



SACRED HEART ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

4040 Nelthorpe Street, Victoria, BC Canada V8X 2A1 • Tel: 250-479-1611 Fax: 250-479-9350
e-mail: sacredheartchurch@shaw.ca www.sacredheartvictoria.com

5th September 2015

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ. (1Cor 3:9-11)

Dear Parishioners of Sacred Heart Parish,

This weekend we celebrate fifty years in our beautiful church building. To properly celebrate this special and holy day, the prayers and readings for this weekend's liturgies will be from the celebration of the dedication of a church. It is on occasions like this that a priest really re-encounters his own smallness. I have barely been your pastor for a two months and I am privileged to be with you as we celebrate what our church building represents.

A church building is a sacramental. Whereas a Sacrament is a sign instituted by Christ himself that communicates his Grace and presence to the believer, a sacramental is something that the Church blesses as a sign that points to the Grace of the Sacraments. Whereas holy water reminds the Church of the mystery of Baptism, a consecrated church building is a sacramental of the Church herself and her Eucharistic identity. It is the "tent" or tabernacle of meeting where God dwells among His pilgrim people.

Our own Parish church is such a sacramental sign of who we are and where we have been. It is a building made holy by the mysteries we celebrate and the people these mysteries sanctify. As such, it is also our duty and privilege to continue the good work begun fifty years ago. I have seen how the need to keep a watchful eye on the maintenance of our church building is a symbol of a pastor's responsibility to keep a loving eye on the Church of God. To neglect our worship space is a symbolic neglect of the Church as to care diligently for our worship space represents a concern for the good of our Parish community.

However, such similarities only reveal greater differences. Our Parish church is not alive as a human being is alive much less as Christ is alive. Its bricks do not think, choose, feel, cry, or rejoice, nor do they fight or forgive. It is not a perfect representation, but it is a helpful representation. Nonetheless, our communion in this church building develops our lives beyond the church walls. In such a short time, Sacred Heart Parish has become my home and its members have become my family.

That being said, I thank the parishioners of Sacred Heart and Bishop Gary for allowing me to share in the joy of celebrating fifty years in Sacred Heart church. It is my honour to be your pastor and I ask you for your prayers and support as I reassure you of my own.

In Christ,

Fr David Hogman –
Pastor, Sacred Heart Parish

From a sermon by Saint Augustine, bishop
(Sermon 336,1,6: PL 38 [edit. 1861]. 1471-1472, 1475)

The building and dedication of God's house within us

We are gathered together to celebrate the dedication of a house of prayer. This is our house of prayer, but we too are a house of God. If we are a house of God, its construction goes on in time so that it may be dedicated at the end of time. The house, in its construction, involves hard work, while its dedication is an occasion for rejoicing.

What was done when this church was being built is similar to what is done when believers are built up into Christ. When they first come to believe they are like timber and stone taken from woods and mountains. In their instruction, baptism and formation they are, so to speak, shaped, leveled and smoothed by the hands of carpenters and craftsmen.

But Christians do not make a house of God until they are one in charity. The timber and stone must fit together in an orderly plan, must be joined in perfect harmony, must give each other the support as it were of love, or no one would enter the building. When you see the stones and beams of a building holding together securely, you enter the building with an easy mind; you are not afraid of its falling down in ruins.

Christ the Lord wants to come in to us and dwell in us. Like a good builder he says: *A new commandment I give you: love one another.* He says: *I give you a commandment.* He means: Before, you were not engaged in building a house for me, but you lay in ruins. Therefore, to be raised up from your former state of ruin you must love one another.

Dear brethren, remember that this house is still in process of being built in the whole world: this is the promise of prophecy. When God's house was being built after the Exile, it was prophesied, in the words of a psalm: *Sing a new song to the Lord; sing to the Lord, all the earth.* For a new song our Lord speaks of *a new commandment.* A new song implies a new inspiration of love. To sing is a sign of love. The singer of this new song is full of the warmth of God's love.

The work we see complete in this building is physical; it should find its spiritual counterpart in your hearts. We see here the finished product of stone and wood; so too your lives should reveal the handiwork of God's grace.

Let us then offer our thanksgiving above all to the Lord our God, from whom every best and perfect gift comes. Let us praise his goodness with our whole hearts. He it was who inspired in his faithful people the will to build this house of prayer; he stirred up their desire and gave them his help. He awakened enthusiasm among those who were at first unconvinced, and guided to a successful conclusion the efforts of men of good will. So God, who *gives to those of good will both the desire and the accomplishment* of the things that belong to him, is the one who began this work, the one who has brought it to completion.