

# History of Our Church (1949-2009)

**1949:** Bishop Richard Gerow and St. Peter's Cathedral purchase twelve acres for \$25,000 on Lynnwood Drive for a new church in north Jackson.

St. Richard's parish is named in honor of St. Richard of Chichester, patron saint of Bishop Richard Gerow.

**1952:** Monsignor Chatham is appointed by Bishop Gerow to organize the new St. Richard parish.

**1953:** Bishop Gerow officially establishes St. Richard as a parish for approximately 274 families.

Construction of a chapel that seats 340 and a 4-classroom elementary school begins. The total cost is approximately \$135,000 for 15,150 square feet or about \$9.00/sq. ft.

Monsignor Chatham is installed as St. Richard's first pastor.

The Sisters of Mercy are in charge of the new school and Sr. Cyrena Harkins, R.S.M. is the first principal and is with the school a total of 14 years.

**1965:** Ground is broken for the new church.

**1967:** New church is dedicated in March.

Church building receives an award from the National Liturgical Conference.

Monsignor Harnett is installed as our second pastor.

**1973:** New sanctuary receives an honor award for Excellence in Design from the Mississippi Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

**1975:** Father Patrick Farrell is installed as our third pastor.

**1978:** Ground is broken for the multi-purpose building. It includes the gymnasium and a 2-story building that has a meeting room on the first floor and the parish office on the second floor.

**1979:** Bishop Houck is installed as auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Jackson.

**1984:** Bishop Brunini retires and Bishop Houck is installed as Bishop of the Diocese of Jackson.

**1985:** Geographical "zones" are organized in our parish. Elections are then held with the Pastoral Council consisting of representatives of each zone.

**1986:** Father Richard Somers is installed as our fourth pastor.

- 1988:** Eight zone groups are formed from the “Renew” groups.
- 1989:** Junior High becomes St. Joseph Junior High.
- 1992:** New rectory is constructed.
- “Zones” become known as Small Faith Communities (SFCs) and ongoing groups begin for neighborhoods and special interests.
- 1995:** Land is purchased in Madison for St. Joseph High School.
- 1997:** St. Joseph High School is constructed in Madison for grades 7-12.
- 1998:** Monsignor Noel Foley is installed as our 5<sup>th</sup> pastor.
- 1999:** Jules Michel becomes the St. Richard Catholic School principal.
- 2003:** Renovation of the parish offices is completed and construction of a reception hall begins.
- Bishop Houck retires, and Bishop Joseph Latino is installed.
- Monsignor Noel Foley goes to his eternal reward on June 10.
- Father Mike O’Brien is installed as our 6<sup>th</sup> pastor.
- Church Staff move into the new offices in August.
- 2004:** Construction of Foley Hall and adjoining meeting rooms are completed. An Open House is held September 12, 2004.
- 2005:** Groundbreaking for Parish meeting rooms, Youth Center, and Preschool classrooms is held in the fall.
- 2006:** New Parish meeting room, Youth Center, and Preschool classrooms are completed in the fall.
- 2007:** Monsignor Michael Glynn goes to his eternal reward on November 12.
- 2009:** Groundbreaking for major renovation to St. Richard Catholic School.