

We walked to church every Sunday. I have very fond memories of the nuns and Father Driscoll. They were very caring, and for us Italian kids it was a good feeling. Even when you are 12 years old, you can feel the sting of discrimination. They were different from our public school teachers.

In 1948, a parish was established in Scotch Plains. It was named St. Bartholomew the Apostle and built on the Westfield Avenue property. The pastor was Father John S. Nelligan.

Church was never the same after that. Father Nelligan was not Father Driscoll. My feeling was that he did not relate well to the Italians who had worked very hard in the community to get a church. Great amounts of money were contributed by them from the proceeds of the festa which was held annually on Labor Day. The old timers had hoped for an Italian priest, but the church in America was controlled by the Irish, and there was not much the Scotch Plains Italians could do about it.

I missed the old mission church and after the new church came to town, going to church was just something I had to do.