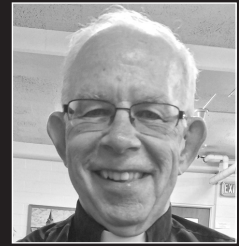
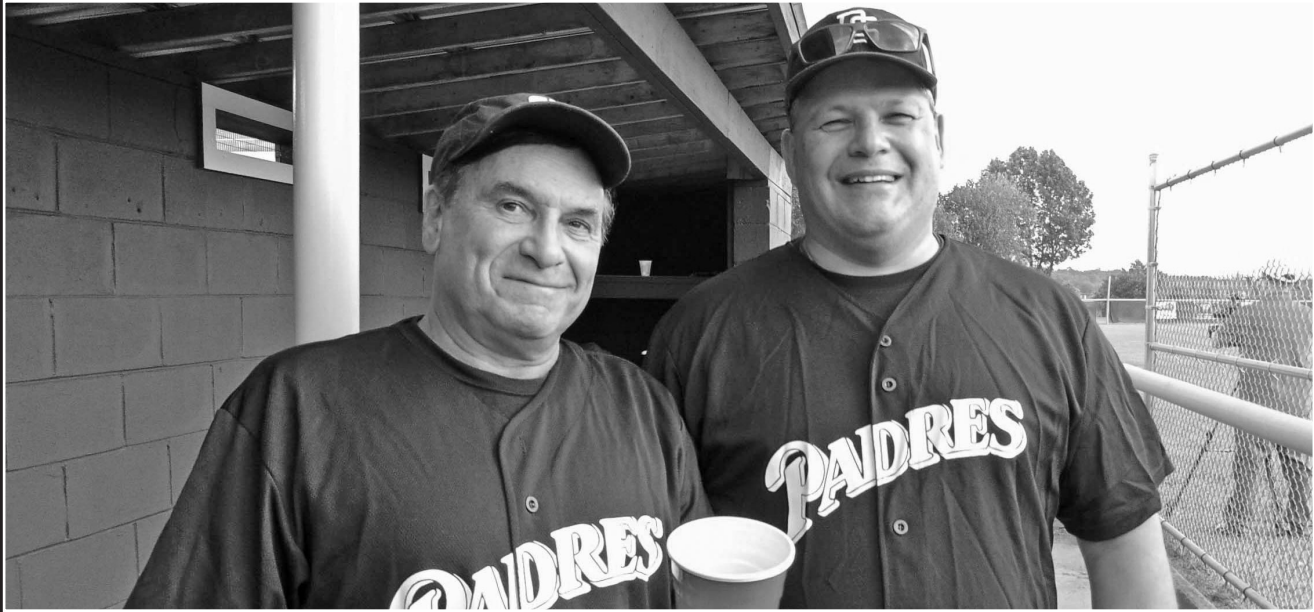


FATHER JOE SALERNO

Keeping parish vibrant, alive



FATHER JOHN ROSE



Father Jim and Bishop Douglas Lucia at the Men in Black softball game in 2019.

This is the last in a series of articles highlighting the history of our parish leading to its 125th anniversary. Previous articles and issues of "More Good News" are available at www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com.

1991-present

The next pastor after Father Henry was the first native son to assume that position.

Father Joseph Salerno became one of the most popular modern shepherds of the parish, leading the way to build the Mount Carmel Apartments for seniors, finally installing air conditioning in the church, rewiring the building and rebuilding the front steps.

He had the gift of establishing successful collaborations with neighboring parishes, which has become a standard for ecumenicalism in our city. He, along with Deacon Bob Riggalls, planned and executed the 100th anniversary of the parish, which culminated at the end of the anniversary year on the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

It took 10 months to find a replacement for Father Joe when he left to become pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes in 2002. Father John Rose saw us through the difficult and

sensitive consolidation of Mount Carmel and Blessed Sacrament parishes. After five years Father John left to work with troubled priests and we gained our present pastor, Father James Cesta.

Father Jim's humor and his homilies have endeared him to an increasingly diverse community. He has used his artistic abilities to embellish and preserve our facility. His attention to the mechanical systems, a new pulpit, organ and the roof of the building ensure its viability for future generations.

He continues collaborative initiatives with priests from neighboring parishes, often trading good natured barbs during shared services. It is common to see him, shirt sleeves rolled up, working at the parish feast or tilling the soil in the gardens. He is not shy about sharing his Italian heritage and in his own folksy way is able to drive home the messages of the gospels through comic stories and shared common experiences.

As the parish of St. Mary of Mount Carmel/Blessed Sacrament goes forward we hope to add more pages to our shared history. We can see the changes happening within our community but are comforted by those things that remain constant and dear. May the parish live on at least another 125 years.



A.J. VALENTINI