# St Agnes Church

Reading, Massachusetts (1887)

**The Building:**The need for a church in the Reading area was made evident by the experience of Rev. Thomas H. Shahan. On his way to visit relatives in Melrose, he had an hour lay-over at the train station in South Reading (Wakefield). When some of the Catholics of the area learned of this, they prevailed upon Father Shahan to say Mass for them while waiting for his train. Father Shahan felt the need of the people of the area who were a community that could work and worship together. He was instrumental in the founding of St. Joseph's mission of Wakefield in 1852. By 1873, when St. Joseph's was elevated to parochial status, Reading had become a separate mission. Reverend Michael Flatley, pastor of St. Joseph's, would travel to Reading to say Mass at Lyceum Hall. In 1886 Father Flatley purchased land in Reading on Washington Street to build a church featuring a plaster on wood lath ceiling. It was completed in 1887.

**The Project:**   
John Canning Co. started this plaster stabilization project by setting up temporary access, lighting and safety equipment.  After removal of broken plaster keys, plaster consolidants were applied to the wood lath from the attic space. Missing keys were recreated, and where required, wood lath was reattached to furring. In addition, ceiling ribs were mechanically fastened to the wood structure. Historic Plaster Solutions, an affiliate of HPCS USA, assisted in this project in which a combination of the HPCS [CO Consolidants](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/) and [AD Adhesive products](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/adhesives/) were used to stabilize about 9500 square feet of plaster.

[](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/st-agnes-church_02.jpg)

St. Agnes Church interior.

[](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/st-agnes-church_01.jpg)

St. Agnes Church ceiling from the attic side.

### HPCS Products Used

[CO Consolidant HPCS product category badge](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/)

[CO S-20 Primer™](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/)

[CO Consolidant HPCS product category badge](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/)

[CO S-50 Primer™](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/)

[CO Consolidant HPCS product category badge](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/)

[CO R-100 Consolidant™](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/consolidants/)

[AD Adhesive HPCS product category badge](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/adhesives/)

[AD Premixed Plaster Lug & Key Replacement™](http://ww2.historicplaster.com/products/adhesives/)