

## **The Story of St. Benedict Parish Falcon, Colorado**

Once upon a time, in the late 1800's, the town of Falcon, Colorado, was a thriving little place with a hotel, a bank, 2 blacksmith shops, and a couple of saloons. By the turn of the century, things changed and railroad tracks, that had been the life line of Falcon, became unnecessary. With time, both the tracks and sign of the town disappeared.

With the turn of this new millennium, Falcon (eleven miles East of downtown Colorado Springs) has risen from its past to become the center of population expansion and economic development in El Paso County.

In 2004, a few local Catholic families started talking about the need for a parish and a Catholic elementary school in Falcon. This idea was brought to the attention of Bishop Michael Sheridan, who was well aware of the population projection for the area. A community meeting was scheduled with diocesan officials for January 19, 2005, in the gymnasium of the old Falcon Middle School (now Patriot Learning Center). The best guess, based on word of mouth, was that about 20 to 25 people might come. 120 very interested Catholics attended. On Ash Wednesday, February 19, 2005, a special Mass was said in the gym for 200 of the faithful. On May 22, 2005, the Catholic Community of Falcon started having Mass every Sunday, with priest provided by Fr. Paul Wicker, Pastor of Holy Apostles Church in Colorado Springs. Fr. Paul was instrumental, from the beginning, in the promotion of this new faith community and is our Canonical Pastor.

It was on July 11, 2005, the Feast of St. Benedict, that Bishop Michael Sheridan designated the Falcon faith community as a quasi parish, naming it after that most venerable Saint, and in honor of the then newly-named Pope Benedict XVI. Still without a resident Pastor, in December, 2006, Bishop Sheridan appointed Deacon Lynn Sherman as Parish Director of St. Benedict.

Today, the newest parish in the Diocese of Colorado Springs has a little over 217 households and a full array of ministries. Sunday Mass, still held in the old "Falcon Middle School" gym (now School District 49's Patriot Learning Center, 11990 Swingline Road, Falcon) is celebrated by one of the priests from the area parishes. The parish offices, some Religious Education classes, the St. Benedict Youth Program and ministry meetings are at the Parish House, 11625 Flacon Highway, Falcon.