

The first Mass said in Ruthven was in March of 1885. The home of James P. Nolan was the setting for this Mass offered by Father Smith. Other Mass locations were the home of P.J. Nolan, the Brennan school in Highland Township, and a local skating rink. Two women, Mrs. Susan Currans and Mrs. P. J. Nolan began collecting the money to build the first church.

The first church was built in 1889 at a cost \$3500. The building fund for the present church and hall was started in 1954. Approval for the new church and hall came from the Most Reverend Joseph M Mueller in August of 1962. The complete Church with furnishings, except in the sanctuary, amounted to \$105,000. The first Mass was celebrated on December 15, 1963. The blessing and consecration of the new church took place on March 3, 1964. The bell tower was completed in 1965 at a cost of about \$8000. Carpeting was added to the travelled parts of the sanctuary by Msgr. Joynt.

The old rectory was razed in March of 1980. The construction work for the present rectory was done by the Ruthven Farmers Co-op Lumber Co. The overall cost for the furnished house was estimated at \$167,000. The open house for the rectory was held on June 7, 1981. Stained glass windows were installed in the church in 1982. More recent improvements include landscaping around the foundations of both the church and the rectory. The Rodgers organ was purchased in 2006 with an updated speaker system for the organ installed behind the louvers above the altar. The control system for the wireless microphones used by the priest and the organist has also been improved. In the last couple years, the kitchen and church hall have had a facelift. New countertops and sinks were installed. Both the kitchen and hall were repainted, new windows were installed, and new curtains were added. The parking lot west of the church was paved and a ramp and handrails help make the west entry handicapped accessible. The heating and air-conditioning have been updated. The latest remodeling project is the updating of the restrooms.

Several years ago, the basement of the rectory suffered some water damage. The classroom areas and small kitchenette got new drywall and carpeting. The wooden deck on the north side of the rectory was removed and a cement patio replaced it.

Sacred Heart Church of Ruthven celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the current church building in 2031. Ruthven Sacred Heart Church is part of the RAE of Light Cluster which also includes Ayrshire Sacred Heart and Emmetsburg Holy Family.

The parish has seen many changes over the years. In 1889 the church membership included 12 families. Currently we have 85 families. In 1888-1889 there were 14 baptisms. In the past year we have had one infant baptism and one adult who has taken a profession of faith to join the church. In 1909 the First Communion class consisted of 11 children. In 2014 there were two in the class. In 1911 Bishop Garrigan confirmed 27 young people. This fall Bishop R. Walker Nickless will confirm four from this parish. Our parish had two weddings in the last year and there were five funerals.

Our parish has benefitted from generous individuals who have remembered us in their wills. The most recent bequest came from the Alberta Hoadley estate.