

## 1985-1997

During August, 1985, a happy group of St. Elias' Boosters met at the Lithuanian Country Club in Pleasant Hills for a picnic, with games, prizes and gifts for all. The following week, the ECF group went to Oglebay Park in West Virginia for a picnic.

After twenty-eight years at St. Elias, Fr. George decided to leave for an assignment in sunny California. A farewell reception was held on October 28, which was attended by clergy, parishioners, friends and community representatives. It was a bittersweet evening marking the end of one era and the beginning of another.

Following the departure of Fr. Vida, Fr. Edward Lucas began his assignment at St. Elias as the first of our interim administrators. Fr. Lucas, a priest for twenty-four years was and also remained pastor of St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church in Duquesne during his tenure at St. Elias.

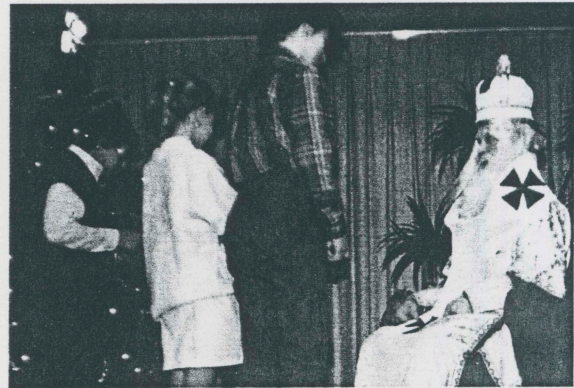
St. Elias hosted a Canonical visit from Bishop Bilock. On May 24 and 25, 1986, he met with parishioners Saturday evening and on Sunday, following the Divine Liturgies. Refreshments were served and much conversation ensued.

The latter part of June saw Fr. Lucas' departure from St. Elias and the assignment of its second interim administrator, Msgr. Raymond Balta. He initiated a roof repair project costing \$87,400.

In early October, Msgr. Balta was replaced by Fr. Donald Valasek. He was welcomed with a coffee social.

During 1987, activities included the Fall Food Fair, Square Dance, Covered Dish Social, Christmas Pageant and Holy Supper for Christmas.

It was busy in 1988 with an ECF Skating Party, Pysanky classes, Square Dance, Flea Market and the annual Night At The Races. On Mother's Day, the Holy Name Society honored each Mother of the parish with a gift of a geranium. This was a continuation of a long-standing tradition. On June 20, Larry Lee Jones, well-known Country Singer, entertained at a dance held to benefit the roof repair mortgage. On July 3, the Blessing of



Animals drew a large and varied group for the Service. The animals - dogs, cats, bunnies, etc., displayed varying degrees of interest.

Highlighting 1989 was the St. Elias Boosters 25th Anniversary celebration in June. A gala dinner dance was held at the Duquesne Golf Club with a near 100% attendance of Boosters. The anniversary marked the dedication of a large group of parishioners who worked, for a time three nights per week, to help pay off the original church mortgage, and to pay for the decoration of the interior of the church.

The Royal Order of Noodle Makers was formed in 1990. This progressed into weekly pirohi sales with a group of loyal women who worked tirelessly to benefit the Church.

Following the Divine Liturgies on August 11th and 12th, a reception was held for Archbishop Thomas Dolinay with refreshments being served in the Church Hall. Many parishioners eagerly met and greeted the new Archbishop.

Sadly, in 1991, on April 14th, the Crucifixion Shrine at the cemetery was vandalized with damage amounting to \$1,700.

The Ladies Guild celebrated their 50th Anniversary with a catered dinner on May 19, 1991.

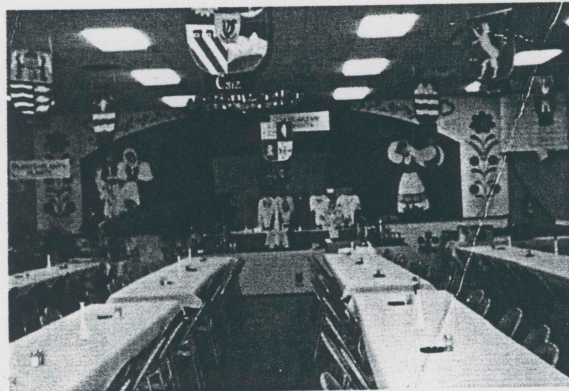
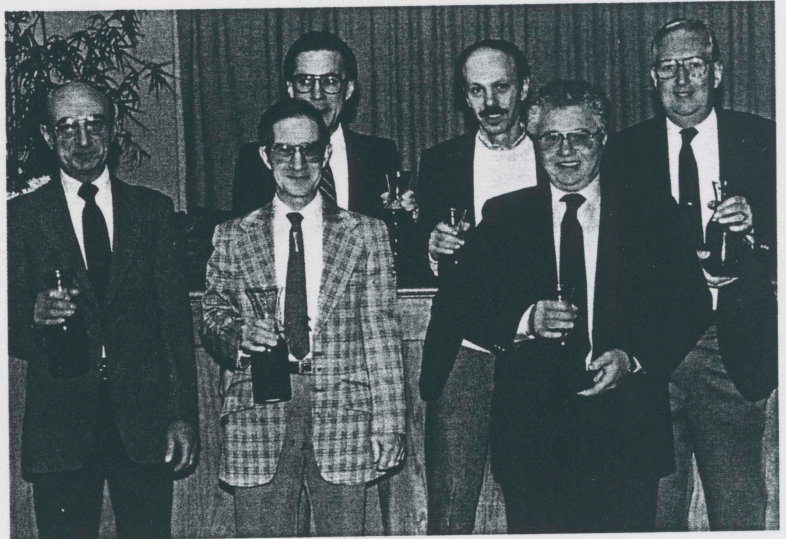
In June of the same year, new carpeting was installed in the Church thanks to the donation from the Royal Order of Noodle Makers.

Csorge Sales on the first Wednesday of each month marked a new beginning. These wonderful Hungarian pastries made a hit with customers and parishioners alike.

Fr. Don underwent successful hip surgery in 1992. On December 10th, the "One Voice" Concert was held at St. Elias. This group is affiliated with the Community College of Allegheny County through its Musical Director.

On October 16, 1993, the first "All You Can Eat" Spaghetti Dinner was held.

St. Elias Church was the Host Parish for the Ordination of David Bosnick and David Misbrenner to the order of Sub-Deaconate by



Bishop Bilock on December 12th.

Fr. Donald Valasek left St. Elias on June 12, 1994, for a new assignment, and a Farewell Party was held for him in the Church Hall.

Our new pastor, Fr. Eugene Yackanich, arrived on July 1, and was welcomed by the parishioners.

In August, the first project of Fr. Eugene was the installation of a new air conditioner for the rectory.

On September 12, a meeting was held to initiate the rental of St. Elias Hall for weddings, anniversaries, parties, etc.

The first Thanksgiving Parish Get-Together was held Sunday, November 20, with the Church providing the turkey and the parishioners adding the trimmings for the dinner. Coupled with the dinner was a "Surprise Shower" for Fr. Eugene.

In February of 1995, the Church Hall was painted by volunteers from the parish. Later that month, a Spaghetti Dinner was held.

On February 26 an Open House was held for the St. Elias Social Hall to show its versatility. A full package of services is offered to those desiring to rent the hall.

The heating and air conditioning for the entire Church had to be replaced in July of 1995. A loan was secured from the GCU for \$130,000 at an interest rate of 8 1/2 %.

The payments, beginning September 17, were \$1,577.26 per month.

A "Night At The Races" was held September 29.

In the continuation of a tradition, luminarias for Christmas Eve lined the Church driveway to light the way for the Christ Child.

On March 30, 1996, another tradition of long standing was the preparation of homemade kolbasz by the men of the parish.

Following Diocesan directives, a Parish Census was taken to determine attendance levels at the May and October Liturgies.

A Reception was held September 29, for Sister Cornelia Mihalko, OSBM, a vocation from St. Elias Parish, celebrating her 50th year as a sister.

On October 8, the first organizational meeting was held in anticipation of our 90th Anniversary in 1997.

On October 27, Fr. Eugene and the Sisters of St. Basil celebrated the Divine Liturgy on Channel 11 at 6:30 a.m.

The Third Parish Thanksgiving Dinner was held November 24, with a special honor being paid to John Repasi, our Cantor, for his many years of devoted service to St. Elias Parish.

The weekly bingo at St. Elias continues to operate to help with the extraordinary expenses of St. Elias Church. 1997 is the 33rd year of existence for the St. Elias Boosters. It is also the 90th year of existence for our St. Elias Parish.