Information in this pamphlet appears to be drawn from the book “Catholic Presence in Central Florida,” created in 1988. It, therefore, contains the same errors presented in that publication: date of fire Jan. 25, 1932; Doyle’s “Hall” is probably location not “livery stable.”
All Souls Catholic Church dates back to 1882, making it one of the oldest in Catholic history in Central Florida. The church building was built in 1887-1888 by the first missionary of the Diocese of St. Augustine. Father Swembergh. Father Swembergh came to Orlando in 1886 as resident priest and took charge of the four-year-old Central Florida missions at Maitland and Sanford that were begun in 1882 by Father McFaul, a priest from St. Louis, Missouri. He held Mass at Doyle's Livery Stable, Sanford.

All Souls’ cornerstone was laid on July 4, 1887. On the cornerstone it showed that Jews and Protestants had also been benefactors of the frame church with its beautiful interior and exterior. The church was painted white, had four pillars in front, a gable roof, and was rectangular in shape. Father Fox of Orlando tended to the Sanford mission until the spring of 1911 when Rev. Patrick J. Bresnahan became first resident priest.

The church burned to the ground in the early thirties. Different sources give different dates of the fire but it was during the time of Father James McInerney. Fr. McInerney served as Pastor from September 1, 1930 to August 31, 1932. Whether it burned in September, 1931 or in January, 1932, it was in the midst of Florida’s economic depression and the parishioners had to work five years to rebuild a church on the same property. The people were poor, but they rebuilt the church with their own hands. The church cost $28,000 to rebuild, but its value is many times that sum.

Mass was offered in the interim in a two-story building Fr. Bresnahan had built, with the first floor used as a chapel the second as a rectory.

The new church, of stucco with a red tile roof and tall rectangular windows of stain glass has a choir loft in the rear. The church seated 430 persons when Bishop Barry dedicated it in 1937, during the pastorate of Rev. John Kellegher.

In 1951, during the pastorate of Fr. Richard Lyons All Souls School was established. The school was staffed with the first Sisters of Christian Charity to serve in Florida. The school opened on September 7, 1954, in a garage on land purchased by the parish. In 1960 a hall and permanent school were built, and in 1981 a multi-purpose center and additional classrooms were added.

Fr. Lyons attended to the official designation of the church as a parish on July 25, 1958, although it had been assumed that it was a parish, but had never been officially designated. Catholic growth at this time was never great. There were only a small number of Catholics in 1887. At the middle of the Twentieth Century, there were 350 families, growth was still very slow.

All Souls ministered to a small number of Catholics in 1911. Today there are over 1300 families in our parish. Over 300 students enrolled in All Souls School, and well over 250 children enrolled in our CCD classes. The parish is growing very rapidly and with the same bond of charity and love that existed so many years ago.
All Souls Catholic Rectory

902 Oak Avenue

All Souls Catholic Rectory, formerly known as Chase Mansion was built in 1899. The Chase Family sold the 900 block in 1954 to the church so that the property could be used to expand the school. The house was first used as a Convent for the Nuns that were teaching in the school. After all the Nuns had moved back up north to the Mother House the house became the rectory. Over the years the house fell into needed repair and the former Pastor moved into an apartment. When Reverend Richard W. Trout became the Pastor of All Souls in 1993 he felt that the Rectory needed to be restored so that the parish could save money on the rental of the priests’ apartment. Fr. Trout also wanted a place that the Parish could feel at home and be used for ministry.

As the parishioners started to renovate the old house, they tried to conserve as much as they could Plumbing was fixed all new electric was installed, a completely new kitchen was designed, and a breakfast nook and a family room were added. The yard was landscaped and new sprinklers were installed.

Now the house is used as the home for the priests and the parishioners are invited over to the house on special occasions and for special church functions. As the house nears its 100th birthday it once again serves the needs of a growing family.