



Holy Family Parish

Meeker, Colorado
Established 1905

Holy Family Mission in Meeker was elevated to a parish by Archbishop Casey. Father John P. Schuneman was appointed the first resident pastor. He served as pastor from 1978 to 1983 and was responsible for the construction of a parish hall.

The White River Ute Agency, where the Indians revolted and killed agent Nathan C. Meeker in 1879, evolved into the town of Meeker. Several Catholic families were among the early settlers, and Edward J. Downey, a circuit-riding pioneer priest, said the first mass in 1884, at the Delaney Ranch at White River City, and later in the old adobe Rio Blanco County courthouse.

Holy Family Mission in Meeker was established by Bishop Matz in 1905. The mission was attended by the pastors of Saint Mary Parish in Rifle. Father Christopher Walsh, pastor of Saint Mary's in Rifle, began construction on a red brick Romanesque church in 1911. The church included a Gothic entry, colored glass windows, rose window and an enclosed square belfry. Bishop Matz dedicated Holy Family Church on July 6, 1913.

In 1959, Holy Family became a mission of Saint Ignatius Parish in Rangely. Father Leo Blach began offering some weekday services as well as Sunday masses. In 1978,

Father Bert Chilson was the second resident pastor of Meeker and Rangely from 1983 to 1986, and Father Lawrence T. Solan was the priest from 1986 to 1991.

In 1991, Father Roger Lascelle was appointed pastor of Holy Family Parish in Meeker and Saint Ignatius Parish in Rangely. In 1998, Father Lascelle became pastor of a 3rd parish, Saint Michael's in Craig. In the spring of 1998, he was instrumental in obtaining a grant from the Colorado Historical Society to refurbish the outside of the building of Holy Family Church. Additional grants were later obtained to renovate the interior of the church. Father James R. Fox has served as pastor of Holy Family Parish in Meeker, Saint Ignatius Parish in Rangely and Saint Michael Parish in Craig since 2004.

