

THE LEGACY OF MONSIGNOR ANDREW ARNOLD LAMBING 1842-1918

Ever Faithful to GOD and His Diocese May He Rest In Peace

Epitaph from Monsignor Lambing's Tombstone

Rev. Aleksandr J. Schrenk



Monsignor Andrew A. Lambing

Source: Seton Hill University Archives

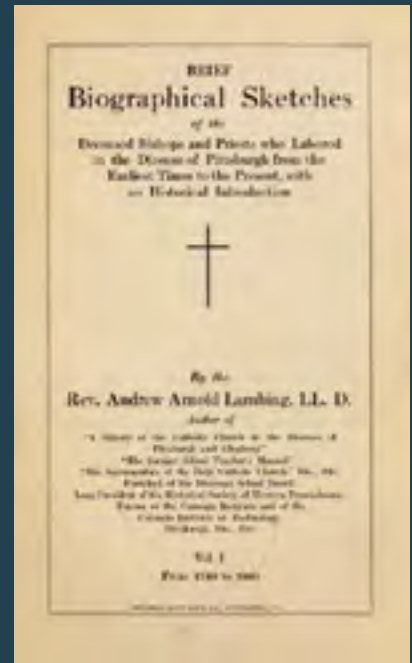
It is, perhaps, a cliché among historians to observe that we stand on the shoulders of giants – but the phrase is no less true for being overused. Among all scientific disciplines, history is unique for its reliance on the testimony of the written word. We must listen to the voice of our predecessors attentively, and as such, the success of our efforts is determined in large part by the diligence of former generations.

When it comes to the Catholic history of Western Pennsylvania, the one giant whose shoulders we all stand upon is Monsignor Andrew Arnold Lambing. As we mark the centenary of Monsignor Lambing's passing in December 1918, we recall our great debt to his life's work, which was the preservation of Catholic history. Lambing, as one of the first academically-trained historians in Western Pennsylvania and the first to document the beginnings of the Catholic Church in our region, is an indispensable resource. The value of his writing cannot be overstated.

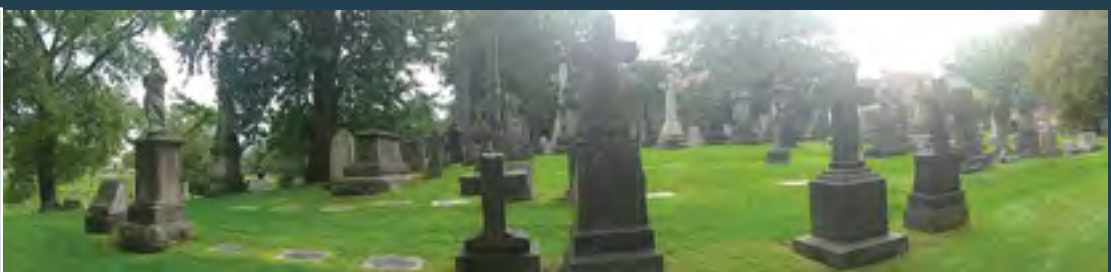
To reflect upon the life and legacy of Monsignor Lambing inspires a sense of providence. He lived and worked at a crucial time for the preservation of the history of the Church in Pennsylvania. Writing in the late 1800s and through the turn of the ensuing century, he had access to documents and testimony which would have passed into oblivion had his passion and erudition not inspired such a concerted effort to preserve them. As such, he forms a crucial link in the living chain that connects us to the earliest days of Catholicity in this part of the world.

It is also a provision of divine providence that his link was such a strong one. "Posterity can make no excuse for us if we fail to transmit a detailed history," he wrote, and the rigorous standards of his work, however colored by the style and methods of his age, live up to that noble task even today.

Monsignor Lambing's legacy lives on through the work of this Society, its members, and all those who participate in the mission that defined his life – to *gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost* (Jn 6:12). The fragments that he gathered have, indeed, remained – and more than that, multiplied. His efforts will always form the bedrock of our research into the Catholic history of this region of the United States, and for that legacy we are profoundly grateful.



Source: Diocese of Pittsburgh Archives



Monsignor Lambing was buried in the priests section of St. Mary's Cemetery, Lawrenceville

Source: Kathleen M. Washy