

## Prayer to Mother of Sorrows

O Mother of Sorrows, with strength from above, you stood by the cross sharing in the suffering of Jesus and with tender café, you bore Him in your arms, morning and weeping.

We praise you for your faith, which accepted the life God planned for you. We praise you for your hope, which trusted that he would do great things through you. We praise you for your love, in bearing with Jesus the sorrows of His passion.

Holy Mary, may we follow your example and stand by all your children who need comfort and love. Mother of God, stand by us in our trials and care for us in our many needs.

Pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

## THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEDICATION OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS CATHOLIC CHURCH

NOVEMBER 11, 1894 - 2019



## HISTORY OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS CATHOLIC CHURCH CHANDLER, OKLAHOMA

Lincoln County, Oklahoma, of which Chandler is the County Seat, was opened to white settlement in the Fall of 1891, and at that point became a part of Oklahoma Territory.

The first indications of Catholic missionary activity in the area of Lincoln County related to occasional missionary trips out of Guthrie, capital of Oklahoma Territory, some forty or fifty miles to the north and west. Benedictine Father, Felix DeGrasse, resided in Guthrie with the first Vicar Apostolic Bishop Meerschaert, arrived in Oklahoma Territory in 1891. Fr. Felix DeGrasse, O.S.B. made trips, by horseback, to Chandler and Meeker from Sacred Heart in Guthrie and said Mass in parishioner's homes. Father Felix continued to make missionary trips out of Guthrie until his return to Sacred Heart Mission, Pottawatomie County, in 1895. *From the record in Bishop Meerschaert's Diary for 1894*

The first Catholic Church, in Chandler, was built at 10th & Steele and Bishop Meerschaert dedicated the church on November 11, 1894 to Our Lady of Seven Sorrows.

On March 30, 1897, a tornado destroyed the church.

The parishioners immediately rebuilt the church on the same site. Most of the material to rebuild the church was contributed by Mr. & Mrs. Charles Moulin and family and the work was done by the parishioners.

Father Edward V. Reynolds became the first resident pastor in 1899 and lived in a room at the back of the church.

Father William P. Trenekens became the second resident priest in 1908 and was also known as the motorcycle priest.

## Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church October 2019



**New Hall blessed November 5, 2017 by Archbishop Paul S. Coakley**



Between 2015 and 1925 Our Lady of Sorrows was a mission of the Benedictines under Father Benedict Ryan and Father Martin Mulcahy.

In 1925 the parish became a mission of Cushing under Father Herman Schafers and later a mission of Bristow in 1936 and was served by Fathers John Murray in 1936, Bernard Collins in 1937, Edmond Von Elm in 1942 and W. J. Swift in 1947.

Groundbreaking for the new church was held on July 25, 1948, with Rev. Msgr. D.C. Fletcher, Deal of Tulsa Deanery and Pastor of Christ the King Church, turning the first shovel. A new brick church and modern 7-room rectory were constructed, under the directions of Father W. J. Swift of Bristow, OK, on a three-acre plot donated by A.M. & Edna Jarvis, 4th & Price.

Bishop McGuinness dedicated the new church on December 19, 1949.

In June of 1949, Father John L. Walch took up residence in Chandler with St. Michael in Meeker as a mission. Father Walch directed the building of the parish hall in 1952.

Father Anthony R. Dockers became the resident priest in 1953 and the parish paid off the building debt in 1954 while he was pastor.

Other resident pastors included Fathers Edwin Buxton, James Halpine, Joseph Dillon, Frank Wrigley, Richard Beckman, Robert McDole, Michael Hughes and Dale Dirschneider.

The parish was again under the Benedictines out of St. Gregory's in Shawnee in 1975 when Philip Berning, O.S.B. became pastor.

Bernard O'Rourke, O.S.B. became pastor in 1983 and in early 1984 began planning the building of a new church. He worked towards this goal until his death in 1984 from complications related to multiple sclerosis.



In October of 1984 the existing church was torn down to make room for the new church and Mass was held on Saturdays at the United Methodist Church.

Louis Vanderley, O.S.B. was assigned as pastor in December 1984 and he finished the building of the new church.

Mass was moved to the parish hall on July 6, 1985 and held there on Saturday evening and Sunday morning until the new church was completed. Prior to the church being completed, Christmas services were held in the new church in 1985.

The new church was dedicated on April 3, 1986 by Archbishop Charles A. Salatka.

In September 1994, the parish was no longer under the Benedictines at St. Gregory's in Shawnee but under the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City when Rev. Dominic Hung Hoang became pastor.

Rev. David Lafferty became pastor in July 1997. The building debt was paid off, while Father Lafferty was pastor, on the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, September 15, 2002 with a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Eusebius J. Beltran, Oklahoma City Archdiocese.

The old hall was torn down September of 2016 and groundbreaking for a new hall occurred on October 9, 2016 following Mass.

Mass and blessing of the new hall occurred on November 5, 2017 by Archbishop Paul S. Coakley followed by lunch in the new hall.

On July 2, 2019, Rev. Timothy F. Ruckel was named Administrator of Our Lady of Sorrows in Chandler & St. Louis in Stroud and now resides in Chandler. Plans are in the works to tear down the old rectory and build a new rectory to the west of the hall.

On October 9, 2016 Groundbreaking for a new Hall occurred after Mass

New hall construction in progress



The old hall was torn down in 2016 to make room for the new hall



## FIRST CHURCH – 10TH & STEELE

On November 11, 1894 Bishop Meerschaert blessed a new church building in Chandler under the patronage of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows.



First Church at 10th & Steele



Louis Vanderley, O.S.B. was assigned as pastor in December 1984 and he finished the building of the new church.

The new church was dedicated on April 3, 1986 by Archbishop Charles A. Salatka.





## FOURTH CHURCH – 4TH & PRICE



On March 30, 1897, a tornado destroyed the church.

*“Remains of Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church after the Chandler cyclone of March 30, 1897 was in heap of rubble beside the topless tree. For documentation, some photographer placed two slats on a chair and scribed them “Ruins of the Catholic Church of Chandler, O.T., 1897.”*  
*Photograph courtesy of The Lincoln County Historical Society*



## SECOND CHURCH – 10TH & STEELE

The parishioners immediately rebuilt the church on the same site. Most of the material to rebuild the church was contributed by Mr. & Mrs. Charles Moulin and family and the work was done by the parishioners.



Tear down inside church – Choir loft



Church torn down







Removal of Our Lady of Sorrows statute from the front of third church building by parishioners, Gary Bledsoe, Mark L. Melson and other members of the parish.

### THIRD CHURCH – 4TH & PRICE

Rt. Rev. Msgr. D.C. Fletcher, dean of Tulsa deanery and pastor of Christ the King Church blessed the ground and turned the first shovel of earth on Sunday, July 25, 1948 for a new brick church and rectory. A new brick church and rectory were started, under the directions of Father W. J. Swift, on a two-acre plot donated by A.M. & Edna Jarvis, located at 4th & Price.



Bishop McGuiness dedicated the new church on December 19, 1949.



In October 1984, the existing church (third church) was torn down to make room for the new church and Mass was held on Saturdays at the United Methodist Church.



Father Walch directed the building of the parish hall in 1952.

