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METRO

# 'Church just oozes Chicago history'

## HOLY FAMILY | Parishioners united by its rich legacy

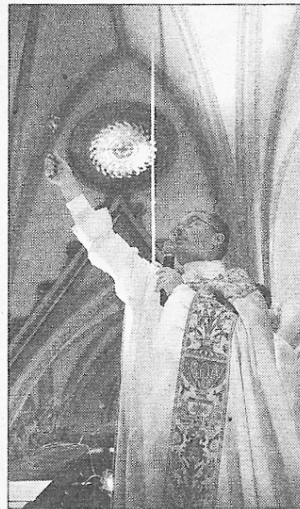
BY MARY HOULIHAN

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For decades, Theresa Coghlan had heard stories about her great-great-grandfather's role in founding Holy Family Parish.

But it wasn't until 1991, when she first saw his name — James O'Shea — inscribed in a stained-glass window at the church that the stories began to form a family history.

"When I saw that window, it pulled all the stories together that my aunts had told



**The Rev. Jeremiah L. Boland blesses the windows at Sunday's rededication mass.**

JEAN LACHAT-SUN-TIMES PHOTOS

me," said Coghlan, 78, who now lives in Hinsdale. "Since then, I have become very at-

tached to my family history and the history of this church."

Coghlan and her 14-year-old granddaughter, Nicole, were on hand Sunday, the Feast of the Holy Family, for the rededication of the dozen round clerestory windows that date to 1860. They are believed to be the work of craftsman Robert Carse.

In addition to O'Shea, the windows bear the names of early parish founders and friends, including John Comiskey, father of White Sox founder Charles Comiskey; Mother Margaret Galloway, founder of the Convent Academy of the Sacred Heart, and Toussaint Menard, architect of the adjacent St. Ignatius College Prep building.

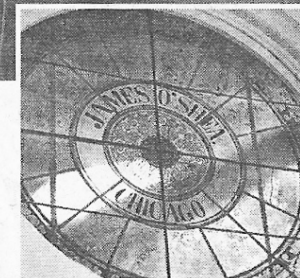
The 151-year-old church, the city's second-oldest, survived the Great Chicago Fire,

threatened demolition in 1990 and a near disastrous fire in 2003. It was founded by the Rev. Arnold Damen, a Jesuit priest, on what was then the outskirts of the city.

It's only in recent years that parishioners and clergy at the West Side church have begun to extensively pull together the parish's rich history, which will be recounted in a new book, *The Miracle on Roosevelt Road*, due out in 2009.

"This church just oozes Chicago history," said the church administrator, the Rev. Jeremiah J. Boland. "And there is a strength that happens when the entire community realizes its multi-generational foundation. It's events like this that help create and grow these very important bonds."

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**Theresa Coghlan of Hinsdale, great-great-granddaughter of James O'Shea, and her granddaughter Nicole Coghlan stand in front of the O'Shea stained-glass window (inset) at Holy Family Church.**