

Built in Faith

A Guide to Our Sacred Space

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Good Shepherd Catholic Church

Evansville, Indiana



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Good Shepherd Catholic Church was founded in faith and built for worship. Established in 1955 on Evansville's east side, the parish grew from humble beginnings—once affectionately known as "*Father Hannigan's Bean Field*"—into a sacred home where generations have gathered to celebrate the sacraments and live the Gospel.

In the Catholic tradition, a church is more than a gathering place. It is a sacred space, where architecture, art, and furnishings express what the Church believes and guide the faithful in prayer. From the baptismal font to the altar, each element serves a purpose within the life of worship.

This renovation honors the parish's history while renewing the church interior so its sacred signs speak clearly today and for generations to come. This guide invites you to look more closely, understand more deeply, and recognize the faith that continues to shape this holy place.

From Font to Altar

Sacred Markers Along the Way

The layout of a Catholic church reflects the journey of faith. As one enters Good Shepherd Church, the baptismal font recalls the sacrament through which every Christian first becomes a member of the Church.

From the font, the parishioners move forward through the nave, the space where God's people gather to hear the Word and offer prayer. This movement toward the sanctuary mirrors the lifelong journey of faith, marked by growth, conversion, and shared worship.

At the heart of the church stands the altar, the center of Catholic life. Here the Church gathers to celebrate the Eucharist, where bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. The altar completes the journey begun at the font, uniting the faithful to Christ's sacrifice and sending them forth to live what they have received.

The mosaic tile repeated at the baptismal font, in the center aisle, and beneath the altar serves as a visual marker uniting these sacred places. It defines a continuous path through the church, reminding the faithful that the journey of Christian life begins in Baptism, is lived out within the worshiping community, and finds its fullness at the Eucharistic altar.



Baptismal Font

Placed prominently at the entrance of Good Shepherd Church, the baptismal font marks the beginning of the Christian journey. Its location at the doorway is intentional: just as we enter the building through these doors, we enter the life of faith through the waters of Baptism. Each time the faithful pass the font, they are reminded of their own baptismal call—to live as disciples, united in Christ and in one another.

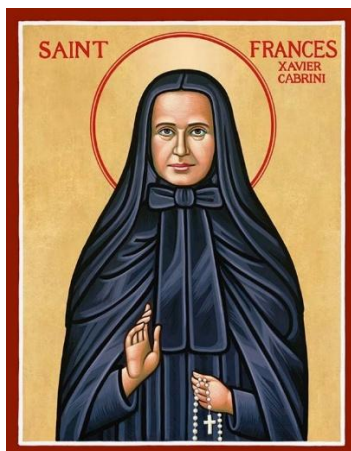
The new baptismal font was purchased through Henninger's, Inc. from Brook Park, Ohio. Once the design was approved, Henninger's sent the information to Costa Paolo and Company in Carrara, Italy for fabrication of the font. The font is made of Emperador marble. The vines are also Emperador marble but in a darker tone.

Saints of Our Parish Story

The saints represented on the walls of Good Shepherd Church were chosen with intention and meaning. Together, they form a visible link between the universal Church and the history of this parish. Each saint reflects a defining aspect of Good Shepherd's identity - its name, its sacramental life, its educational heritage, its charitable mission, its global relationships, and its shared past.

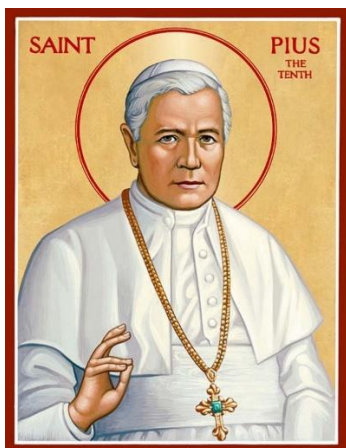
The relics of saints sealed within the altar connect the parish directly to the communion of saints and the Church's ancient tradition of celebrating the Eucharist upon the witness of holy lives. The icons surrounding the assembly extend that witness outward, reminding the faithful that sanctity is lived in service, humility, mission, and love of neighbor.

These saints were not chosen simply for recognition, but because their lives continue to speak to who Good Shepherd has been—and who it is called to be.



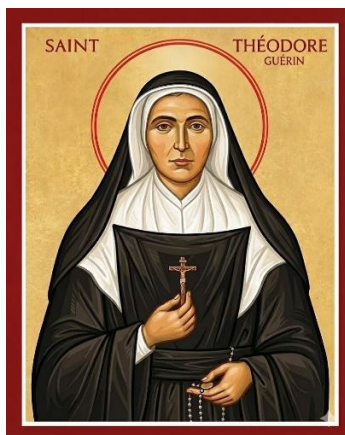
Saint Frances Cabrini

Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini was born July 15, 1850 in Sant' Angelo Lodigiano, Italy, the youngest of eleven children of Agostino Cabrini and Stella Oldini. She founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and came to the United States on March 31, 1889. She devoted her life to caring for immigrants, the poor, and the sick. She died at the age of 67 on December 22, 1917. She was canonized on July 7, 1946 and was the first naturalized citizen of the United States to be named a saint. Her feast day is November 13. Mother Cabrini was the patron saint of Good Shepherd's Altar Society. This icon was chosen for display because it is one of the relics in the altar stone.



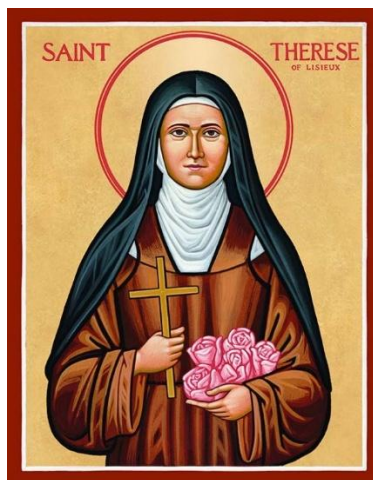
Saint Pius X

Saint Pius X was born Giuseppe Melchiorre Sarto on June 2, 1835 in Riese, Italy, the second of ten children of Giovanni Sarto and Margarita Sanson. He was ordained to the priesthood September 18, 1858. On August 4, 1903, he was elected pope and took the name Pius X. He died at the age of 79 on August 20, 1914. He was canonized on May 29, 1954 and his feast day is August 21. St. Pius X is remembered for renewing the spiritual life of the Church, especially by encouraging frequent reception of the Eucharist. His relic in the altar underscores the centrality of the Mass in parish life. The Diocese of Evansville retreat house (Sarto) is named after him. This icon was chosen for display because it is one of the relics in the altar stone.



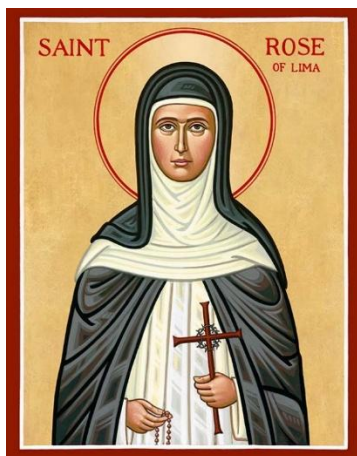
Saint Mother Theodore Guerin

Saint Theodore Guerin was born October 2, 1798 in Etables, Brittany, France, the second of four children to Laurent Guerin and Isabelle Lefevre. She came to the United States in 1840 and passed through Evansville, Indiana on October 4, 1840 where she met Father Anthony Deydier, the first Catholic priest who founded Assumption Catholic Church. She founded the Sisters of Providence at Terre Haute, Indiana that same year. She established schools and ministries across Indiana. She died May 14, 1856 at the age of 57. She was canonized on October 15, 2006 and her feast day is October 3. Saint Mother Theodore Guerin is the first saint in the state of Indiana. This icon was chosen for display because it honors the Sisters who staffed Good Shepherd School beginning in 1959 and reflects the parish's commitment to Catholic education.



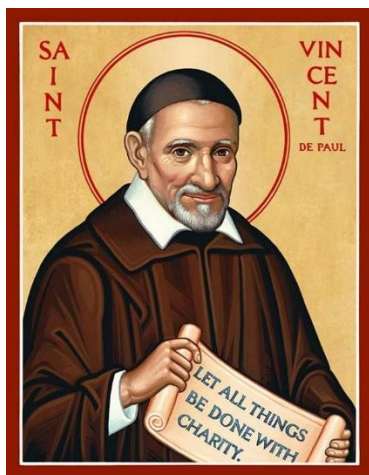
Saint Theres of Lisieux

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux was born January 2, 1873 in Alençon, France, the daughter of Louis Martin and Marie-Azelie Guerin. She was a member of the Discalced Carmelites. She died September 30, 1897 at the age of 24. She was canonized May 17, 1925 and her feast day is October 1. She is known as the Little Flower. This icon was chosen for display in our narthex because Saint Theresa Parish was named in honor of her. Known as “The Little Flower,” St. Thérèse taught that holiness is found in ordinary acts done with great love. Her presence honors the legacy of St. Theresa parish, with which Good Shepherd merged, and emphasizes simplicity and trust in God.



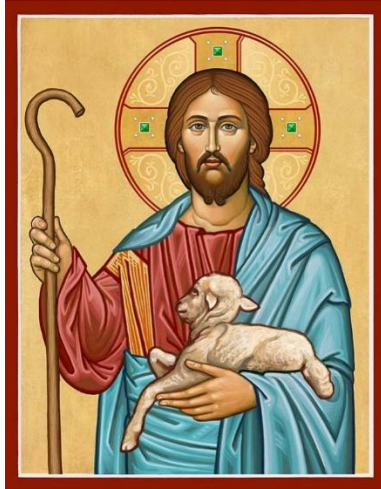
Saint Rose of Lima

Saint Rose of Lima was born April 20, 1586 in Lima, Peru, one of eleven children of Gaspar Flores and Maria de Oliva y Herrera. She joined the Third Order of Saint Dominic. She died August 24, 1617 at the age of 31. She was canonized April 12, 1671 and her feast day is August 23. The first saint of the Americas, St. Rose of Lima represents faith lived with humility and sacrifice. Displayed on our narthex, her icon acknowledges Good Shepherd's sister-parish relationship in Haiti and the parish's commitment to global solidarity.



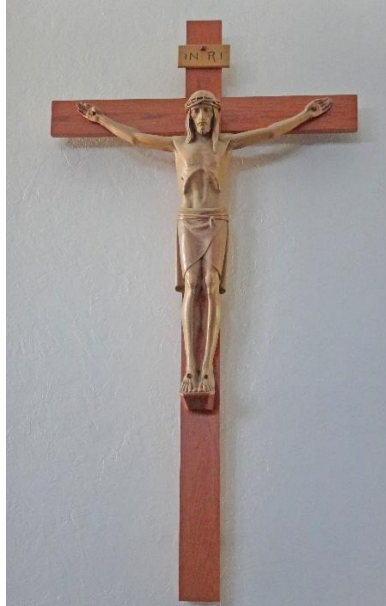
Saint Vincent de Paul

Saint Vincent de Paul was born April 24, 1581 in Pouy, Guyenne, France, one of six children of Jean de Paul and Bertrande de Moras. He is considered the patron of all works of charity. He died September 27, 1660 at the age of 79. He was canonized June 16, 1737 and his feast day is September 27. St. Vincent de Paul dedicated his life to serving the poor and organizing works of charity. Displayed in our chapel, his icon reflects the active ministry of the St. Vincent de Paul Society at Good Shepherd and the parish's enduring commitment to works of mercy.



The Good Shepherd

The image of Christ as the Good Shepherd gives the parish its name and identity. It reminds the faithful of Christ's care, guidance, and sacrificial love, calling the parish to reflect that same shepherding spirit in its worship and service. This icon is displayed in our chapel.



Crucifix

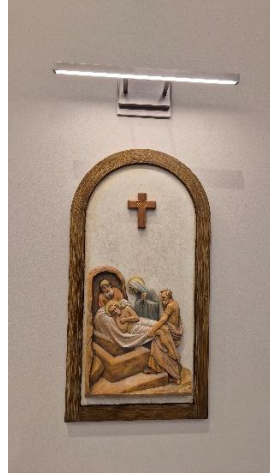
In the Catholic tradition, the crucifix is especially significant because it unites the faithful to the sacrifice of the Mass, where that same self-giving love is made present in the Eucharist. Positioned near the altar, it reminds the assembly that every liturgy is rooted in Christ's passion, death, and resurrection

This crucifix was purchased sometime after the original church was built in 1959. It is not shown in pictures of the first Mass held on May 24, 1959, but is shown in photos in the early 1960's. Source and cost unknown.



Mary and Joseph Statues

In August, 1963 Father Richard Hoffman, the second pastor of Good Shepherd, wrote in the church bulletin about a fund-raising drive to purchase the two statues plus the fourteen Stations of the Cross. These statues were hand-carved in Italy and are displayed on the back wall of the sanctuary.



Stations of the Cross

In August, 1963, Father Richard Hoffman raised money to purchase the fourteen Stations of the Cross after just two Masses. These images were hand-carved in Italy and originally had frames around them. Because the present church is so large, we chose to enlarge them by adding frames and a painted background around them.

Framing and painting was done by Barbara Vowels Woodruff, a former student of Good Shepherd School.



Risen Christ

The Risen Christ statue was donated in 1982 by Mrs. Mary Thomas, principal of Good Shepherd School. The statue is a six-foot image carved from ash wood by Weberding's Carving Shop in Batesville, Indiana. It was dedicated on Easter Sunday, April 4, 1982. Father August Busch, third pastor of Good Shepherd, wrote in the church bulletin, "It is the wish of Mrs. Thomas that the Crucified Christ above the Tabernacle Altar not be moved to make way for the Resurrected Christ; she believes the Crucified Christ-the Sacrifice-should be associated with the Sacrifice of the Mass and she knows how much the parish loves the large Crucifix in the sanctuary. She has always had a theology that when we leave Holy Mass we should be resurrected people. The six-foot image of the Risen Christ will therefore be placed above the center aisle at the lobby doors of the [original] church." This statue is now located in the chapel of our church.



Good Shepherd Statue

The statue of the Good Shepherd was dedicated September 12, 1971, by Bishop Francis R. Shea and was placed at the entrance to the original church in the school entryway. It was hand-carved by Corrado Runggaldier, a sculptor from Ortisei, Italy. The statue was a gift from a non-parishioner. It is now located in the narthex of the church.



Angel Statues

In December, 2013, Father Zach Etienne, seventh pastor of Good Shepherd, purchased two angel statues for either side of the tabernacle. Funding came from donors and permanent endowments. The carved statues were made at the Art Studio of Demetz, Italy.



Mary and Child

The statue of Mary and the Child Jesus reflects the mystery of the Incarnation—God made visible in the person of Christ. Mary is honored as the Mother of God, chosen to bear and nurture the Son of God, and her gentle care for the child Jesus reveals both her unique role in salvation history and her model of faith and obedience.

This three-foot-tall statue located in our narthex was purchased in April, 1991 by Marge Loehr-Thomas, a former teacher and parishioner of Good Shepherd Parish. It was carved by Albert Comploj in Ortesei, Italy.



Ambry

The ambry is a small, secure cabinet located in the pillar near the baptism font where the holy oils used in the sacraments are reverently stored. These oils—blessed annually by the bishop at the Chrism Mass—include the Oil of the Sick, the Oil of Catechumens, and Sacred Chrism. Each oil serves an important role in the life of the Church, being used in the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Anointing of the Sick, and Holy Orders.

The presence of the ambry within the church is a visible reminder of the Church's sacramental life and the many ways God's grace is shared with the faithful.



Altar

The altar is the center of Catholic worship and the focal point of the sanctuary. It is here that the Church gathers to celebrate the Eucharist, offering bread and wine that become the Body and Blood of Christ. In the Catholic tradition, the altar represents Christ himself, the cornerstone upon whom the Church is built.

Upon this altar, the sacrifice of the Mass is celebrated and the faithful are nourished with the Eucharist. Its prominent and permanent placement reflects its importance as the place where the community gathers to give thanks to God and share in Christ's saving sacrifice.

This altar was purchased when the present church was built in 1990. Source and cost unknown.



Presider's Chair

The presider's chair is the place from which the priest leads the assembly in prayer during the celebration of the Mass. From this chair, he opens and concludes the liturgy, offers prayers on behalf of the people, and guides the worship of the gathered community.

Its placement within the sanctuary reflects the priest's role as presider of the liturgical assembly, serving Christ and the Church while leading the faithful in prayer and worship.



The Steeple Cross and Processional Cross

Rising above Good Shepherd Church, the steeple cross proclaims the presence of Christ to the wider community. Installed on February 8, 1991, the spire features a Latin/Maltese cross crafted from matte-finish welded aluminum. Surrounding the cross are three circular bands, symbolizing the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—along with a triune shield representing the mystery of three persons in one God.

The design of this cross is echoed in the processional cross carried at the beginning of Mass. As the cross leads the entrance procession into the church, it mirrors the cross that rises above the steeple outside. Together they form a meaningful connection between the church's exterior witness to faith and the sacred liturgy celebrated within.



Easter Candle

The Easter Candle, also known as the Paschal Candle, is a central symbol of Christ's presence among His people. Lit for the first time at the Easter Vigil, it represents the light of Christ rising from the darkness of death. The candle is marked with a cross, the current year, and the Greek letters Alpha and Omega, signifying that Christ is the beginning and the end.

Throughout the Easter season, the candle stands near the altar as a visible sign of the Resurrection. After Easter, it is placed near the baptismal font and is lit during Baptisms and funerals, reminding the faithful that through Christ's death and resurrection, we are given new life and the promise of eternal life.



Ambo

The ambo is the place from which the Word of God is proclaimed during the liturgy. From this sacred stand, the Scriptures are read, the Psalm is sung, and the Gospel is announced to the assembly. As the altar is the table of the Eucharist, the ambo is the table of the Word, emphasizing the Church's belief that Christ is present when the Scriptures are proclaimed to the faithful.

The ambo was purchased when the church was built in 1990. Source and cost unknown.



Mary and Joseph Statues

These statues were originally from St. Theresa Parish. When we merged, we placed them in storage and recently had them repainted by Barbara Vowels Woodruff, a former student of Good Shepherd School. The statues are thought to have been purchased very early in the history of St. Theresa. Source and cost unknown.

These statues are located in our chapel as part of our votive candle display.



Good Shepherd Carving

“The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.”

Psalm 23 is the primary biblical text associated with the image of the Good Shepherd. It presents God as the shepherd who guides, protects, and provides for His people, leading them beside restful waters and through difficult valleys.

This carving was originally from St. Theresa Parish. It was designed and carved by Lynn Ubelhor.



Thurible

The thurible is used during the liturgy to burn incense as a sign of reverence and prayer. The rising smoke symbolizes the prayers of the faithful ascending to God and honors what is made holy—especially the altar, the Gospel, the Eucharist, and the gathered assembly.

With the exception of the altar and ambo, all of the vine-covered furnishing in the church were designed and crafted by John W. Greenwell, a long-time parishioner of Good Shepherd Parish.



Tabernacle

The tabernacle is the sacred place where the Blessed Sacrament—the Body of Christ—is reserved after the celebration of the Eucharist. It is a secure and honored location within the church, often marked by a sanctuary lamp, indicating the real presence of Christ among His people.

The purpose of the tabernacle is both practical and devotional. It allows Holy Communion to be brought to the sick and homebound, and it provides a place for prayer and adoration. Before the tabernacle, the faithful are invited into quiet reverence, recognizing that Christ is truly present.

This tabernacle was originally from St. Theresa Parish.