

# The Consecration of the City of Aliquippa to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary

by Nelson Hertel

**O**n Saturday, June 4, 2016 the city of Aliquippa (located in western Pennsylvania's Beaver County) was solemnly consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was truly an historic and exceptional moment.

Aliquippa is a small city just outside of Pittsburgh, with about 9,000 inhabitants. Years ago, the area's citizens numbered over 27,000. But like many American cities, Aliquippa has suffered tremendously over the past few decades due to the collapse of the local steel industry and other economic-social changes. The city finds itself at a critical time; human solutions for its improvement and revival seem to be exhausted.

In the past, a great percentage of Aliquippa's citizens were Catholic, filling its churches to the brim for Sunday Mass. The city has three Catholic parishes: one Roman, the others of the Byzantine and Ukrainian Rites. Although Mass attendance has dropped significantly, there have

been positive developments in recent years.

In November 2007 the Traditional Latin Mass Guild of the local Knights of Columbus (Woodlawn Council 2161) was formed. Part of a growing national contingent of traditional Knights of Columbus councils, the Guild does admirable work, actively and successfully promoting the celebration of the Traditional Mass and sacraments, especially at Aliquippa's Roman parish of Saint Titus.

During the past few years, members of this Guild had considered the necessity and timeliness of a consecration of their city to the Sacred and Immaculate Hearts. They began to arrange this consecration in a concrete way, after reading excerpts of a speech given by Suzanne Pearson at The Fatima Center's September 2015 conference in Washington, DC.

In her speech, "New Light on the Consecration of Russia," excerpts of which were published

in the Winter 2016 *Fatima Crusader* (Issue 113), Miss Pearson described the benefits of past consecrations (of parishes, dioceses, cities and countries like Portugal) and encouraged local ceremonies as a kind of stepping stone to the proper Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Encouraged by this, Guild members approached the local Catholic pastors and Aliquippa's mayor, Hon. Dwan Walker.

All parties readily agreed to perform the consecration of Aliquippa. The date was set, June 4: the First Saturday of the month, in the centenary year of the Fatima apparitions. Meanwhile, solemn ceremonies were organized for the morning and afternoon. On Saturday morning, a procession began at 10:30 am at St. George Byzantine Catholic Church. During the procession, a copy of the icon of the "United Hearts of Jesus and Mary" was carried. This icon was originally commissioned in Miami. There, it was exposed during a May 2013 consecration ceremony – although not made explicitly to the Sacred and Immaculate Hearts – performed by the local Archbishop and Mayor.

The image was then enshrined just outside of the


church's iconostasis, and the Holy Rosary recited. The Divine Liturgy followed, beautifully sung by the choir of SS. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church of nearby Ambridge. The Liturgy was concelebrated by Aliquippa's three Catholic pastors (Fr. Mykhaylo Shkyndya of St. George, Fr. Michael Polosky of SS. Peter and Paul and Fr. Paul Householder of St. Titus). Several other priests assisted in choir, Mayor Walker was also in attendance. Upon the Divine Liturgy's conclusion, the pastors and mayor knelt in front of the icon, where they fervently read in turn, the prayers of consecration.

These prayers were based on the Act of Dedication of the Human Race to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; the May 1931 consecration of Portugal to the Immaculate Heart by the Portuguese episcopate; and the May 2013 Miami consecration. They were fitting texts, fulfilling Our Lord's desire expressed to Sister Lucia in 1936: "I want My whole Church to... put the devotion to My Mother's Immaculate Heart beside the devotion to My Sacred Heart."

After the prayer, the consecrators gathered near the church's entrance. The Knights' Guild presented each



**SOLEMN CONSECRATION**  
 OF THE  
**CITY OF ALIQUIPPA**



TO THE  
**IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY**  
 AND THE  
**SACRED HEART OF JESUS**

Saturday  
 4 June 2016

Knights of Columbus  
 Woodlawn Council 2361

consecrator with a copy of the icon. Surrounded by parishioners and guests, Mayor Walker read an official proclamation. He then presented a copy of the proclamation and the flag of the city of Aliquippa to each pastor.

Visibly moved, the mayor proceeded to make some unprepared remarks, embracing the grateful clergy and many of the faithful. He acknowledged that only Divine intervention could save Aliquippa, beset by so many challenges. But those who assisted at the ceremony could not help but have renewed hope for Aliquippa, now-consecrated to the Sacred and Immaculate Hearts.

Although well-conscious of their city's current troubles, the faithful could take courage in the words spoken by Our Lady to Lucia on June 13, 1917: "Don't lose heart. I will never forsake you. My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God."

The congregation then proceeded to St. Titus Church, where a number of people were already present, waiting for the Tridentine Mass to begin. Before the Solemn High Mass, at which he also assisted, Mayor Walker read his proclamation again and briefly addressed those

assembled.

The Votive Mass of Christ the King was offered in thanksgiving for the consecration, by Canon Jean Marie Moreau of the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest. He was assisted by Pittsburgh diocesan priests, Fathers Ladis Cizik and David Rombold, respectively as deacon and subdeacon. The Bach Choir of Pittsburgh sang Mozart's Coronation Mass magnificently. During the Mass, Canon Moreau preached on the Social Reign of Our Lord, citing Saint Augustine in his work, *City of God*, as well as the eminent Cardinal Pie of Poitiers.

Let us pray that the city of Aliquippa be abundantly blessed by God for this Consecration. Let us pray for our country, the whole world and the Church, doing what we can to bring about more local consecrations. Above all, let us continue to pray and work for the Consecration of Russia as requested by Heaven.

While we know that this will be done "late," and we realize all too well that things appear to be very bleak, even universally, let us remember and take comfort in Our Lord's words to Sr. Lucy in August 1931: "It is never too late to have recourse to Jesus and Mary." 