

# St. Aloysius Roman Catholic Church

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## Parish History

# MDCCLXXVI

### *Our Parish History*

Saint Aloysius Parish of Great Neck was born in 1876. Bishop John Loughlin, the first Bishop of Brooklyn, established the parish and appointed Reverend Patrick Sheridan its first Pastor. Father Sheridan celebrated the first Mass in Great Neck in February 1876 in the home of Captain Fallon near the corner of Steamboat Road and Middle Neck Road. Later that year the first Church was dedicated on May 20, 1876. Its location was farther back from the corner of Middle Neck Road and Breuer Avenue than the present Church. The parish's second Pastor, Reverend Edward J. Smith, came in 1880 and remained until his death in 1899. Reverend Daniel F. Cherry succeeded Father Smith and remained as third Pastor from August 1899 to April 1908. Father John J. Molloy was the fourth Pastor of St. Aloysius and he was responsible for the building of the present Church. He chose a distinguished architect, Gustave Steinbach, an expert in Byzantine Romanesque style of church architecture.

Ground was broken for the church on August 13, 1913 and the cornerstone was laid on November 30. Father Molloy worked diligently from 1913 to 1915 to raise the funds that were necessary to complete our beautiful church and finally on Sunday, July 14, 1915, it was dedicated by the second Bishop of Brooklyn, the Right Reverend Charles Edward McDonnell. At the same time, Father Molloy built the present Rectory. Father Molloy died in 1918. The fifth Pastor, Reverend Patrick J. Rogers, served from 1918 to 1928. His first concern was the religious instruction of the children. In 1920 he brought the Sisters of St. Joseph from Flushing to teach classes until the cornerstone of the new St. Aloysius School was laid in 1922. In September of 1923 St. Aloysius School was opened. The first assistant priest came to the parish under the pastorate of Father Rogers. From June 1920 to May 1928 he was assisted by Fathers John J. Kearney, William S. Ratigan, Robert Barrett and Thomas P. Casey.

The Reverend Edward Donovan became the sixth Pastor of St. Aloysius and served from 1928 until 1955. During his Pastorate, he enlarged the Rectory, added a wing to the school, installed a carillon tower and a new wing to the Convent. He was the longest pastorate - 27 years. He died in 1955. Monsignor Vincent Baldwin was assigned as the seventh Pastor of St. Aloysius. When Pope Pius XII (on April 16, 1957) separated the counties of Nassau and Suffolk from the old Diocese of Brooklyn, Bishop Walter P. Kellenberg became the first Bishop of the new Diocese of Rockville Centre. The Bishop appointed Monsignor Baldwin as Vicar General and Chancellor of the Diocese. He later became the first Auxiliary Bishop of Rockville Centre. From October 30, 1960 to March 18, 1961, Father James Collins acted as Administrator of the Parish until the appointment of the church's eighth Pastor, Father Henry James Reel. During his more than 23 years as our Pastor, he refurbished all the buildings, added a large library to the school and introduced a Pre-Kindergarten program. In 1984, Reverend Joseph Edward Dunn became the ninth Pastor of St. Aloysius and Monsignor Reel stayed on as Pastor Emeritus until his death in February 1990. In June of 1990, Reverend John J. Gorman became the Pastor of St. Aloysius and Father Dunn became Pastor Emeritus. Father Gorman served as Pastor for 2 years and was followed by Father Thomas D. Candrea who was Pastor from 1992-1998. In 1970, Monsignor Brendan P. Riordan came to St. Aloysius as a newly ordained priest. He was assigned here until 1975 and then reassigned. Monsignor Riordan returned to St. Aloysius and became Pastor in June 1998. After 17 years as our Pastor, Monsignor Riordan retired in June 2015. Our current Pastor is Father Rene O. Tapel.



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## St. Aloysius Great Neck NY

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