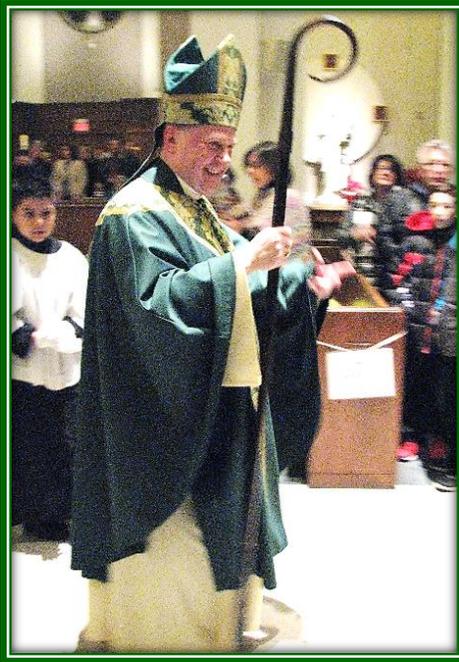




GIFT AND RESPONSIBILITY

REMEMBER THE PAST AND ENSURE THE FUTURE



Last Saturday 3 February, Our Holy Redeemer celebrated the 115th Anniversary of our Parish's founding! Over three hundred people came home for the 5:00 P.M. Mass which was offered by our good friend Bishop Andrzej Zglejszewski, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Centre. He was joined at the Altar by me and my brother Priests, Deacon Cris, Altar Servers, our Parish Choir, and hundreds of happy people whose roots pass through five of the world's seven continents. It was truly a blessed remembrance of the past with gratitude.

Each one of us in attendance for the anniversary celebration, as well as those of us not in attendance, shares a responsibility for the gift of the Parish that has been entrusted to us. It is not enough, the Bishop said, for us to *come home* and remember the past with gratitude. We must ensure – as did our ancestors who founded this parish in 1903, and built this church in 1911 – that the gift is not simply maintained and repaired, but also developed and advanced.

It is not enough to remember Mass-goers who have come and gone but we must go out and invite new Mass-goers to *come home*. It is not enough to remember the Priests who have come and gone but we must go out and be fishers of men. It is not enough to remember the Nuns who have come and gone but we must go out and introduce women to a better life than the cover of *Sports Illustrated* magazine, a *Victoria's Secret* runway, or an *MTV* studio. It is not enough to remember the Altar Servers, the Lectors, the Ushers, the Choir Members, the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, the Catechists, the volunteers, nor is it enough to expect others to answer the call to serve, if we want our posterity to have something to celebrate 115 years from now, then **WE must answer the call to conceive and give birth to new life in the parish.**



When you pray, fast, and give alms this Lent, remember all of those who have come and gone during the past 115 years here at Our Holy Redeemer in Freeport. And as you attend daily Mass and the weekly Stations of the Cross, as you limit yourself to one full meal on Fridays and give 25 cents more a week in the Sunday Offertory, ask the Lord to show you how to develop and advance the gift that they entrusted to you so that when Easter arrives you will live up to the responsibility and new Life will rise through you, with you, and in you at Our Holy Redeemer.