

## **FOST Announcement**

After a seven-month hiatus, the Friends of Old Saint Thomas (FOST) has begun again to promote the unique history of Saint Thomas the Apostle at Ivy Mills parish, the first Catholic parish in Pennsylvania, founded in 1729. Building upon the work of that group, these web pages shall be updated to reflect the work of new FOST. Check back often for current news. In the meantime, explore the site for parish history. All FOST Newsletters are archived from the navigation bar at the top of the home page of the FOST website.

## **New FOST Is Underway**

The parish of Saint Thomas the Apostle at Ivy Mills was founded in 1729 at Ivy Mills (1/2 mile west of St Thomas' present site). The Willcoxes, the founding Catholic family and their Quaker and Episcopalian neighbors lived out the promise of William Penn's vision of religious toleration in his colony and by example showed the way to all who settled in the American colonies, even in Philadelphia, where the idea struggled to become fully functional.

Saint Thomas' parish history is unique. Parishioners can and should know the story well and make it known to the wider community. The volunteers of New FOST have taken up the challenge to do so. Immediate goals are to maintain the parish's Historic District, to re-start the popular Tours/Tour Guide and Saint Thomas School Heritage programs, work on promoting weddings in the 1852 Chapel, and to keep the parish informed every step of the way.

Much parish history and 29 years' worth of first FOST's education and preservation efforts can be found at <https://friendsofoldstthomas.org>, and in the "Self-Guided Tour and History" pamphlet found in the 1852 Chapel.

The Chairman of New FOST is Ed Winter, Vice-Chairman is Pat McFadden. The group will meet on April 21, at 7 pm in the 1874 Rectory. To sign up, email the group at [edwintercpa@aol.com](mailto:edwintercpa@aol.com).