



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

**47**

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

**August 8-9, 2015**

*In just a year*

## **From "Father" to "Friar" to "Father"**

When **Friar Dan Gurnick** came to Sacred Heart Parish as pastor 10 months ago, he voiced a preference to be called "**Friar**" Dan. After decades of referring to our pastors as "Father," it took time to get used to calling him "Friar." Now we are back to calling our new pastor "**Father**" David.

*Which raises the question: what are the origins of the titles of our Catholic pastors?*

**Friar:** in the early church it was usual for all Christians to address each other as *fratres*, or brothers, all being God's children. Later, when monastic orders grew, this appellation gradually began to have a more restricted meaning as the brotherhood bond grew under their abbot.

The word occurs early in English literature and from the end of the 13th century it frequently was used to refer to members of the mendicant orders — "*frere prechors*" circa 1297; "*freres of the Carme and of Saint Austin*" circa 1325; and, "*frere meneours*" circa 1400 — Shakespeare speaks of the "*Friars of orders gray*." The word *friar* is to be carefully distinguished in its application from the word monk because, for a monk, retirement and solitude are undisturbed by the public ministry, unless under exceptional circumstances.

**Father:** the early church seems to have avoided any titles for Christians, except for the egalitarian "brother" and "sister."

As **Jesus** said: "*You are not to claim the title of Rabbi; you have but one Master, and you are all brethren alike. Nor are you to call any man on earth your father; you have but one Father, and He is in heaven. . . . Among you, the greatest of all is to be the servant of all; the man who exalts himself will be humbled, and the man who humbles himself will be exalted.*" — **Matthew 23: 8-12** [Matthew's gospel is very concerned about the rules of conduct within a Christian community].

In this teaching, **Jesus** suggests that titles are a way of claiming rank over and above others and is therefore not proper for a disciple who seeks to be a servant to all. And **St. Paul** wrote: "*Yes, you may have ten thousand schoolmasters in Christ, but not more than one father.*" — **1 Corinthians 4: 15**

With the passage of time, however, the title "Father" crept into Christian etiquette and usage as the clergy sought a way to describe their relationship with those to whom they minister.

Bishops also began claiming the title "Father" to describe the nature of their teaching authority over a local church.

In the middle ages, as the practice of private confession to a priest grew, priests who served as confessors were called "Father." So were mendicant friars like the Franciscans and Dominicans.

One also finds "dom" or "don" as an address title from the Latin "*dominus*" or "master." Benedictine monks in Europe retain the title of "dom". Those who like champagne will remember "*Dom Perignon*" the bubbly's Benedictine inventor.

Despite precedents, the use of "Father" as the normal title for ALL priests, whether attached to a diocese or members of a religious order, is a very recent practice.

It originated, it is said, in Ireland and spread to the United States with the Irish immigrations of the 1840s. When **Cardinal Manning** was archbishop of Westminster [1865-1892] he worked hard to establish this custom as the universal practice in England as well. Before, in England, secular Catholic priests were simply addressed as "sir," "mister," or "doctor" [if the priest possessed a doctorate]. However, it is said, the title "Father" emerged as a universal title of address, when the Catholic hierarchy was re-established in England, to distinguish Catholic priests from Anglican priests.

In the new world, Spanish speakers frequently referred to priests as "*padre*" since the establishment of Catholicism in Latin America was laid by Franciscan, Dominican, and Jesuit missionaries, all who would have been religious "*padres*."

What are the origins of the other titles of our Catholic clergy in their hierarchical structure?

**Monsignor:** clergy members who have received from the Pope this ecclesiastical title because of valuable service to the church, or who provide some special function in church governance, or who are members of bodies such as certain chapters. The title is never bestowed on those classified as religious.

**Bishop:** while in the early Church, clerics did not generally bear standard titles, "*pappa*" [Greek for "daddy"] was an accepted form of address for bishops in general. In the west, "*pappa*," or the Latinized form "*papa*," became almost exclusively associated with the bishop of Rome since the time of **Leo the Great** [440-461 A.D.]. A notable exception is the Alexandria's Coptic patriarch, who bears the title "papa" or "pope".

**Cardinal:** there is disagreement about its origin but there is general consensus that "*cardinalis*," from the word "*cardo*" [meaning 'pivot' or 'hinge'] was first used in late antiquity to designate a bishop or priest who was incorporated into a church for which he had not originally been ordained.

In Rome, the first persons to be called cardinals were the deacons of the city's seven regions at the beginning of the 6th century, when the word began to mean "principal," "eminent," or "superior." The name was also given to the senior priest in each of Rome's "title" churches [parish churches] and to the bishops of the seven sees surrounding the city.

By the 8th century the Roman cardinals constituted a privileged class among the Roman clergy. They took part in the church's administration and in the papal liturgy. By decree of the Synod of 769, only a cardinal was eligible to become pope.

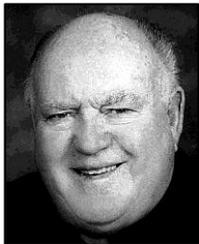
The first Roman Catholic Cardinal to be documented was **St. Calepodio**. He lived in the second century and was priest in the Roman church of St. Mario in Via Lata.

**Pope:** [from Latin: *papa*; from Greek: *pappas*, a child's word for *father*] is the Bishop of Rome and his primacy is largely derived from his role as successor to **St. Peter**, to whom **Jesus** gave the keys of heaven and the powers of "binding and loosing," naming him as the "rock" upon which the church would be built.



## Fr. Bill MacDonald, OMI

**Fr. Bill Macdonald**, Sacred Heart's 13th pastor, was born on 25 March '39 at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver to **Catherine** and **Alex MacDonald**. He was the second of three brothers.



He studied at St. Patrick Elementary School and St. Patrick's Regional Secondary School in Vancouver. This was followed by a year in the arts at the University of British Columbia.

He joined the Oblate Novitiate in '58 in Ottawa at age 29.

**St. Eugene de Mazenod**, a French priest born in Aix-en-Provence founded the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) on 25 January 1816. **Pope Leo XII** officially recognized the congregation on 17 February 1826,

**Fr. Bill** studied at Saint Paul University in Ottawa — the OMI founded the University of Ottawa in 1848 and then the College of Bytown. Since the University of Ottawa became publicly funded in 1965, St. Paul University exists as a separate but federated institution. It has a pontifical charter to grant ecclesiastical degrees and a public charter, through the University of Ottawa, to grant civil degrees.

**Fr. Bill** was ordained on 18 December '65 by **Archbishop Michael Martin Johnson** of Vancouver.

After his ordination he has served in: Prince Rupert ['67-'70]; Kitimat ['70-'76]; Edmonton ['76-'79]; Lethbridge ['80-'86]; Vancouver ['86-'98]; Smithers in '98, and in Prince George ['99-'02] where he was rector of the Sacred Heart Cathedral,

In Christianity's early centuries this title was applied, especially in the east, to all bishops and other senior clergy, and later became reserved in the west to the Bishop of Rome, a reservation made official only in the 11th century.

The earliest recorded use of this title by then deceased Patriarch of Alexandria, **Pope Heraclas** of Alexandria [232–248] but the earliest recorded use of the title "pope" in English dates to the mid-10th century, when it was used in reference to **Pope Vitalian** in an Old English translation of **Bede's Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum**.

And there are addresses/personal speech that have evolved over the ages: **Brother:** Brother/Brother; **Friar:** Friar/Friar; **Religious Order Priest:** Reverend/Father; **Secular Priest:** Father/Father; **Monsignor:** Very Reverend Monsignor/Monsignor; **Bishop:** Most Reverend/Bishop; **Archbishop:** Most Reverend/Your Excellency; **Cardinal:** Your Eminence/Your Eminence; **Pope:** His Holiness/Your Holiness.

All this within the context of these words when **Jesus** addressed his disciples: "Among you, the greatest of all is to be the servant of all; the man who exalts himself will be humbled, and the man who humbles himself will be exalted." — **Matthew 23: 11-12**

In '02 he joined the Victoria diocese and was pastor at St. Patrick's Church in Campbell River before coming to Sacred Heart Parish in '10. He was transferred to St. Patrick's Church in '11.

He retired on 31 July '14 and is now at St. Peter's Parish [first parish in B.C. opened in 1866] in residence.



## Focus on North America

Continued from bulletin # 46

Calling it the "Audiencia," Guatemala's Spanish conquerors transformed the region into a powerful political entity, and it served as a high court for Spain's North American outposts. It was also the scene of the Dominicans' special missionary effort. Tezulutlán province was called the "land of war" because of the ferocity of its unconquered inhabitants.

A group composed poems in their native language telling the biblical accounts of the creation of the world, the life of **Jesus** and our redemption, and put them to simple music. Christian peddlers spread these songs.

An episcopal see was erected in Verapaz in 1599, but it was suppressed in 1607. The missions nevertheless continued in the charge of the Dominicans.

A diocese was erected in Guatemala in 1534, and it was raised to an archdiocese in 1743. The last bishop and the first archbishop was the Peruvian **Pedro Pardo de Figueroa**, a patron of arts and cultural activities. **De Figueroa** built the church of Santo Cristo de Esquipulas, which would become a center of pilgrimage for Central America and southern Mexico. This shrine has been erected as a prelature nullius in the charge of the Benedictines of North America.