

We are the Community. We are the Church.

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

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August 15-16, 2015

"Protected by her own industry and good repute, she greets the morrow with a smile. Ripe wisdom governs her speech, but it is kindly instruction she gives. She keeps watch over all that goes on in her house, not content to go through life eating and sleeping." — Proverbs 31: 25-27

Women are preeminent in parish 'family'

At the pulsating heart of our faith community — the Sacred Heart family — are women.

Check out the July parish bulletin and you will find that women heavily outnumber men, 18 to 10, in serving in all parish ministries and groups: ■ **Angela Spencer** ■ **Catherine Minvielle** ■ **Elizabeth Olcen** ■ **Ginnie McGinty** ■ **Helen Payne** ■ **Hilda Rosales** ■ **Margie Noonan** ■ **Marilyn Turner** ■ **Mary Bennett** ■ **Mary Ellen Ross** ■ **Miriam Podmoroff** ■ **Pamela Blakeslee** ■ **Pat Tonkin** ■ **Rita Kelly** ■ **Rocio King** ■ **Sandy Bourbeau** ■ **Theresa Reichelt** ■ **Vincenza Cameron**, and ■ **Zeudy Villar-Vega**.

These are just those whose names appear in the parish bulletin. There are many other women — and men, too — who are committee members, proclaimers, eucharistic ministers, ushers, choir members and girls who are altar servers. In these groups, too, women seem to dominate in numbers.

This is not something new. It has been like this since the beginning of the parish in '36.

Of course, there were also the many Immaculate Heart of Mary sisters who ran our Sacred Heart parish school from '43 to '70, and the Sisters of St. Ann who were involved in our parish.

The members of the Sacred Heart Council of the Catholic Women's League, established in '40, also played a major role in our parish [see bulletin #43].

And if the attributes of women in a family are also reflected in our Sacred Heart Family, this should be good: ■ masterful in opportunity management; ■ tremendous instincts and emotional intelligence — neutralizing any approaching dangers; ■ well organized; ■ well-balanced; ■ full of love, caring, gentleness, compassion and has a big heart; ■ prudent in finances — can see beyond today; ■ does the right thing; ■ good with kids — patient and understanding; ■ has a great sense of humor; ■ tactful with class; ■ enjoys and appreciates the simple things; ■ hardworking and honest. The list can go on and on.

Perhaps it is because of these attributes that Sacred Heart faith community is a comparatively close family in the Victoria diocese. At least this is what three women who have served as



paid parish employees think it is: ■ **Cheryl Stinson** was the first employee and she served for 20 years from '78-'98; ■ **Marilyn Bojko**, served for 15 years from '97-'12; and ■ **Katherine Newton**, who started in '13.

Cheryl was born in Victoria on 4 November '55 to **Veronica** and **William Stinson** and was baptized in the United Church in '56. Her father was a third generation Victoria resident. A middle-child, Cheryl has an older brother, who is married and has two children, and a younger sister.

She attended Richmond Elementary School, Lansdowne Middle School and Oak Bay High School, from where she graduated in '73. She did her first-year science at Camosun College before working in the bush on forestry research projects.

Fr. Leo Roberts, assistant pastor, initiated her at Sacred Heart Parish in '77 and was confirmed in July that year by **Fr. Guy Merveille** [Norbertine], pastor. These were without the benefit of any instruction in Catholicism. Long-time parishioners **Ken** and **Maria Kissinger** were her godparents. Their daughter had worked with **Cheryl** in the bush.

"I always felt a connection to the Catholic Church," says **Cheryl**. "My mother's family members — she had 14 siblings — were Catholics, but only two continued to practice their faith. One was a nun."

Soon after being confirmed, **Cheryl** volunteered in fall '77 as a youth director at Sacred Heart Parish and in August '78 started working as parish secretary under **Fr. Guy Merveille**. When **Fr.**

Harold Heard [Congregation of the Holy Spirit or 'Holy Ghost Father'] became pastor, in '79, **Cheryl** became pastoral assistant.

At the invitation of **Fr. Heard** and his close friend, **Fr. Joe Jackson**, **Cheryl** joined them on a trip to Sierre Leone and Cameroon, in '80 to attend the installation of **Bishop Joseph Ganda** from Serabu — where **Fr. Heard** had served for 32 years from '42-'74 — as archbishop of Freetown and Bo.

When **Fr. Sigismond Lajoie** [Franciscan] succeeded **Fr. Heard** as Sacred Heart pastor in '84, **Cheryl** continued her close association and friendship with **Fr. Heard** and travelled three more times with him to Africa, the last time to Nigeria in January '92 for a belated 50th anniversary [1 November '91] observance of his ordination. "He was 79 and could not travel alone," says Cheryl.

Under **Fr. Sig.**, **Cheryl** served as pastoral assistant and coordinated the parish ministries.

"Sacred Heart Parish was one big family and I felt I belonged to it. It was my home. I was initiated there and was confirmed

there. I enjoyed working with the parishioners and being with them," **Cheryl** says. She served Sacred Heart Parish for 20 years, something she is proud about.

Marilyn Bojko was born in Victoria, raised in Port Alberni where she attended Smith Memorial Catholic School, "under the loving care of the Sisters of St. Ann," she says.

After graduation, Marilyn moved to Victoria, and continued education at St. Joseph's School of Nursing. Her aspiration to be a registered Nurse was interrupted mid-way because of her father's terminal illness. However, she soldiered on as a working practical nurse at Mount St. Mary's Hospital and Queen Alexandra Solarium.

Marilyn married, had three daughters and now has three grandchildren.

Her work history with the church began at St. Andrew's Cathedral in the early 80s, working initially as a coordinator of seniors' activities, and then branching out into other ministries.

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Our Pastors



Fr. Alfred Alilio



Fr. Alfred "Al" Francis Alilio y Magkawas, Sacred Heart Parish's 14th pastor, was born on 28 January '65. to **Luz Cauyan Magkawas** and Nicholas **Almendras Alilio Sr.** in Dolores — with a population today of 18,000 — in Quezon Province, in the Philippines. Dolores is the home of the Hambujan Festival, the ceremony of acceptance of guests from other places who come to present themselves with a gift of friendship and the proposal of unity.

Fr. Al is the oldest of four children: **Theresa Alilio-Baguisa**, who lives in Surrey, B.C., **Nicholas Alilio Jr.**, who lives in the Philippines, and **Joseph Alilio**, who lives in Victoria.

He attended three elementary schools: ■ from '71 to '73, was at Our Lady of Fatima Canossa College, run by the Canossian Daughters of Charity, in San Pablo City; ■ from '73-'75 at Dolores Central School in Dolores, Quezon, and. ■ from '75-'77 at Ateneo de San Pedro in San Pablo City, run by the Jesuits and closed in '78 after the Jesuits donated the land to the diocese..

He entered the seminary when he was 12 years old, attending the now 73-year-old Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Seminary in Sariya, Quezon, a diocesan seminary, from '77-'81.

He continued his seminary formation at St. Francis de Sales Major Seminary, established in '17, from '81 to '86 in Maraouy, Lipa City, the college where he received his Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy. He was on regency from '82-'86.

In '86 he entered St. Alphonsus School of Theology in Isabang, Lucena City and remained there until '91. He was ordained a deacon on 23 February '91. Fr. Al was ordained a priest on 22 June '91 by now Lucena **Bishop Emeritus Ruben T. Profugo**, D.D. at St. Ferdinand [he was King of Leon and Castile] Cathedral, established in 1881, in Lucena City.

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Catholicism in the continents

Focus on South America

There are 14 countries in South America: ■ Brazil [population 204.5 million]; ■ Colombia [48 million]; ■ Argentina [43 million]; ■ Peru [31 million]; ■ Venezuela [30.6 million]; ■ Chile [18 million]; ■ Ecuador [16 million]; ■ Bolivia [10.5 million]; ■ Paraguay [7 million]; ■ Uruguay [3.3 million]; ■ Guyana [747,000]; ■ Surinam; [560,000]; ■ French Guyana [262,000]; and, ■ Falkland Islands [3,000].

The continent Latin America is home to more than 425 million Catholics – nearly 40 per cent of the world's total Catholic population. Moreover, in most South American countries, at least 7-in-10 adults identify as Catholic. Indeed, in only one Spanish- or Portuguese-speaking country in South America [Uruguay] do Catholics make up less than half of the adult population [42 per cent].

Brazil, a former Portuguese colony, of course, is the country with the largest number of Catholics [145.4 million] in the world and South America is the continent with the largest percentage of Catholics [82.4 per cent] or 310 million Catholics. Colombia has the sixth largest number of Catholics in the world [38.4 million]. A recent Pew Research, published in the *Catholic Herald* on 17 November '14, found that in 30,000 residents of 18 Latin American countries [including Puerto Rico, a U.S. territory] only 69 per cent of respondents confirmed they were Catholic, even though 84 percent of people said they had been raised in the Church. "The figures suggest that large numbers are moving towards either Evangelical Protestantism or are leaving religion altogether. A century ago more than 90 per cent of the people in the region were Catholics, but increasing numbers are moving towards evangelical church, which have more of an emphasis on moral living and offer practical answers to the question of poverty."

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