

PASTORS OF ST. BRIGID'S CHURCH

When St. Brigid's was formed, it was not a parish but a mission church. Priests originally came from St. Paul's in Brooklyn, later from St. Monica's in Jamaica (when it was established) and from St. Patrick's in Glen Cove. Half the Irish population of the Nassau County area, which was almost all the Catholic population, was Catholic, with the majority living in Glen Cove in 1850. Data shows there were about 600 Catholics in the Nassau area. St. Patrick's of Glen Cove and St. Brigid's of Westbury were establishing themselves and building a church at the about the same time. St. Brigid's was ahead of Glen Cove because it bought a building rather than having to build a church as St. Patrick's did. St. Brigid's was also dedicated a year before St. Patrick's.



Photo of
Rev. James
O'Donnell

1836 to 1846 Frs. Nicholas and James O'Donnell, (cousins) were assigned to the Long Island Mission and rode the circuit on horseback saying Mass at different locations on Long Island. Fr. Nicholas was born in Ireland on December 7, 1802 and ordained into the Order of St. Augustine on September 25, 1928. Fr. James was born in Ireland on April 15, 1806 and ordained at Mount St. Mary in Maryland into the

Order of St. Augustine on January 13, 1837. They were Augustinians from Villanova Pa assigned to New York. Fr. James O'Donnell reportedly said first Mass for what was to become St. Brigid's at Barney Powers home in 1840. Fr. James O'Donnell also started St. Monica's in Jamaica. The O'Donnell brothers were not pastors of St. Brigid's. They both returned to Philadelphia at separate times in the middle 1840s.



Photo of Fr. Anthony Farley in later life.

1844 to 1856 – Fr. William McGuiness, Fr. Anthony Farley, Fr. Patrick Kelly and Fr. James McEnroe came from St. Monica's in Jamaica (and later from Glen Cove) and said Mass at St. Brigid's. There was no pastor of St. Brigid's at this time.

1856 to 1858 - Fr. Patrick Kelly, named Pastor of St. Patrick's of Glen Cove. Because St. Brigid's was a mission church of St. Patrick's Fr. Kelly was Pastor of St. Brigid's Mission Church



Photo of Rev. James McEnroe in later life.

1858 to 1870 - Fr. James McEnroe was born in County Cavan, Ireland in 1832. He was ordained in Ireland and shortly after came to the United States. He was named Pastor of St. Patrick's in Glen Cove in 1858. This made him the non-resident pastor of St Brigid's Mission Church from 1858 to 1870. He also said Mass in Oyster Bay, Mineola, Roslyn, Sea Cliff, Hempstead, and at times Massapequa through 1897 when he was reassigned to Brooklyn. There are numerous stories about Fr. McEnroe charging around the area in his horse and buggy going from one church to the next on weekends to say Mass. He died at the Most Holy Rosary in Brooklyn in January 25, 1925 at age 92.

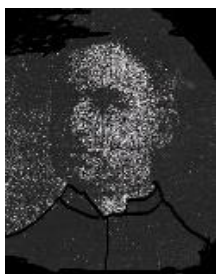
1870 to 1891 - The parish mission was transferred to Our Lady of Loretto in Hempstead in 1870. The Pastors were Fr. Eugene McSherry (1871-1878), Fr. Peter Kearney (1879-1883), Fr. Peter Maguire (1883), Fr. Peter

Plunkett (1884-1885), Fr. James McCusker (1885-1891), and Fr. Richard Boyce (1891-1896). St. Brigid's became a parish in 1892.

Resident Pastors of St. Brigid's Parish – St. Brigid's starts counting the number of pastors from 1892, when St. Brigid became a parish. As of May 1, 2017, there have been fifteen pastors.



1. Rev. Michael F. Murray—born in Brooklyn on May 18, 1850. Ordained at Our Lady of Angels in Niagara, NY on May 23, 1875. Pastor of St. Brigid's from February 1892 to November 1892; he became very ill and was relieved of his duties as pastor. He died January 3, 1896. He was the first resident pastor of St. Brigid's.



2. Rev. Thomas F. McGronen—born in Brooklyn on November 1, 1860; ordained at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore on December 19, 1885. He became pastor of St. Brigid's from 1893 to 1895 and died on October 5, 1914. Worked to raise funds and donations from parishes in Brooklyn and laid the cornerstone for the second church on November 4, 1894. He had the first Rectory built in 1893. He established a mission church in New Hyde Park. While pastor of St. Ambrose in Brooklyn he became the first chaplain to the New York City Fire Department.



3. Rev. Herbert F. Farrell—born in Brooklyn on March 30, 1856; ordained at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore on February 2, 1888; pastor of St. Brigid's from November 1894 to 1904; died January 18, 1924. Completed the construction of the second church. Moved and renovated the first church to become the Parish Hall and Sunday School. Established many societies in the parish. Established Corpus Christi Church in Mineola as a mission church of St. Brigid's. For his hard work, he was appointed Dean of Nassau County.



4. Rev. Dr. William McGinnis D.D.—born in Brooklyn on December 28, 1867; ordained at North American College, Rome, Italy July 25, 1891; pastor of St. Brigid's from 1904 - 1922; died May 16, 1932. He and his parents are buried outside the north triptych window which bears his parents' name. Founder and President of the International Catholic Truth Society. Westbury Public School Board President 1905 – 1922. Had Parish Hall and Public Library 1909 erection with bowling alley. Build third church in 1916. Moved the second church and opened St. Brigid's Catholic School. Obtained the assistance of the Sisters of Notre Dame to conduct the school in 1918. Rented a private home as a convent until one was built. Had the plans developed for the rectory and convent. Opened the Parish Hall for recreation of soldiers from 1916-1918. Established the first Boy Scout Troop in Westbury, inaugurated the Westbury Carnival, and had the first telephone number 21.



5. Rev. John J. Moran—born in Brooklyn on January 9, 1867; completed theological studies at St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, N.Y.; ordained St. John's Seminary on April 1, 1902; pastor of St. Brigid's from 1922-1928; died July 11, 1928 and is buried in St. Brigid's Cemetery. (Curate at St. Brigid's from July 1, 1911 to November 20, 1913.) Completed the rectory and convent from plans designed by F. Burrall Hoffman and his brother Murry that Fr. McGinnis had developed. Landscaped the grounds. Converted the coal burner to an oil burner which heated all 5 buildings in the complex. Resolved the debt left from all the building that had previously occurred.



6. Rev. Daniel Aloysius Dwyer—born in Falls River, Massachusetts, on February 9, 1883; ordained at Saint John's Seminary, Brooklyn on April 25, 1908; became pastor of St. Brigid's from 1928 to 1933; died May 16, 1968 shortly after celebrating 60 years as a priest. While at St. Brigid's he completed the modernization of the parish buildings started by Fr. Moran. Just prior to becoming pastor of St. Brigid's he established St. Martin Tours in Bethpage and was their first pastor.



7. Rev. Michael Dowling Lopez—born in Brooklyn on August 16, 1876; completed theological studies and ordained at Saint John's Seminary, Brooklyn on April 25, 1904; pastor of St. Brigid's from 1933 to 1934; died on March 25, 1943.



8. Rev. Edward M. Kehoe—born in Philadelphia, PA. on September 25, 1887; ordained at Almo Collegio Capranica, Rome on July 6, 1913 for the Diocese of Brooklyn. He became pastor of St. Brigid's on October 6, 1934 and served until his death on August 23, 1935. He is buried in Holy Rood Cemetery. He suffered a long, painful illness for over half the time he was pastor, and Fr. Elwood Purick was acting pastor during that time. Before becoming pastor of St. Brigid's, he started churches in Amagansett and Montauk. It was said that Fr. Kehoe had a "sharp tongue like St. Patrick and St. Brigid."



9. Rev. Loksley A. Appo—born May 23, 1876 in Hartford, Connecticut; completed theological studies and was ordained at the North American College, Rome, Italy on May 26, 1907 for the Diocese of Brooklyn; pastor of St. Brigid's 1935 to 1943; died November 4, 1943. He rented a storefront in 1938 on Westbury Avenue, Carle Place to accommodate the growing Catholic population of Carle Place. He is buried in Holy Rood Cemetery.



10. Rev. James A. Sullivan, Ph.D.—born in Brooklyn on October 4, 1892; completed theological studies at St. John's Seminary and the Irish College, Spain; ordained in Brooklyn on November 11, 1917; pastor of St. Brigid's from 1944 to 195; died on August 23, 1965. Purchased the land for the new school from the Hicks Corporation and for the Carle Place Chapel from various people in 1947. Did door-to-door fundraising for the school and chapel building fund. Started the construction of the new school on Maple Ave and Carle Place Chapel (presently Our Lady of Hope Parish). He is buried in Holy Rood Cemetery.



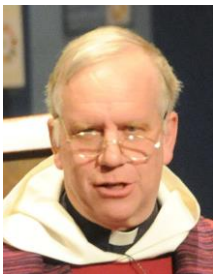
11. Rev. Thomas F. Code—born in Brooklyn on December 29, 1899, completed theological studies and ordained at Saint John's Seminary on October 18, 1926; pastor of St. Brigid's from 1954 to 1975; died in 1978. He liquidated the debt from the chapel and the school. Led a major interior renovation of the church for the centennial year of the parish. Built an extension on the school to accommodate 600 more students, a library, and a gym in 1965. Built a modern convent for the school sisters next to the school in 1965. Coined the phrase the "Diocese of Westbury" when he was pastor referring to the size and complexity of the parish. He is buried in Holy Rood.



12. Rev. Fredrick F. Schaefer—born on May 26, 1928 in Queens; ordained June 6, 1953 by the Fathers of Mercy (became a priest in the Diocese of Rockville Centre in April 1958); pastor of St. Brigid's from 1975 to 1989; died August 20, 1996. He sent and paid for 16 lay people to receive their Master's Degree in Theology. The first 4 Permanent Deacons were ordained and worked in the Church. Embraced the growing Spanish population. In 1985, he led a major renovation the of the church under the Vatican II rubrics. Open the parish Outreach Center in New Cassel. He is buried in Holy Rood Cemetery.



13. Rev. Francis X. Gaeta—pastor of St. Brigid's from 1989 to 2001.



14. Rev. Ralph Sommer—pastor of St. Brigid's from 2001 to 2013.



15. Rev. Anthony Stanganelli—pastor of St. Brigid's since 2013.