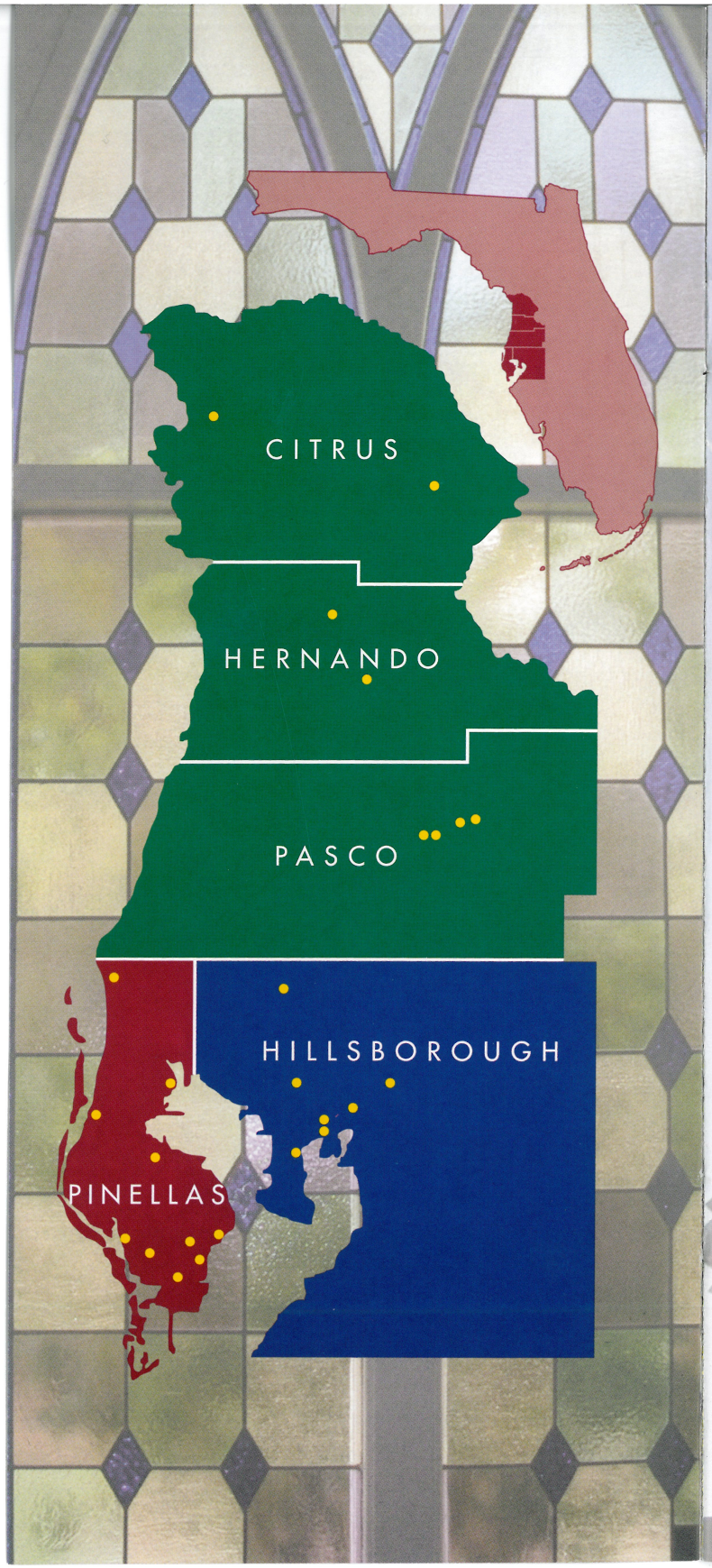


Catholic Driving Pilgrimage

25 Tampa Bay Religious Sites



Catholic Driving Pilgrimage
Table of Contents

Crimson Way: Pinellas County

Pinellas Guide Map 1
Site of Narváez Landing 1
Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle 2
St. Joseph 2
St Mary, Our Lady of Grace 3
St. Paul 3
St. Raphael 3
Calvary Catholic Cemetery 4
St. Cecelia 4
Espiritu Santo 5
St. Ignatius of Antioch 5

Sapphire Path: Hillsborough County

Hillsborough Guide Map 6
Sacred Heart 6
St. Louis Cemetery 7
Our Lady of Perpetual Help 7
Mary Help of Christians 7
Academy of the Holy Names 8
Jesuit High School 8
St. James Chapel 9

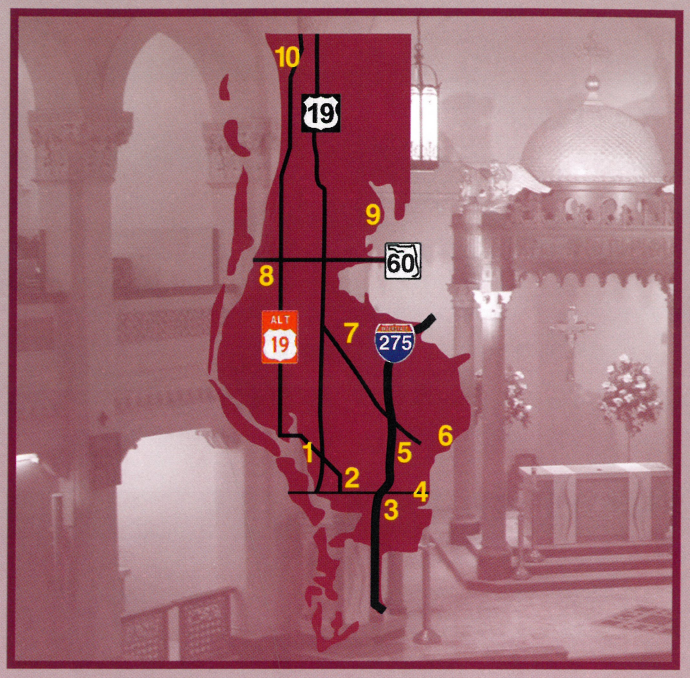
Emerald Trail: Pasco, Hernando & Citrus Counties

Northern Counties Guide Map 9
St. Anthony of Padua 10
St. Anthony of Padua School 10
Holy Name Monastery 11
St Leo Abbey 11
St. Anthony the Abbot 12
St. Stanislaus Chapel 12
St. Benedict 13
Our Lady of Good Council Chapel 13

Additional Pilgrims' Resources

Brief History of the Diocese 14
A Pilgrims' Prayer 16
Why a Pilgrimage .....back cover

Pinellas County
Crimson Way



1. Site of Narváez Landing, 1528

Jungle Prada Park • Park Street and Elbow Lane North, St. Petersburg



It was on this spot that Spanish explorer Pánfilo de Narváez arrived in April 1528 with 5 ships and a complement of 600 men. In his company were eight diocesan and five Franciscan priests; among them was Father Juan Xuarez, O.F.M. who had received an appointment as Bishop of Florida. Father Xuarez celebrated Easter Mass ashore on April 16th making it the first mass ever celebrated in Florida. After ten days in the area including several violent encounters with the native Tocobaga peoples, Narváez headed north overland with 300 men (including five priests). Eight years later, a mere four survivors made it to Mexico, including Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca who wrote an account of their ill-fated expedition.

2. Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle, 1950

5815 5th Avenue North, St. Petersburg



Established as a parish in 1950, the present church was built in 1963 and elevated to a cathedral in 1968. As the Mother Church of the diocese it is the church of our bishop and holds his chair or cathedra. The cathedral serves as the focal point for the liturgical life of the diocese. The plan of the cathedral is based on a Latin Cross topped with a sixty-two foot high Byzantine style dome. The gold colored dome is pierced with stained glass windows that cast light on the altar below. Rising twenty-five feet above the dome is a golden finial and cross. Also on the grounds are a Lourdes Grotto, Our Lady's Chapel, and the Shrine Shop.

Parish Office: 727-347-9702

3. St. Joseph, 1926

2101 22nd Avenue South, St. Petersburg



Born out of St. Mary's, it initially served the then predominately white neighborhoods of south St. Petersburg. Several years later a separate mission church, Immaculate Conception, was established nearby for black families. Schools were started at both St. Joseph and Immaculate Conception – both would later close. By the 1960's, the church had undergone a pronounced facelift including the addition of the steeple, but even more profound changes were on the horizon. Though there had been a huge social gulf between these two congregations due to racial segregation, by the 1980's the shifting demographics were so profound that the two congregations were merged. Renovations to its initial Florentine style have been done over the years that are in keeping with its present day multi-racial character and, like its elder sister in Tampa, St. Peter Claver (which had its own church by 1915), all are welcome here today.

Parish Office: 727-822-2153

4. St. Mary, Our Lady of Grace, 1908

515 Fourth Street South, St. Petersburg



Up until 1920 St. Mary's remained a mission of the Jesuits from Tampa with two previous churches serving the Catholic families of St. Petersburg until the construction of the current church in 1929. Byzantine in style with Romanesque features, it is octagonal in shape with solid two foot thick brick walls. The magnificent Italian and German stained glass windows include a large rose window over the entrance to the church. The building which is furnished with decorative wood and numerous types of marble includes 7 balconies, numerous grand archways, and marble floors.
Parish Office: 727-896-2191

5. St. Paul, 1925

1800 12th Street North, St. Petersburg



Initially a mission of St. Mary's, St. Paul's first building was a one-story school. After the arrival of its first pastor in 1929, a building boom began that would see a convent, rectory, church, school additions, and even a high school constructed over the the next 25 years. The church (1939) boasts an elegant red brick exterior in a classic Roman style. Franciscan Sisters of Allegany have been present at the parochial school, the oldest Catholic school in Pinellas County, from its earliest days. **Parish Office: 727-822-3481**

6. St. Raphael, 1960

1376 Snell Isle Boulevard Northeast, St. Petersburg

St. Raphael's is emblematic of the many parishes that were begun under Archbishop Joseph Hurley in the post-World War II boom years. Hurley bought the property in the 1950's. In 1960, he then directed Msgr. Mullins from nearby St. Paul's to start celebrating mass in the area and the following year a pastor was appointed. A simple church building was constructed in



1962, followed by a Catholic school in 1964. The temporary church would serve the parish for 45 years until the present church, a 1,000 seat waterfront mission-style structure with a clay roof, was built, and dedicated in the Summer of 2005.
Parish Office: 727-821-7989

7. Calvary Catholic Cemetery, 1960

5233 118th Avenue North, Clearwater



Calvary Catholic Cemetery was the first diocesan cemetery on Florida's West Coast. Many Catholics who came to Florida in the building boom following World War II chose this tranquil spot for their resting place until they are awakened by the Lord. St. Petersburg's founding bishop, Bishop Charles B. McLaughlin is buried here along with nearly one hundred priests and religious who selflessly dedicated themselves to the care of God's people over the years.
Office: 727-572-4355

8. St. Cecelia, 1924

820 Jasmine Way, Clearwater



Originally built in 1924 so that Catholics did not have to travel all the way to Tampa for mass, it was formally established as a parish in 1929. Over the next twenty years, the parish would grow and expand to include an elementary school, which was later moved to another site. In 1955 a new wing, along with a new sanctuary, was added to the existing church creating its still unique "L" shape. Both the "old church" and the "new church" remain joined and in use to this day. **Parish Office: 727-447-3494**

9. Espiritu Santo, 1960

2405 Philippe Parkway, Safety Harbor



On Pentecost Sunday in May of 1539 the Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto sailed into what is now Tampa Bay and named it *Bahía Espiritu Santo* (Holy Spirit Bay). Ten years later in May 1549 Fr. Luis de Cancer, the famed Dominican missionary, sailed into the bay in a noble effort to spread the Gospel. For six weeks he made numerous contacts with the native peoples he encountered even celebrating mass ashore on the Feast of Corpus Christi. On June 26, 1549, the next day, he was martyred on the northwest edge of the bay near a Tocobaga village. Twenty years after that, a small chapel was erected nearby by a Jesuit priest in another short lived missionary endeavor. Four hundred years would pass before ground was broken for a permanent parish on a beautiful knoll close to the site of these ancient Spanish missionary efforts. The contemporary Spanish mission style church with its large Fr. Luis de Cancer window pays tribute to those initial efforts of evangelization. **Parish Office: 727-726-8477**

10. St. Ignatius of Antioch, 1889

715 East Orange Street, Tarpon Springs



Up until 1947, mass was celebrated in a small mission chapel on Lemon Street, the first forty of those years by the Jesuits who often had to travel by boat from Tampa. The parish was then relocated to Tarpon Avenue and a converted army building would be used for mass for the next 20 years. The parish plant continued to grow over the next decade and culminated with the construction of a large contemporary church in 1981. Among its features are walls imbedded with Tennessee river rocks and seven large laminated pine beams from North Carolina which direct the eyes of the worshipper to the simple marble altar below.
Parish Office: 727-937-4050

Hillsborough County

Sapphire Path



1. Sacred Heart, 1860

509 North Florida Avenue, Tampa (Downtown)



Originally called St. Louis, our oldest parish was initially staffed by diocesan priests until an outbreak of yellow fever claimed the lives of three priests in 1887-88. In October 1888 Bishop Moore of St. Augustine recruited the New Orleans Jesuits to administer the parish and all of south Florida. Construction on this grand Romanesque church (with Gothic and Byzantine influences) began in 1898 and was completed seven years later. The 17 stained glass windows were designed and manufactured for Sacred Heart by the Mayer Company of Munich, Germany. The structure includes a 135 foot dome, solid oak pews and doors, porcelain tiles, and an altar made of Italian Carrara marble. Over the years numerous parishes, missions, and schools throughout the area, and Florida at large, were begun through Sacred Heart.
Parish Office: 813-229-1595

2. St. Louis Cemetery, 1874

606 E. Harrison St., Tampa (north section of Oaklawn)



St. Louis Cemetery is the oldest Catholic cemetery in the diocese. Located on the northern part of Oaklawn Cemetery (a fence once separated the two), this sacred ground has served the parishioners of St. Louis Church (now Sacred Heart) since the 19th Century. Our area's earliest Catholic pioneer families are buried here including the foundress of St. Anthony of Padua School, Mrs. Cecilia Morse, along with five of her children, and Vincente Martinez-Ybor, who brought the cigar industry to Tampa. Five pioneer priests are also buried here including three who died of yellow fever in 1887-88.

3. Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 1900

1711 East 11th Avenue, Tampa (Ybor City)



Initially established by the Jesuits in 1890 as a mission to the Spanish-speaking immigrants coming to Ybor City to work in the cigar industry, a small church was built in 1900 under the title of Our Lady of Mercy (another parish, Most Holy Name, was also established on 7th Ave. in Ybor City in 1920 for the Italian immigrant families). Run by the Salesians from 1926 until the Redemptorists arrived in 1934, a new Spanish style Romanesque church with beautiful stained glass was built in 1937 and dedicated to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. **Parish Office: 813-248-5701**

4. Mary Help of Christians, 1928

6400 East Chelsea Street, Tampa

Originally founded as a boys' orphanage in 1928 and later developed into a school and parish by the Salesians of Don Bosco, the church (formerly the school's chapel) uses bright colors and vibrant images to capture the attention of youth. The stunning central mosaic dedicated to Mary incorporates both the history of the Salesians and that of the diocese.



Other mosaics portray scenes in the life of St. John Bosco and St. Dominic Savio. The colorful stained glass windows depicting the joyful and glorious mysteries of the rosary reinforce Mary's role as both model and intercessor. **Parish Office: 813-626-7588**

5. Academy of the Holy Names, 1881

3319 Bayshore Boulevard, Tampa



Bishop Augustin Verot, the first Bishop of St. Augustine, brought the Sisters of Holy Names of Jesus and Mary to Florida from Canada in the mid 19th Century to help catechize the young. In 1881, they opened the first local Catholic school using a former gunsmith shop in what was to become downtown Tampa. They would go on to start and staff a number of surrounding Catholic schools as well. After several relocations and expansions the Academy finally settled at its present site in 1928. **School Office: 813-839-5371**

6. Jesuit High School, 1899

4701 North Himes Avenue, Tampa



In 1899, the Jesuit priests from Sacred Heart opened a boys' school next to the parish. First known as Sacred Heart College, and then as Tampa College, the school was renamed Jesuit High School in 1940. In 1956 it was relocated to its present 40 acre campus which allowed the school to expand its enrollment and flourish. The centerpiece of campus is St. Anthony's Chapel with its three ton rough-hewn white Italian marble altar and the impressive modern stained glass windows created by renowned artist Joe Testa-Secca. **School Office: 813-877-5344**

7. St. James Chapel, 2008

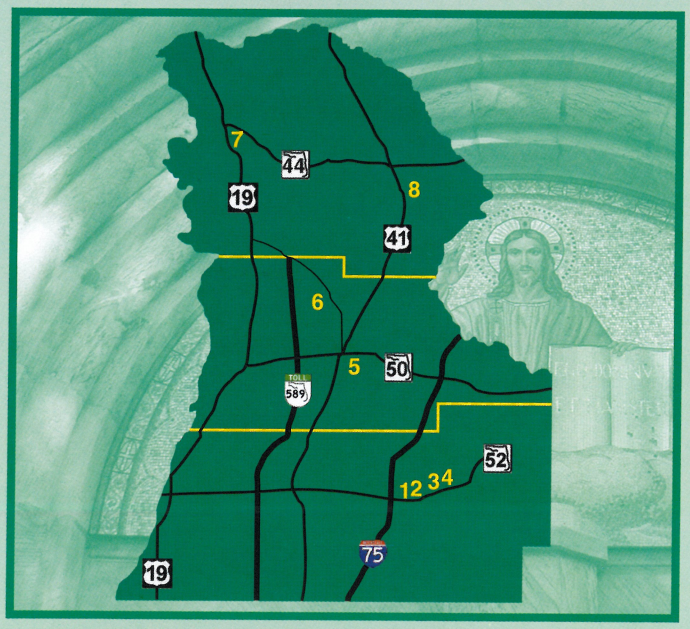
18150 Bethany Center Drive, Lutz



Located on the grounds of the 200 acre Bethany Center, the rustic St. James Chapel overlooks beautiful Lake Mary. Built in the *old Florida* style with a metal roof and a "hardy board" exterior, the chapel harmonizes magnificently with the surrounding natural oasis and grounds of our diocesan retreat center. The bronze crucifix, stations of the cross, and doors were commissioned specifically for Bethany and imported from Stuflesser Ars Liturgica of Ortesei, Italy. The massive doors depict both the raising of Lazarus at Bethany and modern day saints such as Mother Teresa and Pope John Paul the Great. Once inside, the chapel's simple interior provides an ideal setting for both prayer and reflection. **Bethany Office: 813-960-6300**

The Northern Counties

Emerald Trail



The eight sites in this tour are spread across the more rural areas of the diocese which include Pasco, Hernando and Citrus Counties.

1. St. Anthony of Padua, 1883

32832 Massachusetts Avenue, San Antonio (Pasco Co.)



San Antonio was established as a Catholic colony in honor of St. Anthony of Padua in answer to a prayer. Catholics have quite literally been worshiping in these very pews for over a century and a quarter. The present structure replaced the original wooden church in 1911 and is one of the earliest known examples of precast concrete hollow-block construction in Florida. The church, with its French colonial twin towers added in 1954, is laid out as the centerpiece of the town, in an urban plan more commonly seen in Europe than in the United States. Of particulate note is the large realistic crucifix, the marbleized wood altar and the graceful old stained glass. As alluded to above, most of the heart pine pews are the originals, salvaged from the 1883 wooden church. **Parish Office: 352-588-3081**

2. St. Anthony of Padua School, 1884

32902 Massachusetts Avenue, San Antonio (Pasco Co.)



The oldest parochial school in the diocese was established to catechize and educate this Catholic colony's children. Begun with 14 pupils in the kitchen of Mrs. Cecilia Morse and staffed by Benedictine nuns for most of its history, generations have grown in faith, knowledge and grace here. An 1884 12' x 24' one-room schoolhouse and a two-story wooden structure built in 1889 preceded the present landmark building. Usually the expression *"the students built this institution"* is not meant literally, but in St. Anthony School's case, alumni of the era fondly recalled that during construction, students with good marks earned the "privilege" of assisting the workers by carrying bricks during recess. The charm and familial spirit alive within these red-brick walls, which opened in the Fall of 1922, continues to draw families seeking spiritual and academic excellence. **School Office: 352-588-3041**

3. Holy Name Monastery, 1889

33201 State Road 52, St. Leo (Pasco Co.)



In response to a growing need for teachers for the children of German immigrants in the area, five Benedictine sisters set out from Allegheny, Pennsylvania by train for Florida in the late 19th Century. The sisters founded Holy Name Convent and Academy in a former hotel. The original convent, a large three-story frame building was located at the north end of the square in San Antonio. In 1911 the entire building (with the sisters still living inside!) was raised up on log rollers and moved by oxen one half mile uphill into the town of St. Leo over a period of 6 weeks. The present Monastery was constructed in 1960. **Office: 352-588-8320**

4. St. Leo Abbey, 1889

33601 State Road 52, St. Leo (Pasco Co.)



The Benedictine Abbey's Church of the Holy Cross is of Lombardic-Romanesque design with a gleaming white 86 foot tower and red tile roof. Most of the exterior is constructed with native white limestone brick while the interior is richly furbished with red cedar. The exterior trim and much of the interior is sandstone from St. Meinrad Archabbey in Indiana. The monks actually traded boxes of fresh oranges from the abbey's groves for the sandstone from St. Meinrad in Indiana. The majestic marble crucifix, weighing 22 tons, is modeled after the Shroud of Turin and is framed by Italian mosaic. The oldest stained glass windows are of domestic "antique" glass and include two stunning rose windows. Across the highway, there is a Lourdes Grotto which was constructed in 1916. The serene grotto was so beloved by the first abbot that he asked to be buried there. Early on the monks also established a Catholic boys' prep school which later became a Catholic college in the 1960's. **Office: 352-588-8624**

5. St. Anthony the Abbot, 1892

20428 Cortez Boulevard, Brooksville (Hernando Co.)



Originally started as a mission of St. Anthony of Padua over in San Antonio, Benedictine priests would travel on horseback from Pasco County to celebrate mass in the homes of Catholics in the Brooksville area. In 1908 a Catholic Women's Club was formed expressly for the purpose of raising money to build a church. Hernando County's first Catholic church was built in 1908 on Olive St. in Brooksville (this church is still standing but is now a private home). By the mid 1960's, the church had become inadequate for the needs of the congregation so a new provisional church and school were built on a new site. By the end of the decade the parish was moved once again to its current location. After several renovations, the simple elegance of this house of worship stands as a sacred refuge amidst a busy and changing community. **Parish Office: 352-796-2096**

6. St. Stanislaus Chapel, 1915

14211 Citrus Way, Brooksville (Hernando Co.)



In 1913 a group of Polish farmers moved to northern Hernando County having purchased high hammock land in an effort to begin a new community. Property was purchased for a church and cemetery in 1915. By 1917, they had built a small chapel which a priest from St. Leo Abbey would come out to once a month to celebrate the sacraments. After a fire destroyed the first church in 1929, it was replaced with the present structure, an authentic *Old Florida* clapboard church. Challenging soil conditions, disease, and the Great Depression forced the settlement to disband though many of the early Catholic pioneers are buried in the adjoining cemetery. Mass is still celebrated here annually on All Souls Day. For more information contact St. Anthony the Abbot parish office.

7. St. Benedict, 1953

455 South Suncoast Boulevard., Crystal River (Citrus Co.)



Since the late 19th Century, the Benedictines from St. Leo cared for Citrus County. Mass was celebrated in various locations including private homes, stores, a theatre, even a radar station. The Crystal River area did not receive a permanent priestly presence until the 1940's with the appointment of Fr. James Hoge, OSB to the Hernando-Citrus missions. A small concrete block chapel, honoring St. Benedict, was built in 1953. By the mid 1970's the parish had outgrown it and relocated three miles south to the present location. A new church, built in the shape of a Greek cross with a fresco of St. Benedict in the dome, was dedicated in 1981. The parish hall, which also served as the church for six years, houses a series of large paintings depicting the parish's history from pioneer days until today. **Parish Office: 352-795-4479**

8. Our Lady of Good Council Chapel, 1948

8888 East Gobbler Drive, Floral City (Citrus Co.)

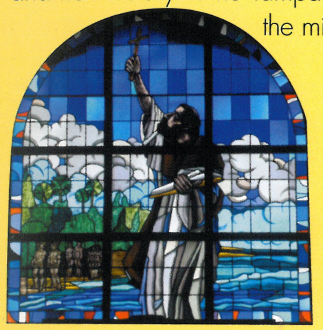


Camp Good Counsel opened its doors in the summer of 1948 for Catholic youth to experience the beauty and majesty of God's creation. The 150 acre property located on the Tsala Apopka Lake-chain is home to a variety of Florida flora and fauna. Much of the rustic camp bears the imprint of its founder, Msgr. George Cummings and his great love of the outdoors. The circular chapel, built in 1955, was inspired by a visit he made to St. Stefano Rotondo in Rome. The altar was fashioned from a nearly thousand year old cypress which came from the now-defunct sawmill in Lacoochee.
Office: 352-726-2198

For more information about these sites and on all of our schools and parishes, including mass times, please visit *www.dioceseofstpete.org*

A Brief History of the Diocese of St. Petersburg

May 2, 1968, is the date Pope Paul VI canonically established the Diocese of St. Petersburg which today consists of Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties. At the same time he appointed Bishop Charles McLaughlin as the First Bishop of St. Petersburg. Bishop McLaughlin's installation as the first residential bishop on Florida's West Coast on June 17, 1968 at the newly elevated Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle was not the beginning of Catholicism here, merely the recognition that it had come of age. The Church's presence in this part of Florida stretches back over four centuries to the arrival of the Spanish explorers and the missionaries who accompanied them. Whether it was the Jesuits and Franciscans who came in the late 16th Century with the hope of native conversions or Catholic families that have relocated here more recently for work or weather, the Catholic Church has a long and rich history in the Tampa Bay area. Pioneer priests up until the mid 20th Century regularly traveled from city to city so that Catholics could go to Mass and have access to the sacraments. Our Catholic community has now grown to a diocese of over 400,000 who worship each Sunday at seventy-five different churches throughout the area.



After Juan Ponce de León's initial discovery of Florida on Easter 1513, explorers over the next several decades such as Pánfilo de Narváez (1528) and Hernando de Soto (1539) came here bringing with them priests and religious. The first Mass ever celebrated in Florida took place in what is today the Jungle Prada area of St. Petersburg in April 1528 [It would be another thirty-seven years before Mass was to be celebrated in St. Augustine]. The Spanish arrived with both political and religious motives though some missionaries like Fr. Luis de Cancer, who arrived in Tampa Bay in 1549, showed great respect and understanding for the indigenous peoples advocating peaceful coexistence even though he himself would be Florida's first martyr.

(continued)

Since ancient times, Christians have been making pilgrimages to holy shrines and great churches. Whether to walk in the footsteps of the Lord in the Holy Land or to visit the tombs of the apostles and saints, there is great value in stepping out of our normal routine to journey with the Lord. Entering into a spirit of pilgrimage reminds us that we are all on a pilgrimage in this life. The Lord not only calls us to eternal life with Him in heaven, but He walks with us amidst the challenges of this life. For nearly five centuries, the Catholic faith has been proclaimed and lived on the West Coast of Florida. Our local heritage includes brave missionaries and martyrs. It comprises those who were looking for religious freedom. It has encompassed many pioneer priests and religious who labored under extraordinary circumstances. It comprises the faith of families who struggled to maintain their Catholic identity in often hostile surroundings. It's made up of both those born and reared in the true faith from a young age and those who embraced it later in life.

What you will find within these pages is a regional pilgrimage of sorts. While there are many worthy locations that could have also been included, these twenty-five sites of special religious and historical character have been chosen. Sites were chosen throughout the five counties of the Diocese of St. Petersburg. They are divided up by region in order to facilitate your driving. It is our hope that by following this *pilgrim's way* you will come, not only to a deeper appreciation of our local Catholic heritage, but that you enter into it with a sense of pilgrimage, so that it is not just a matter of making a tourist stop, but that your faith will be enriched. You may wish to spend more time at certain sites than others, but it would be entirely appropriate to pray an *Our Father*, a *Hail Mary*, and a *Glory Be* at each site for our Holy Father, our bishop, and the people of our diocese.

May our Lord, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life bless you on your journey and throughout your pilgrimage of life.

DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG
CATHOLIC HERITAGE

www.dioceseofstpete.org