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## Annunciation celebrates 100th anniversary with special Mass

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By David Eck

ARCHDIOCESE — For 100 years Annunciation Parish has been serving Catholics in Cincinnati's Clifton neighborhood, and Barbara Mussman's family has been part of it since the beginning.

In fact, Mussman's grandmother moved to the area in 1907, three years before the parish was founded. Those generational ties make her connection to Annunciation particularly strong.



**Cincinnati Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr** and Father Todd Grogan, pastor, distribute Communion during Annunciation's 100th anniversary Mass. (CT/Colleen Kelley)

"What I love is when I walk into that parish I think about my great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother (who) were there christening babies," said Mussman. "You just have a lot of memories being in that church."

Although she moved out of state and later raised her family in another part of the archdiocese, Mussman moved back to Clifton and Annunciation about 10 years ago.

Stories of the past and hope for the future flowed Feb. 7 at a special Mass and

luncheon as parishioners celebrated Annunciation's 100th anniversary. Cincinnati Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr celebrated the Mass. Concelebrants included Father Todd Grogan, pastor, and several other priests who were former pastors or had some connection with the parish over the past century. Even more poignant was the fact that the date was exactly 100 years and a day removed from the first Mass.

On Feb. 6, 1910, firefighters set up a temporary altar in a storeroom in a building at the corner of Ludlow and Clifton avenues in Cincinnati, and Mass was first celebrated in Annunciation Parish. Within nine months the parish had acquired the present site on Clifton Avenue and dedicated a frame building on the site. A school was established in 1914, and the current church was completed in 1930.

In his homily Archbishop Schnurr noted the current church and school are monuments to past generations.

"They placed their efforts in the hands of the Lord," Archbishop Schnurr said. "We all owe a debt of gratitude to those who have gone before us."

The Lord is also part of the future of the church, the archbishop said. Regardless of whether there are more priests or fewer, more practicing Catholics or fewer, the Gospel will continue to be proclaimed, the sacraments celebrated and the Lord will be our midst.

The church was full for the Mass as some former parishioners returned to the parish they once called home. Sunlight streaming through the golden stained-glass windows belied the frigid temperatures outside.

Marian Budde, an Annunciation parishioner for 60 years, enjoyed the Mass. "It was very inspiring," she said. "It was moving."

Parishioner Ray Faller grew up in the parish and has fond memories of the past. "It's amazing that the parish has been there for a century now. To think that it was founded 100 years ago — how different the world was then compared to now," Faller said. "You made lifetime friends there. I still have friends from grade school even though they are no longer around there."

In a message to the parish published in the



**Barbara Mussman** served as lector during the anniversary Mass. (CT/Colleen Kelley)

anniversary program, Father Grogan wrote of gratitude and the sense of community in the parish.

“Our parish’s celebration is an occasion of grace for all of us,” he wrote. “No one person, or group, or year, or decade can be said to be the sum total of Annunciation Parish. Such an awareness trains us in the grace of humility and in the even greater grace of charity.”

After Mass, the group held a reception and luncheon. Parishioners and visitors mingled and looked over historic photos of the church and school that lined the walls. Old vestments and artifacts were also on display. Several pieces of artwork created by parishioners in honor of the anniversary were displayed, as were icons made by students at Annunciation school.

Archbishop Schnurr spent time visiting with parishioners.

“I particularly enjoyed the opportunity to come and celebrate Mass with you,” he said at the reception. “I use this opportunity to say ‘thank you.’”

Father Grogan said he was pleased with the event, and the turnout was more than organizers expected.

The celebration not only was an opportunity to recognize the past, but also to look to the future and strengthen the parish community.

“I think it gives (the parish) confidence it can do things,” Father Grogan said.

Other events during the anniversary year included concerts, prayer, a picnic and ice cream social and visits by an iconographer and an illustrator. For more information about the anniversary, including photos from the events visit <http://www.annunciationbvmparish.org>.

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