

Corpus Christi Church, Mt. Royal Ave. Baltimore, Maryland



The rapid development around the area of Mount Royal Hill in the 1880s necessitated the establishment of a new parish by the Archdiocese of Baltimore. A wealthy family named Jenkins donated the funds to build a new church at Mount Royal Avenue and West Lafayette Streets. It was called the Jenkins Memorial Church and later changed to **Corpus Christi Church**. The church was built to serve the wealthier merchant class Catholics moving into Victorian homes on Bolton Hill, a few short blocks from the Irish immigrant families on Grasshopper Hill. The Manion/Mannions and Coffays switched their membership from Immaculate Conception to the more convenient Corpus Christi. For the next twenty years, this was the site for the Coffay and Manion/Mannion weddings, confirmations, first communions, baptisms, as well as some education in the parish school

From the Church's Website:

“On January 1, 1891, Corpus Christi Church was consecrated. The magnificent church building was built for the wealthy community of Bolton Hill, then known as Bolton Depot. Its consecration on Jan. 1, 1891 was a major social and liturgical event that began at 6:30 a.m. and lasted more than 14 hours. Baltimore's Cardinal James Gibbons presided, along with six bishops from across the country and all the clergy of Baltimore. The carriages of the wealthy wound in long lines up the hill. “

“Hill” People

Since this parish was built by and for wealthy families from high society, I'm sure there was some concern when the Irish immigrants of Grasshopper Hill joined in. I sensed a bit of snobbery when reading the church's parish registers. The names of parishioners were accompanied by their street addresses, e.g.: North Avenue, Mount Royal Terrace, Druid Hill Avenue, etc.. For our Irish immigrant ancestors, the accompanying address was always “Hill,” and nothing more. Not, The Hill, or Mount Royal Hill or Grasshopper Hill, just “Hill,” as in “Mary Manion – Hill.” Their street had a name, Elm Street, but to the staff at Corpus Christi Church, the Irish immigrants of Grasshopper Hill were “Hill” people!



Corpus Christi Church ca. 1890
A clock and steeple were added at a later date. The Maryland Institute College of Art is to the left.

Weddings at Corpus Christi Church

1888 - William Mannion, son of **William Manion & Mary Coyle**
and **Agnes Mooney**, daughter of **John Mooney**
Witnesses: **Michael Coffay** (William's uncle) and **Catherine McGlone**

1893 – John T. Mannion (later changed to **Manning**), son of **William Manion & Mary Coyle**
and **Alice O'Hara**, daughter of **Daniel O'Hara**
Witnesses: **James Gormanly** (Alice's sister's husband) and **Mary Gleeson**

Confirmations at Corpus Christi Church

- 1882 - John Thomas Mannion**, Parents: **William Mannion** and **Mary Coyle**
(John was on the record, but he didn't show up that day. He was confirmed in 1885)
- 1882 - Mary Ann Mannion**, Parents: **William Mannion** and **Mary Coyle**
- 1882 - Michael Manion**, Parents: **William Manion** and **Mary Coyle**
- 1885 - Francis Manion**: Parents: **William Manion** and **Mary Coyle**
- 1885 - John Thomas Mannion**: **William Mannion** and **Mary Coyle**
- 1885 - Hugh Lee**, Parents: **Thomas Lee** and **Mary Coffay**
- 1885 - Francis Lee**, Parents: **Thomas Lee** and **Mary Coffay**
- 1891 - Thomas Lee**, Parents: **Thomas Lee** and **Mary Coffay**
- 1894 - Stella Mannion**, Parents: **William Manion** and **Mary Coyle**
- 1894 - Joseph Coffay**, Parents: **John Coffay** and **Helen Kelly**
- 1897 - Catherine Ann Coffay**, Parents: **John Coffay** and **Helen Kelly**
- 1905 - Winifred Mannion**, Parents: **William Mannion** and **Agnes Mooney**
- 1905 - William Mannion**, Parents **William Mannion** and **Agnes Mooney**
- 1909 - John Mannion**, Parents: **William Mannion** and **Agnes Mooney**

Baptisms at Corpus Christi Church

1885 Ann Coffay, daughter of **John Coffay** and **Helen Kelly**
Godparent: **Sara Boyd** (Helen Kelly's sister)

1886 Bessie Sacks, daughter of **Mary Ann Mannion** and **Henry Sacks**
Godparents: **Michael Coyle** (great grandfather) and **Mary Lee** (daughter of **Mary Coffay Lee**)

1887 William Henry Sacks son of **Mary Ann Mannion** and **Henry Sacks**
Godparents: **John Mannion/Manning** and **Loretta Slunt** (daughter of **Catherine Coffay Slunt**)

1892 Mary Margaret Coffay daughter of **John Coffay** and **Helen Kelly**
Godparents: **Philip Hendricks** and **Rose Slunt** (daughter of **Catherine Coffay Slunt**)

1894 William Joseph Mannion, son of **John Mannion/Manning** and **Alice O'Hara**
Godparents: **James Gorman** (Alice O'Hara's brother-in-law) and **Mary Gleason**

1896 John Joseph Mannion, son of **William Mannion** and **Agnes Mooney**
(John died the same day)

1897 John Joseph Mannion, son of **William Mannion** and **Agnes Mooney**
Godparent: **Stella Mannion** (sister of William Mannion)

Requiem Masses

1889 Michael Coffay, son of **John** and **Catherine Coffay**
1896 John Coffay, husband of **Catherine Coffay**



Some of our ancestors were baptized at this site in Corpus Christi Church, Baltimore, MD



The clock and steeple shown in this picture were added to the church after it was completed

These postcard views of the church are c. 1910.

