



**We are the Community. We are the Church.**

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*Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the First Mass  
at Sacred Heart Church at Nelthorpe Street  
on September 5, 2015*

May 16 - 17, 2015

# Long tradition of nurturing the faith in children

In summer '68, **Fr. Donal Lehane** called for volunteers to assist in a catechism program for students attending public schools. **Rose Bannister** co-ordinated the program. Small classes were held in the teachers' homes on days that were suitable to both the students and the teachers.

After Sacred Heart Parish School closed in '70, parishioners entered into the challenging era of lay

involvement in an expanded catechetics program. Parent participation increased. **Dr. Jack Nash** and **Jim Wood** ran the Saturday evening [grade 9 and 10] and Sunday morning classes with the assistance of Sr. Dorothy Agnes, S.S.A. [**Bernice Sheehan**]. There were 17 classes in total every weekend.

In '72, the Victoria Office of Religious Education began co-ordinating the '*Come to the Father*' catechetics program, which had replaced the *Baltimore Catechism*. This home-correspondence program was co-ordinated in the Greater Victoria area by **Sr. Ann Mallon**, S.S.A., and a catechetics team. In '72 and '73, **Sr. Dorothy Agnes**, S.S.A., ran the program for our parish. She was succeeded by **Ann Brady**, who co-ordinated the 'Catecare' program from '74-'76.

When **Fr. Guy Merveille** became pastor in '76, he introduced the family mass on Sundays with children serving and bringing the gifts to the altar. He invited the children to the altar after the Gospel and gave them a brief catechetical lesson on the readings, the Gospel, or on other matters. He also initiated the baptism of children during Sunday mass so that the community could welcome them.

In '77, the parish hired **Claire Gratton** to co-ordinate the program for the parish. Two new sacramental programs were incorporated into the course in the fall, when 132 children registered. The next year, **Mary Bennett** handled the course. In '79, the parish appointed Cheryl Stinson as co-ordinator for the home-correspondence program, now called '*Born of the Spirit*'.

The program was changed in '81 to a combination of Sunday classes and the home-study course. The classes were at the parish

hall, the hall's kitchen and stage, the **Pope John XXIII** hall and office room, and the rectory's office and living room.

In '82, the parish got permission to use the classrooms at St. Andrew's Regional High School. The classes, taught by

volunteers, were after the 10 a.m. Sunday mass.

In '86, **Audrey Trenholme** began assisting in teaching catechism and started co-ordinating in '88.



In June '91, the Victoria diocese introduced *Come Join us at The Table*, that provided catechesis for confirmation before first communion to complete the initiation of baptized children. Sacred Heart was the first parish to use it as a pilot project before its final publication. It emphasized family and parish responsibility for the process — six weeks of sacramental preparation.

In '98, **Noel Burns** was hired as religious education co-ordinator for both adult and children and, from '99 to '01, **Darcy Kimmitt**, held the position.

In '01, **Marilyn Bojko**, as the new facilitator of ministries, became in charge of catechesis and the program moved back to the parish hall from St. Andrew's School.

**Marilyn** recruited **Lorraine van Dyk** in '01. She used the *Sunday Book of Readings Adapted for Children*, its workbook, and *Let the Little Children Come*. **Lorraine** produced monthly kits with lesson plans for the parents, as well as a song to sing and a craft/activity to do. **Lorraine** did this for seven years until '08. At the 10 a.m. mass, the parents took the kids downstairs before the first reading for the children's liturgy and came back in time to bring the gifts up to the altar. **Lorraine** developed the lessons for the children's liturgy. She also made lessons for the summer Sundays from '02 to '09. After the mass, there were classes using the *Born of the Spirit* series.

**Marilyn** took **Lorraine's** previous lessons, updated them, and continued to make the kits for the children's liturgy.

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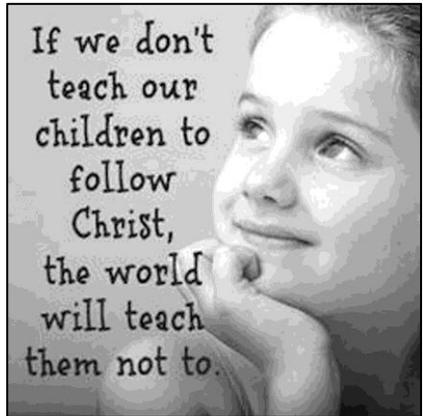
In '08, **Marilyn** was involved in the diocesan committee in developing the *Sharing our Faith Journey*, which includes *Come Join us at The Table*. They used the previously developed children's liturgy lessons. **Lorraine** helped in expanding and changing the liturgy lessons to make it as part of the first year program and added a homework component. This expanded the six weeks of sacramental preparation to a year-long *Sharing our Faith Journey*.

It was introduced as a pilot project that year at Sacred Heart and was intended to be the first year of a two-year sacramental preparation program.

Six years later, in the fall of '14, the second year of the program was ready to be implemented in all the parishes in the Victoria diocese.

The diocese's two-year sacramental preparation program prepares children, ages seven to 13, for the three initiation sacraments: baptism [if not already baptized], confirmation and first communion. It is rooted in the Sunday mass, builds on the liturgy of the word for children, follows the church's liturgical year, and

encourages families commitment to community life and mission.



The sacramental preparation program is one part of Sacred Heart's faith formation ministry. This ministry offers classes for children ages four to 13: those children preparing to enter the sacramental preparation program, those who have completed the program, and a faith discussion group for parents. These classes are designed to encourage children and parents on their faith journey of encountering **Jesus** by following the *Born in the Spirit* series.

When **Marilyn** retired in '12, the parish hired **Miriam Podmoroff** as religious education coordinator for children.

The '14-'15 school year saw 90 students in the faith formation program, including 13 in the first year and 22 in the second year of the sacramental preparation program. There were 16 adult helpers and 11 youth helpers. Classes are held in the Parish Hall after the 10 a.m. Sunday mass and follow the school calendar year, September to March.



## Catholicism in the continents

**P**ortugal was first christianized when it was geographically part of the Roman Empire. Christianity was solidified when the Visigoths, a Germanic tribe already christianized, came into the Iberian Peninsula in the fifth century.

Christianity was nearly extinguished in southern Portugal during Moorish rule, but, in the north, it provided the cultural and religious cement that helped hold Portugal together as a distinctive entity.

By the same token, christianity was the rallying cry of those who rose up against the Moors and sought to drive them out.

Hence, christianity and the Catholic Church predated the establishment of the Portuguese nation, a point that shaped relations between the two.

Under **Afonso Henriques** (reigned from 1139-1185), the first king of Portugal and the founder of the Portuguese state, church and state were unified into a lasting and mutually beneficial partnership.

To secure papal recognition of his country, **Afonso** declared Portugal a vassal state of the pope.

Because the Catholic Church preceded the establishment of Portugal as a nation, catholicism influenced and shaped its development.

Although church and state were formally separated during the Portuguese First Republic (1910-1926), a separation reiterated in the constitution of 1976, Catholic precepts continue to have a significant bearing in Portuguese society and culture. The educational and health care systems were for a long time the church's preserve, and in many cases, whenever a building, bridge, or highway was opened, it received a blessing from the clergy.

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## Our Pastors

### Fr. Sigismund Lajoie, OFM



**Fr. Sigismund "Sig" Lajoie**, was the 9th pastor of Sacred Heart Church and he served the faith community for 20 years, the longest period by a pastor at the parish.

**Fr. Sig** was born in Winterburn, Alberta, on January 15, '27, to **Odelia** and **Athanase Lajoie**. He had three brothers and four sisters: **Herve; Adrien;**



**Georges; Yvonne; Marie Ann; Julienne; and Gilberte.**

**Fr. Sig** was raised at Therien, Alberta, near St. Paul.

It was there that he received

most of his elementary and high school education, completing the latter at St. Anthony's College in Edmonton.

The college was entirely under the direction of the Franciscan Friars of Western Canada and **Fr. Sig**, in his last year of high school, decided to pursue a Franciscan priestly vocation.

He left his home at age 15, for studies at St. Anthony's College, Edmonton.

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