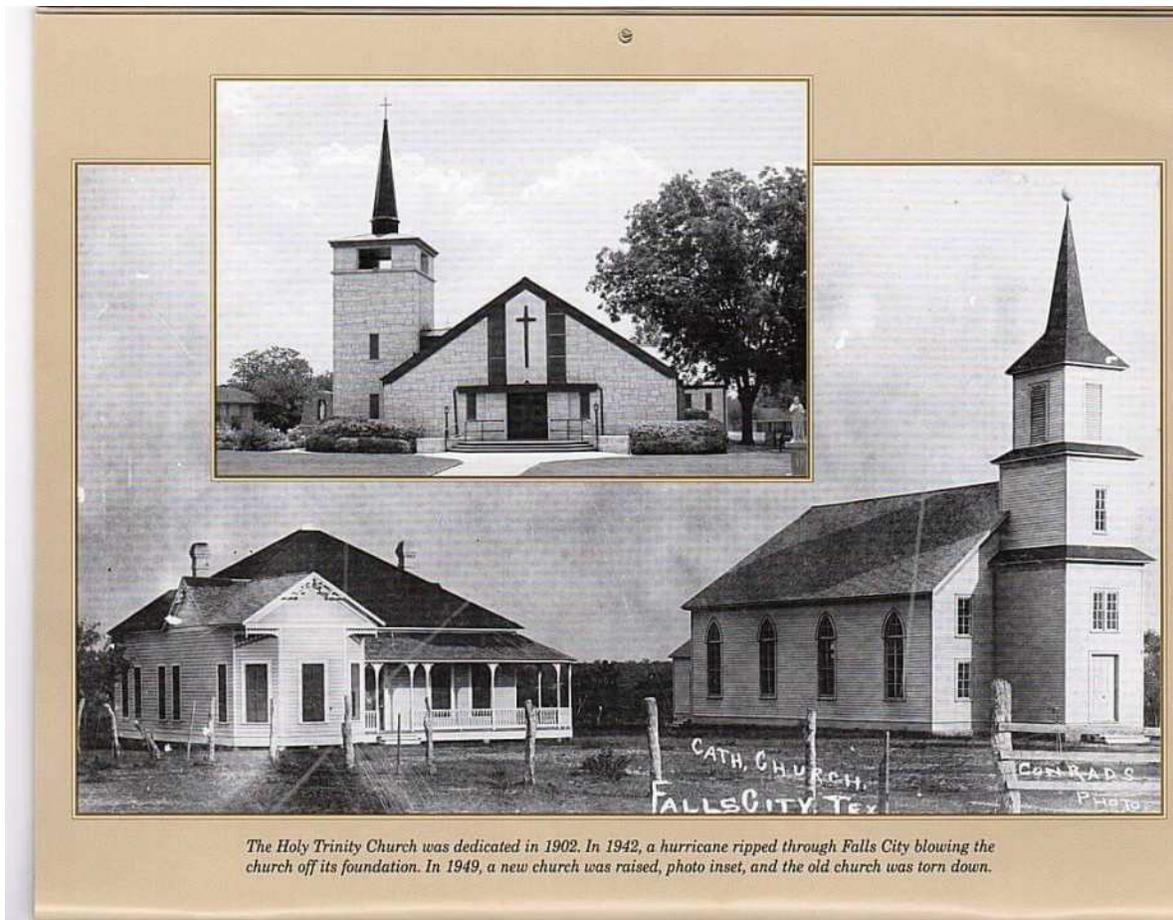
#### ***CURRENT CHURCH***



# PASTORS OF HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Rev. Stanislaus Przyborowski 1902 – 1906; Rev. J. Klanowski 1906 – 1908; Rev. John Jacktyl 1908 – 1909; Rev. Stanislaus Frog 1910; Rev. J. Karcz 1910 – 1912; Rev. Arthur A. Huebsch 1912 – 1914; Rev. I. J. Mazurowski 1915 (six months); Rev. S. Pueyo 1916 (six months); Rev. A. Wensorra 1916 – 1920; Rev. W. E. Heffernan 1920 – 1923; Rev. Leo Moczygamba 1923 – 1942; Rev. Edmund Dragon 1943 – 1948; Rev. Theodore T. Janysek 1948 – 1988; Rev. John Klak 1988 – 2000, Rev. Walter Mushulla 2000 – 2004, Rev. Kzaimierz Olesky 2004 - 2006, Rev. Gregory Sawicki, SDS 2007 - current

## BOTH OLD AND NEW CHURCH



*The Holy Trinity Church was dedicated in 1902. In 1942, a hurricane ripped through Falls City blowing the church off its foundation. In 1949, a new church was raised, photo inset, and the old church was torn down.*



The “falls” of Falls City (no date)  
*Images taken from the Holy Trinity Centennial Book*  
Schulz’s Mercantile Company (no date)



Schultz Mercantile Company

corner of Hwy. 181 and Maverick St.



Pollok & Son General Merchandise Store (no date)  
*Images taken from the Holy Trinity Centennial Book*  
Falls City Bank (no date)



## *Grateful for these gifts!*

We wish to acknowledge and express our gratefulness for the recent support that has been received: **Lambert & Rosalie Titzman, Guadalupe & Carlos Ontiveros, Hans B. & Minerva Nadler, and Judy A. Swientek.**

### **Correction – Correction!**

In Newsletter 17, the previous issue, I incorrectly identified the store pictured on page 6 as being the Red & White Store of Kosciusko. That store in fact was the Pruski store. The Red & White is pictured here! Thank you for the corrections! The up side is that it shows that not

PEOPLE IN THE PICTURE FROM LEFT TO RIGHT ARE **STANLEY DWORACZYK (ON THE MULE), ANTON JASKINIA AND BEN KOPECKI.** IMAGE COURTESY OF **BERTHA KORZEWKA.**



only are people reading, but that they are paying attention and know their local history! Thank you to everyone who reached out to let me know of this error!

# Memorials & Legacies

These are a few of the memorials that you may consider to remember your ancestors and loved ones. This is a wonderful way for families to come together, of all sizes, to memorialize those who have left us their legacy of faith and values. For those wishing to memorialize someone, the gift can be spaced out over time. For additional information, contact **Bishop Yanta at 210-733-1979** or **John Wojtasczyk at 210-387-7472**, or write to **PO Box 28125, San Antonio, TX, 78228**.

2.1 Saints Cyril and Methodius.....	\$750,000
4.5 Civil War/Peter Kiolbassa .....	\$150,000
4.7 The Blue Sisters .....	\$50,000
PP1 Polish School Posters 1 (from St. Joseph School, Panna Maria)	\$25,000
5.4 St. Stanislaus, Bandera .....	\$50,000
5.13 St. Michael’s Cemetery, San Antonio .....	\$25,000
6.6 Replica Section of the Berlin Wall .....	\$50,000
7.2 The Polish Pope, John Paul II visits San Antonio.....	\$250,000
7.3 Bishop John W. Yanta, the first Bishop from the Polish Immigration of 1854.....	\$200,000
Texas Polish Silesian with Religious Vocations .....	\$100,000

## Special Recognitions:

- **Water Well & Pump** donated by **Thomas Moy & Sons Water Well Drilling, Inc.**
- **Book collection** of author, **Hon. Robert Thonhoff**
- **Survey work** by **Pollok Surveyors**

## Tax Benefits to You of Giving to Charity

There are great tax benefits for those who give. Here are some of the benefits you should know about.

- **A gift to a qualified charitable organization may entitle you to a charitable contribution deduction against your income tax if you itemize deductions.**  
If the gifts are deductible, the actual cost of the donation is reduced by your tax savings. For example, if you are in the 33% tax bracket, the actual cost of a \$100 donation is only \$67 (\$100 less the \$33 tax savings). As your income tax bracket increases, the real cost of your charitable gift decreases, making contributions more attractive for those in higher brackets. The actual cost to a person in the lowest bracket, 15%, for a \$100 contribution is \$85. For a person in the highest bracket, 39.6%, the actual cost is only \$60.40. Not only can the wealthy afford to give more, but they receive a larger reward for giving.
- **A contribution to a qualified charity is deductible in the year in which it is paid.**  
Putting the check in the mail to the charity constitutes payment. A contribution made on a credit card is deductible in the year it is charged to your credit card, even if payment to the credit card company is made in a later year.
- **Most, but not all, charitable organizations qualify for a charitable contribution deduction.**  
You can deduct contributions only if they are made to or for the use of a qualified recipient. No charitable contribution deduction is allowed for gifts to certain other kinds of organizations, even if those organizations are exempt from income tax. Contributions to foreign governments, foreign charities, and certain private foundations similarly are not deductible. Below, you can view a list of organizations for which your donations can be deducted. All organizations rated by Charity Navigator qualify for charitable status, and you can deduct your donations, subject to certain limitations.
- **There are limits to how much you can deduct, but they're very high.**  
For most people, the limits on charitable contributions don't apply. Only if you contribute more than 20% of your adjusted gross income to charity is it necessary to be concerned about donation limits. If the contribution is made to a public charity, the deduction is limited to 50% of your contribution base. For example, if you have an adjusted gross income of \$100,000, your deduction limit for that year is \$50,000.

Adapted from Charity Navigator [www.charitynavigator.com](http://www.charitynavigator.com)

*Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Heritage Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law, as decreed by the IRS.*

Tax ID number: 46-0561240

***Please note that this document is subject to tax law changes.***

# CONSTRUCTION WEEK 71!



## Summary: Phase II – Construction of Exterior

Bid awarded to Boyle Construction:	\$3,373,000.00
14 <sup>th</sup> Month completed Construction Cost (April '16 – May '17):	\$1,905,831.32
8 Months payment by Polish Heritage Center:	\$1,114,376.21
<b>5 Months payment by Falls City National Bank Loan:</b>	<b>\$791,455.11</b>
<b>Interest Payments paid to Falls City National Bank for loan:</b>	<b>\$16,631.40</b>
Construction cost for first 15 months:	\$2,000,831.32
<b>15<sup>th</sup> Month payment due September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017:</b>	<b>approx. \$95,000.00</b>
Remaining Construction cost after 15 months paid:	\$1,372,168.68

# Bishop Yanta Update!



***BEGINNING WITH BISHOP YANTA, GOING CLOCKWISE (WHO ARE VISIBLE) IS AL NOTZON, JOHN CEBROWSKI, MARK MORKOVSKY, MICHAEL BOYLE, WHIT BRACKETT, AND STEVE HARDING***

Bishop Yanta presided at the Monday meeting on August 14<sup>th</sup> with all of the key figures involved with the Heritage Center project. In attendance was Mark Morkovsky, our architect, Michael Boyle, our general contractor with Whit Brackett his assistant, and Steve Harding, our designer. The purpose of this meeting was to plan and coordinate our moving forward into the next phase of the project which is finishing the inside of the Heritage Center so that the exhibits and other fixtures can be installed.

***God Bless You and Yours!***