

## **The Polish Churches: A Schism— St. Stanislaus and Immaculate Heart of Mary**

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Developments in Cleveland during the closing of the 19th century influenced the evolution of the "Warszawa" neighborhood in its old 18th ward. Annexed from Newburgh in 1873, the "Iron Ward" was an industrial powerhouse, the *Cleveland Rolling Mill Company* a dominant employer since 1863. Advances in steel-making combined with recessions precipitated animosity between the skilled unionizing workers and the unskilled Polish and Bohemian immigrants. The mostly Catholic immigrants' need for adequate jobs clashed with the established positions of the mostly Protestant skilled workers who viewed them as scornful threats to their livelihoods. Coming from cultures which sanctioned class divisions, the Poles used force to satisfy their demands in a free America. Knowing little English, the Poles' motives were misinterpreted by many who regarded them as ignorant troublemakers.

The Catholic Diocese sought to bring a bureaucratic control over its ethnic parishes. Bishops struggled to quell dissension among the ethnic churches flung across the 15,000 square miles under their rule. Not until 1908 did Rome release the United States from missionary status, replacing sometimes arbitrary local control with universal canon law.

In 1873, Bishop Gilmour established St. Stanislaus parish to serve all of Cleveland's Poles who by 1880 numbered 532. By 1881 the parish had its own church on Tod Street (East 65th). The neighborhood flourished. In 1883 Bishop Horstmann appointed Rev. A.F. Kolaszewski as pastor. Bolstered by the workers' faith and pledges, construction of the largest church in the diocese began in 1886. Recession, unorthodox financing, and struggles with Horstmann's authority forced Kolaszewski's resignation in 1892.

Division within St. Stanislaus over the removal of this charismatic pastor festered until his unannounced return to Cleveland in 1894. Horstmann's refusal to reinstate Kolaszewski as pastor resulted in the unauthorized formation of the independent Catholic Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary on May 3, 1894.