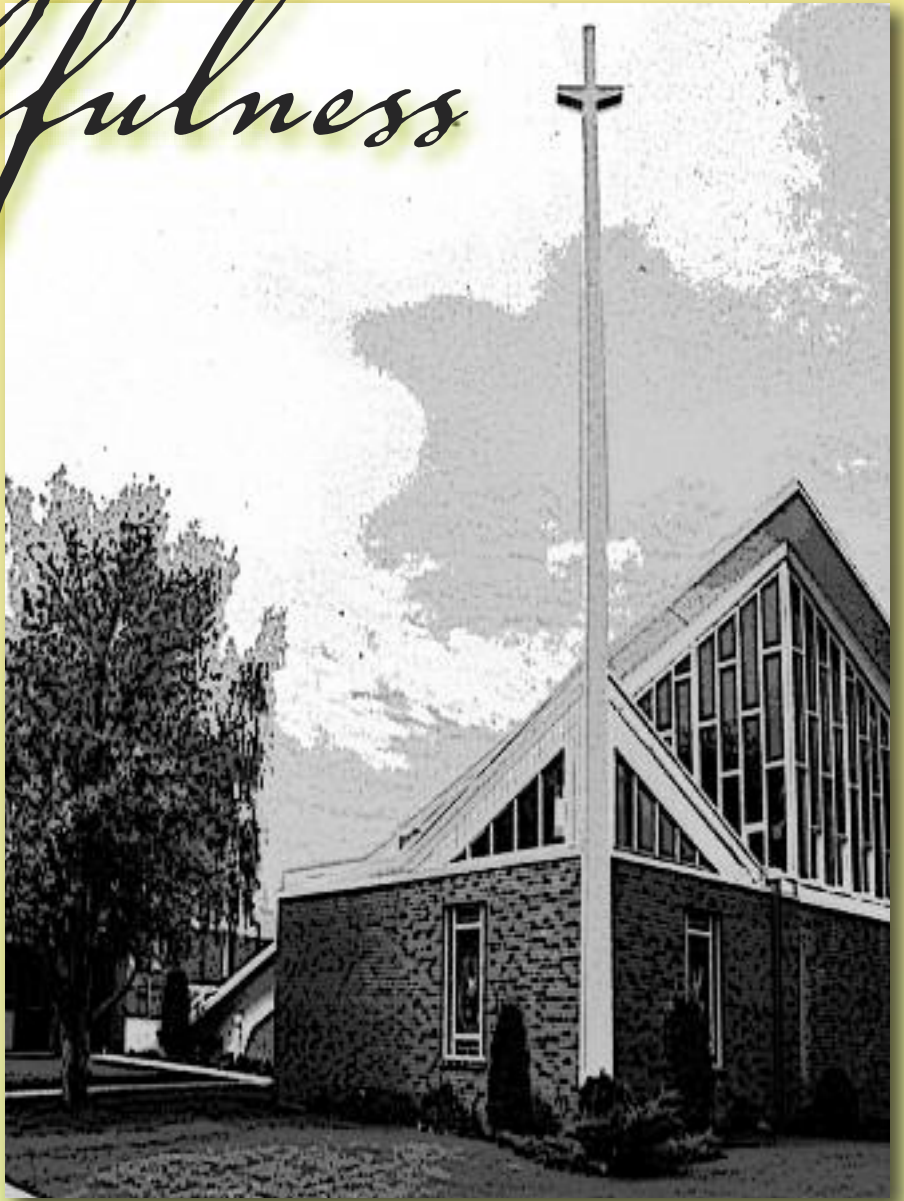




*50 years
of
holy
joyfulness*

*50 years
of
holy
joyfulness*



Diocese of Saskatoon
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 2N7
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Dear Parishioners of St. Philip Neri Parish:

Congratulations as you celebrate your 50th Anniversary. This is indeed an occasion to rejoice in God's many blessings amongst you over these past 50 years. You will recall significant milestones beginning with the foundation of your parish and the building of the church to its renovations and growth over the years. You will also recall the development of your parish life over the years with several pastors who have served and shepherded you and also with the numerous lay people who have stepped forward to share their gifts and participation.

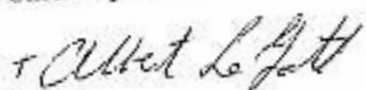
Interestingly your 50th Anniversary coincides with the 50th Anniversary of the announcement of the Second Vatican Council by Pope John XXIII which he proclaimed on January 25, 1959. These past 50 years in our Church have seen much renewal in all aspects of the Church's life. One of the most significant developments has indeed been the much greater participation of lay people in the life and mission of the Church in response to a strengthened sense of our common baptismal call.

Over the past fifty years this has been evident at St. Philip Neri Parish in your rich liturgical celebrations, in your enriching catechetical programs for your children, in your vibrant youth ministry activities and in your many strong adult faith development opportunities. As well your parish has had a vibrant sense of community relationships, a strong desire to reach out and welcome others and a real concern for social justice issues in our city and beyond.

As you consider all this there is much to inspire pride and joy in your hearts, much for which God should be given thanks and praise. May these blessings of Christ's active presence and work amongst you encourage you to step forward into the future with hope and a renewed desire to spread the Gospel to all in our community, in our diocese and to the world beyond.

Expressing my gratitude to all of you for your faithful witness I pray that God may continue to bless you and all your families.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Rev. Albert LeGatt
Bishop of Saskatoon

50TH ANNIVERSARY 1959 - 2009

St. Philip Neri Parish

1904 Munroe Avenue
Saskatoon, SK S7J 1R8
(306) 343-0325
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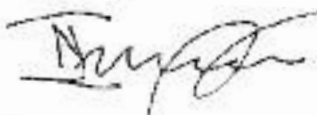
Dear parishioners of St. Philip Neri,

It is with great pleasure that I extend heartfelt congratulations to all parishioners of St. Philip Neri on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee celebration of the parish. This unique event provides an opportunity to remember and acknowledge with thankfulness, the founding Mothers and Fathers and all the dedicated parishioners with whom this parish has been endowed, and whose dedicated and selfless services have contributed to the vibrancy of this parish over the years.

In imitation of its patron saint, this parish, through its ministries, has cared for both young and old physically and spiritually, and has continuously nurtured the enriching presence of Christ, bringing out the best in people regardless of age, background or condition. Over the past half century, love for the Church and neighbour has inspired generations of parishioners to build a thriving Christ-centered Eucharistic community. This community work has been supported through the various liturgical celebrations that motivate people to renew their commitment to God their Maker. Unquestionably, the numerous laudable achievements of this parish, both in Canada and globally, are attributable to the dedication and hard work of its parishioners and those parishioners whose trust in the providence of God is unshakeable, and continually manifests their faith and love of the Lord.

May the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the St. Philip Neri Parish bring with it a renewal of the deep commitment and dedication to the work all have so consistently provided to the praise and glory of God. I rejoice in your accomplishments and, in the words of St. Paul, I greet and congratulate all parishioners. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Cor. 13: 14)

In Christ,



Joseph Kofi Nsiah
Priest Moderator



50TH ANNIVERSARY 1959 - 2009

St. Philip Neri Parish

1904 Munroe Avenue
Saskatoon, SK S7J 1R8
(306) 343-0325
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Happy Anniversary St. Philip Neri Parish!

"How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity! For there the Lord ordained his blessing, life forevermore." Psalm 133

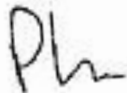
Perhaps this psalm was on the minds and in the hearts of our founding families as they worked together in unity to build not just a place of worship, but a place of ministry, healing and hope.

Certainly this has been our legacy as a parish community. With St. Philip Neri as our example each of us as baptized Christians, whether ordained or lay faithful, have done our best to live out the call to be salt and light in our world and to bring the healing touch of Jesus to those at home and abroad. We have not only built and maintained a building, but we have worked diligently to be the Light of Christ.

The Spirit is alive and at work here at St. Philip Neri parish, inspiring each of us to live a Christian life filled with faith, hope and love.

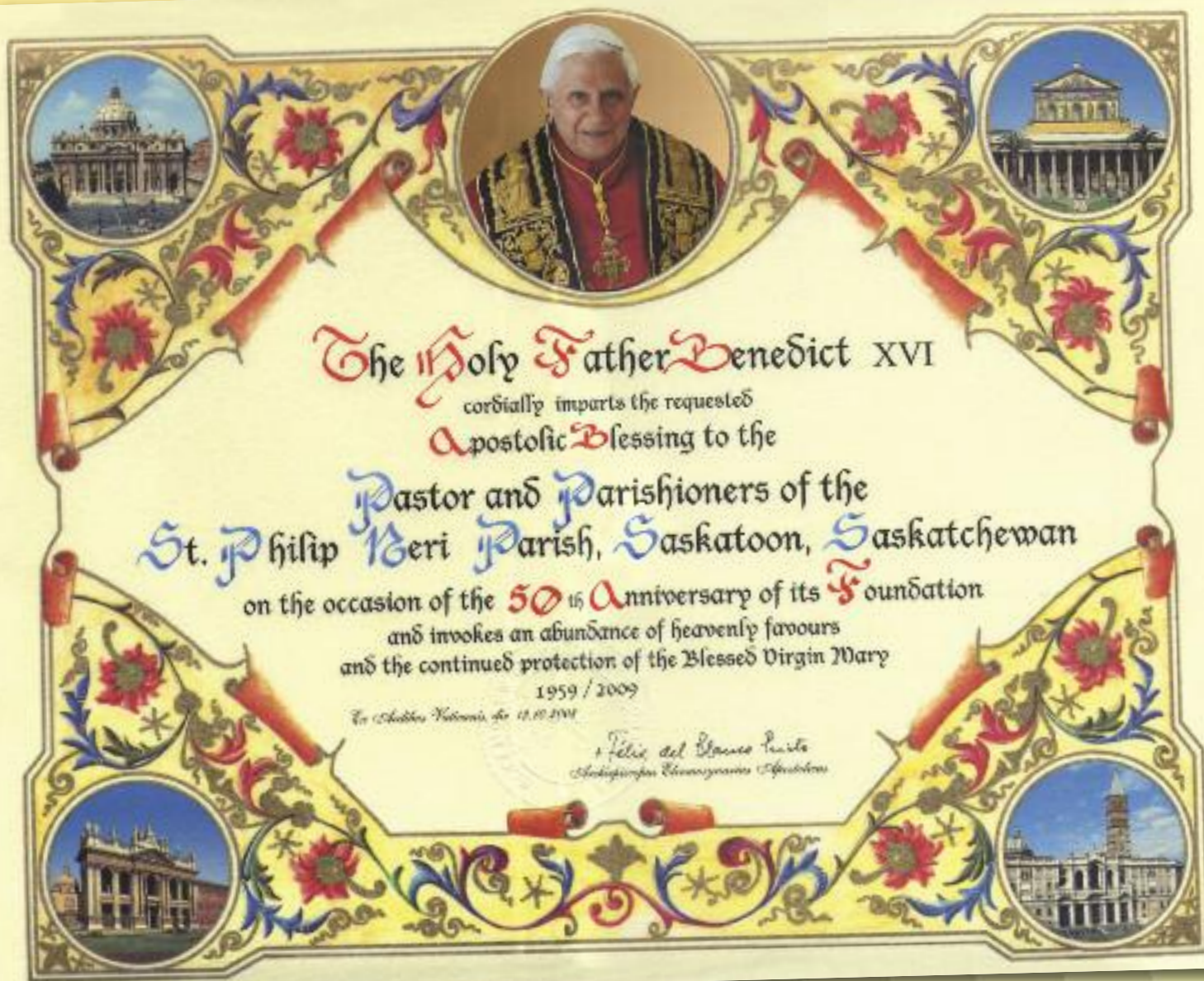
May the celebration of our 50th Anniversary inspire us on to continue working together in unity, as our founding families did, with confidence that we will experience the blessing of the Lord!

In Christ,



Patrick J. Clarke
Parish Life Director





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THE *spirit* MOVES US!

by Ned Powers

THE DECISION TO BUILD ST. PHILIP NERI CHURCH CAME AS SASKATOON EMERGED FROM WHAT HISTORIANS CALL THE CITY'S FLOURISHING FIFTIES, WITH THE FINAL STAGES OF CONSTRUCTION OCCURRING DURING THE SOARING SIXTIES.

IT WAS A TIME OF WHEN SASKATOON GROWTH WAS ON THE UPSWING. IN THE YEARS JUST BEYOND THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THE AREA AROUND TAYLOR STREET WAS MARKED BY SEEMINGLY IMPASSABLE ROADS AND LOW WATER LEVELS. THE RESIDENTS WERE ACCUSTOMED TO OUT-HOUSES ON THEIR PROPERTY AND DRINKING WATER DELIVERED BY BARRELS. THE DISTINGUISHABLE LANDMARKS WERE THE THREE SISTERS, THREE SIMILARLY-LOOKING HOUSES, BUILT BEFORE THE WAR WITHOUT FOUNDATIONS, AND STANDING TALL ON YORK AVENUE, JUST OFF TAYLOR.

Taylor Street's different look began with a cluster of businesses at Lorne Avenue, another cluster at Broadway Avenue and then dramatic expansion towards the south and east. Lathey swimming pool opened in 1955, a sign of the values Saskatoon placed on recreational facilities. Aden Bowman Collegiate opened in 1958, the first expansion of high schools towards suburbia. Herb Pinder and Cliff McClocklin developed the Churchill shopping centre, an entirely new concept in the Saskatoon marketplace.

The construction of St. Philip's elementary school in 1956 was a spark for Catholic families who wanted to strengthen and enhance their spiritual well-being.

It was Sept. 2, 1959, that Bishop F.J. Klein informed the parishioners of St. Joseph's and St. Francis churches there would be another new church on the eastside. He wrote "After prayer and serious thought, in view of the fact of an increased number of the faithful, and for the welfare of their souls, we erect a new parish under the name of St. Philip."

The church's namesake, St. Philip Neri (1551-1595) entered a religious life as early as 18, preached on the streets and markets in Rome and founded The Confraternity of the Most Holy Trinity, mostly lay people who preached to needy pilgrims in 1548. He was ordained in 1551 and achieved success in converting people to the Catholic faith. He was known as The Apostle of Rome in his later years and venerated by all walks of life. He experienced ecstasies and visions and had the gift of prophecy. He died in Rome, was venerated as a saint, and was canonized in 1622 by Pope Gregory XV.

Fr. Don Macgillivray was appointed the first pastor. He set up temporary living quarters at St. Pius X Seminary at 403 Clarence Avenue. By Sept. 13, he said the first Mass in the elementary school adjacent to Taylor Street.

Steve Burkell was in the front line of the development and, years later, reflected on his personal thoughts.

"It was in the mid-1950s when our family first became residents of the area," wrote Burkell in the newsletter which celebrated the 25th anniversary of the church. "It wasn't long before we got to know other families who, like ourselves, began to feel the need of our own parish."

Once the school was in place, Burkell remembered, "There were some far-sighted people who ventured to see Bishop Klein about a parish. I recall Bishop Klein's response. 'Do you think you can? Show me.' Those formative first few years of St. Philip's were a heart-warming experience for us. We soon learned how to love thy neighbour, the offering of oneself to benefit others and how God rewards us many-fold. It was amazing to learn of one's God-given talents as well as those of other people and what miracles can be created."

Burkell recalled, "The various stages we went through in the creation of the parish; the meetings, discussions and planning, the masses in the school, the construction of the chapel-auditorium, the involvement of all human resources, the social activities, the Masses and sermons, the charity and love and the spreading of the Peace of Christ."

Michael Hepp was the second principal of St. Philip's school, appointed in 1958 just as the talk of church construction was at its strongest.

"The first Mass of the parish was held in September, 1959, in a double classroom," says Hepp, "because at that point, we still didn't have a gymnasium or an auditorium. The desks were removed and we borrowed chairs from St. Joseph's Hall. Some of the men arranged for a portable altar, a communion rail and a sound system. Fr. Macgillivray sent out letters to the parents, announcing the first Sunday morning masses would be held at 8:15 and 10:15."

Marriages, funerals or baptisms were to be performed at either St. Joseph's or St. Francis Xavier churches.

Fr. Macgillivray turned the first sod for the chapel-auditorium on June 27, 1960, and the ceremonial guests included Ed Scissons, chairman of the Saskatoon Separate School Board, Bill Reid, school board superintendent of grounds, Hepp, and Ned Helfrick, president of the Men's Club. The chapel-auditorium was opened and blessed on Dec. 4, 1960, with Bishop Klein officiating.

Hepp says, "The blending of the school and the church worked so effectively. Fr. Macgillivray didn't miss a beat. On the days before we had the church, he lived in a house across the street from the school and he'd be on the grounds at noon and recesses, mixing with the kids and giving them a positive influence."

Seven separate committees were struck to undertake the fund-raising for the new church. Acting as an umbrella for the committee was a group co-chaired by Howard Stensrud and J.E. Graff. There were committees chosen to handle the land acquisition, the chapel-auditorium construction, parish visits and tithing, finances and budgets, plans and designing of the church, tenders and the letting of the contracts and the furnishings and decorations.

Stensrud and Bill Schwinghammer played a big part in organizing the construction.

"About a dozen of us went downtown to visit Bishop Klein, our campaign had raised about \$100,000 but the cost of the new church was going to be about \$300,000," says Stensrud. "Bishop Klein arranged for us to go a bank and borrow the rest of the money."

Primary architect of the job was Gary Cooper, who was associated with Webster, Forrester and Scott. The contract was awarded to Boychuk Construction.

"Gary was certainly responsible for the sloping roof we eventually decided to accept," says Stensrud. "To be honest, I had to be convinced. I had been in charge of construction at St. Francis, which was a beautiful church and I was somewhat of a traditionalist. We debated the



Fr. Don performed the honours at the sod-turning for the new church, with Ed Scissons and Fr. Ron Beechinor.



Fr. Don conducted his first services in a double classroom at St. Philip's school.

roof issues several times and Gary deserves credit for what the building became. The semi-circular seating was also attractive."

Stensrud says, "We also decided, at the time, we would build the church so that, on Sunday mornings, we'd face the beautiful sun. Years later, when the church was renovated, it was decided to move the sanctuary in an opposite direction and now the priests face the sun."



Bishop Klein blessed the church on May 26, 1964, accompanied by Fr. Coyne of St. Mary's parish and Fr. Mallin of St. Thomas More College.

The first Mass in the new church was held April 12, 1964, with Fr. Ron Beechinor as the celebrant. The church was blessed on May 26, not long before Fr. Macgillivray was due to leave the parish for his new duties with the mission in Brazil. A student Mass was held at 11 a.m. Right Rev. Abbot Jerome Weber of Muenster consecrated the altars at 4 p.m. Bishop Klein was the main celebrant during the blessing and the pontifical high Mass at 7:30 p.m.

Fr. Macgillivray was one of nine brothers raised in Saskatoon and his parents, Alexander and Idose, saw to it that the boys joined in the rosary every day and served as adult boys at St. Paul's Cathedral. He attended elementary school at St. Paul's and high school at City Park and then St. Peter's College in Muenster. As products of the City Park area, they were good friends of the Mahoneys, whose son, James, became Bishop of Saskatoon for 30 years. He says the family atmosphere almost meant there were going to be priests within the family, but he was the only one who achieved the goal.

Fr. Macgillivray studied philosophy and theology at St. Peter's Seminary in London, Ont., and was ordained in Saskatoon in 1960. He was assistant curate at St. Paul's for six years and was at St. Alphonse in Viscount for three years before he was called to St. Philip's.

Fr. Beechinor was ordained in 1963 and he received three-fold instructions from Bishop Klein: Enroll in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan, start teaching at St. Paul's High School in the fall of 1964 and go into St. Philip Neri to assist Fr. Macgillivray.

Fr. Beechinor's time at St. Philip's was short, and a year later, he moved to St. Francis church.

He was at St. Philip's at a time when Fr. Macgillivray faced one of the toughest decisions of his life.

"Don was a kind, gentle, always-present priest who would have been very happy to have a prolonged stay at St. Philip Neri and the people would have been happy to have him stay.

"But Bishop Klein had come back from the Second Vatican Council in Rome, knowing he had to fulfill a promise to send priests to Uniao Dos Palmares in Brazil. Don had no intention of applying for the assignment. One night, he got a phone call from Bishop Klein, asking him to join him at a basketball game at St. Paul's. At halftime, the Bishop told Don that he wanted him to go to Brazil.

"He came home, we talked, and Don admitted he didn't want to go. I asked him why he accepted. He said that with his ordination, he made a promise of obedience to any bishop and that promise meant a great deal to him," says Fr. Beechinor, who fittingly and eloquently delivered the homily at his friend's funeral in June 14, 2008.

"The trip to Brazil turned out so well for Don," says Fr. Beechinor. "Those people in Brazil became so much of his life. I think there was once when Bishop Mahoney decided that Don should come home. But Don resisted. It wasn't until the last time he came home in 2002 that doctors told me he'd never be healthy enough to go back and stay."



Bishop Klein addressed the congregation at one of the first Masses.



Fr. Beechinor was the celebrant of the first Mass to be held in the new church.

Fr. Beechinor went into education, teaching at St. Paul's, then at E.D. Feehan when it opened its building in 1968, and then he was moved to the downtown office of the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools in 1976. He is a pastoral services associate with the system.

With the loss of Fr. Macgillivray to the Brazil mission team, Bishop Klein announced on July 8, 1964, that Fr. John S. Robinson would become the new pastor of the parish.



Fr. Robinson became pastor in 1964, an appointment announced by Bishop Klein.

Fr. Robinson was born in St. John, N.B., and studied for the priesthood in London, Ont. He arrived in Saskatoon in 1944 at the same time that Bishop Philip Pocock was appointed to take over the Saskatoon diocese. The story goes that Bishop Pocock was given permission to take a priest from London and

move him to Saskatoon. Fr.

Robinson, or Robby as he was commonly known, volunteered. He stayed at St. Philip Neri until 1970. He also served at St. Michael's, Holy Spirit and St. Paul's Cathedral. He was named vicar general of the Saskatoon diocese and was appointed prelate by Pope Paul VI in 1964. He died April 4, 1979.

While at St. Philip's, Fr. Robinson took a leading role in a January, 1965, observance of the Octave of Prayer of Christian Unity, with people from St. Martin's United Church and St. Timothy's Anglican Church among the 500 who joined in prayer and song. He was also instrumental in the formation of the first parish council, whose first chair became Ken Scissons, when it was formed on April 24, 1966.

Fr. Robinson was also honoured at two special celebrations—one being the silver anniversary of his ordination and the second, in 1979, being a testimonial evening at which the parish donated \$10,000 in Robby's name for the establishment of a bursary to be used for the education of seminarians.

When an elementary school was named in Fr. Robinson's honour in 1992, Bishop James Mahoney talked richly about Robby's accomplishments during an interview with the StarPhoenix.

"Robby immediately started developing recreational programs for the young people in Saskatoon. He was a marvellous beggar when it came to getting equipment and sweaters for his teams. He never stopped trying. He was very, very interested in the schools in his parish," said Bishop Mahoney.

"In the Bible, it talks about making hospitality your constant gift. He was a wonderful bond for us because everyone liked him. That helped us during the most difficult days of the stress that followed after the changes started coming

through after Vatican II. I would say Robby was the one who held us together in a difficult time.

"For the last few years of his life, he was accompanied by cancer but that didn't slow him down a bit. He was a strong man physically and strong spiritually," said the bishop.

Fr. Beechinor concurs.

"When Bishop Pocock came from London, he was allowed to take one priest and Robby thought it would be temporary. He made Saskatoon his home and we were all richer for it. While he was curate at St. Paul's, he'd often turn up at our elementary school. One day while I was a student there, he told me to stop by the house on my way home. He gave me a green band CCM hockey stick, knowing that hockey was so important to me in my young days.

"Robby was a doer, a very good person and an amazing man," says Fr. Beechinor.

It wasn't long after Fr. Bob Ogle completed his six-year tour of duty as a missionary in Brazil that he was called to become parish priest at St. Philip's. He took over in 1970, succeeding Monsignor Robinson, who became rector at St. Paul's Cathedral.

Fr. Ogle was born on Christmas Eve, 1934, in a town called Gunwurth, not far from Rosetown but a town no longer identified on the map. His father, Henry, was a farmer in the Depression Days. The family lost its farm to mortgage holders in Nebraska in 1939 but managed to salvage a good enough crop that they could buy land closer to Rosetown. Fr. Ogle says his decision to enter the priesthood was simply part of an Irish-Catholic tradition in his family, but chances are he never forgot the farming hardships of the 1930s.

He attended the seminary in London, Ont. and was ordained in 1953. He was a graduate student working towards a doctorate in Canon Law at the University of Ottawa from 1953 until 1956. When he returned to Saskatoon, he was asked by Bishop Klein to be the first principal of a Catholic seminary, housed in an old brick building on Clarence Avenue. The seminary closed permanently in 1994 and was converted into a residence by St. Thomas More College and it has been renamed Ogle Hall. Fr. Ogle also spent five years as the founding director of the Saskatoon Catholic Centre before accepting the role in Brazil.

Fr. Ogle brought a new sense of global and social consciousness to the pulpit at St. Philip's. He acknowledges "the misery of the world I viewed in Brazil" was always in the back of his mind, and he became an activist in the Canadian Catholic organization for Development and Peace.

Fr. Paul Donlevy says, in reflection, that the decision to have Fr. Ogle go to St. Philip's "was kind of monumental. Here was a priest, who had just finished serving the poorest of the poor in Brazil, and he was being asked to take over in an upper and middle class thriving city parish. In a way, Bob radicalized the parish and left a profound influence on its people, something that I still sensed when I became pastor several years later."

Fr. Ogle once took 200 parishioners on a Tannenbaum Pilgrimage to McDowell where each was allowed to cut down their own Christmas tree and bring it home.

As part of the Holy Year celebrations in 1975, he led 43 parishioners on a pilgrimage to Rome. While in Rome, the pilgrims had an audience with the Holy Father, celebrated liturgies in some famous landmarks and also at the tomb of St. Philip Neri in the Chiesa Nuova.

During Fr. Ogle's final spring at St. Philip's, the parishioners celebrated the burning of the mortgage with Fr. Ogle's friend, Fr. Macgillivray, making a special trip back from Brazil to be the special guest. The celebrations took place for three days, May 23-25, in 1975. There was a three-fold purpose, Repentance, Reconciliation and Rejoicing. Part of the Rejoicing phase was, as Fr. Ogle described it, "the burning of the mortgage and a renewal of parish generosity to the whole world." After the final liturgical celebration, parishioners went to the Western Development Museum to enjoy a parish meal and social.

Later, after a long talk with Bishop Mahoney, Fr. Ogle entered politics, was elected as NDP member of parliament in Saskatoon East in 1979 and again in 1980. He served four years as the NDP health critic and sat on the North-South task force which was examining Canada's relationship with the Caribbean and South American countries. In 1984, he accepted a papal decision that he should give up his role in politics.

"All my life," said Fr. Ogle at the time, "I have had a strong sense of obedience and respect for church."

He created a television series and wrote books on his North-South experiences. He was diagnosed with inoperable cancer in 1986 but maintained an ability to fight for his causes until he died April 1, 1998. He was installed as an officer of the Order of Canada in 1990, and received the Saskatchewan Order of Merit in 1995.

after a previous parish role at Sts. Martyrs-Canadiens. He also taught at St. Paul's High School in downtown Saskatoon, 1958 through 1964, was director of St. Pius X Seminary from 1967 to 1971, and worked closely with Bishop James Mahoney in the diocese office.

"It was kind of daunting to follow in Bob's shoes. He was so well-organized at the parish level. The parish was blessed with so many activities and there was a group of people ready to make any activity work. I was also following a man who was bent on being a member of parliament. He was an NDP candidate and was running against Otto Lang, who was one of our parishioners and a cabinet minister in the Liberal government," says Fr. Morand.

He remembers the high level of organization within the parish, the strong faith, the devotion to liturgies, the extreme generosity and "the feeling of always being accepted."

He recalls a regular Mass at 12:10 on Sundays "and we had a group of musicians, who played dances and functions under the name, The Hourglass. The music rocked. Sometimes I worried about the loudness of the mass and some people were shocked at first. But they were good kids, they were faithful, and I'd bet that on most Sundays, you couldn't get another 10 people into the church. That's how full we were.

"Another time, these same young people put together a service on Good Friday evening, complete with psychedelic lighting, the appropriate pictures and their special music."

Fr. Morand was also there in the fall of 1979 when the parishioners of St. Philip's formed what they called St. Jude's Refugee Group to bring in two families from Vietnam. Following one year of assisted living by the parishioners, both families gained their own independence.



They were among the first shepherds at St. Philip Neri: Fr. Macgillivray, Fr. Blaise Morand, Bishop James Mahoney, Fr. Ogle and Fr. Donlevy.

Fr. Blaise Morand became the fourth parish priest, chosen on July 1, 1975, to succeed Fr. Ogle.

One of six priests raised in a family in Windsor, he was ordained in London, Ont., and came west with his brother, Leonard, to join the Saskatoon diocese in 1958. He served a number of parishes in his 23 years in Saskatoon, joining St. Philip's

"Once, when I was serving as chancellor, I knew of another parish which was burdened with a debt of about \$35,000. The people of St. Philip's stepped in and cleared their debt."

While maintaining the pastoral care of St. Philip's, Fr. Morand received other appointments. He was named a vicar-general in June, 1979, a monsignor in September, 1980, and then the coadjutor bishop of Prince Albert in April, 1981 and bishop in April, 1983.

Bishop Morand says, "I learned much from Bishop Mahoney. I worked with him in the office, we were close friends, and you learned by watching.

"When I was appointed monsignor, Bishop Mahoney came to St. Philip's to make the announcement. 'You're probably wondering what it means to be a monsignor,' the bishop announced from the pulpit. 'Well, a monsignorship and two bits will get you a good cup of coffee.'

"When I was appointed bishop of Prince Albert, I asked him to again come to St. Philip's on the last Sunday of my time in the parish. He told the parish that they'd been blessed with some interesting pastors. 'Robby went west, Bob went east, Don went south and now this bird's going north.'"

As bishop of Prince Albert, he served until retirement in May, 2008. He is now considered bishop emeritus.

Fr. Paul Donlevy became the fifth pastor of St. Philip's in July, 1981, succeeding Fr. Vince Mullee who acted as pro-tem pastor after Fr. Morand was named bishop of Prince Albert.

Fr. Donlevy attended St. Paul's High School, the first of the Catholic secondary schools introduced in 1952 with the entry of Grade 9 students. It was located at the current site of Federated Co-operatives Limited. He attended the University of Saskatchewan, then St. Pius X seminary in Saskatoon and then St. Paul's Seminary in Ottawa. He was ordained in 1971.

Fr. Donlevy served as rector at the seminary and was pastor at Holy Family before his posting to St. Philip Neri. Later he worked in the chancery, was administrator of St. Paul's Cathedral and then served at Holy Spirit, Our Lady of Czestochowa, St. John Bosco and St. Anne's.

He was pastor at St. Philip's when the parish celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1984 and told the parishioners at the time, "God's people continue to grow in holiness and caring for each other in a multitude of ways. We look forward to new ways to respond to the special needs of our times, a concentrated effort for re-evangelization of our people; a new thrust for justice and mercy; and an ecumenical effort with our Protestant, Orthodox and Anglican friends."



Bishop Blaise Morand of Prince Albert, Fr. Ogle, Fr. Donlevy, Fr. Macgillivray and Bishop Mahoney shared in the cake-cutting at the 25th anniversary celebrations.

The celebrations ran March 3-5, 1984, and began with a supper and dance on the Saturday night. The church banner was unveiled on Sunday morning, the home and school association held a carnival and outdoor barbeque in the afternoon and a helium balloon release was held around supper time. The St. Philip's Happy Wanderers Square Dance Club celebrated on Monday evening. Then on the weekend of May 25-27, Fr. Macgillivray came home from Brazil to join Bishop James Mahoney, Bishop Blaise Morand, Fr. Ogle and Fr. Donlevy in an anniversary Mass. During the summer, two buses carried St. Philip's parishioners to Edmonton where Pope John Paul II celebrated mass on his Canadian tour.

At the end of the 25th anniversary celebrations, Fr. Donlevy packaged some

Churchill's Vintage Port into a wooden crate and clearly indicated the port shouldn't be open until the 50th anniversary. "Don't open till then," says Fr. Donlevy's message on the crate.

He did light some fires under a transformed parish council, a rebirth of the Catholic Women's League, a youth group, the RCIA and the practice of visits to Extendingcare.

There was a bit of a disappointment in 1983 when Fr. Donlevy asked for the parish's permission to proceed with a renovation program.

"I believed we needed more space because of the growth in our parish. But when I went to the parish, I wanted a sizeable majority from the voters. There were 52 per cent in favour and, at the time, I didn't think that was a big enough margin and we dropped the plans."

He always believed St. Philip's was "an outward-looking parish, blessed with a good sense of laity taking responsibility."

He also remembers some humorous times which prevailed at the church, a couple of which were at his expense.

"Near the end of each school year, the students at St. Philip's and St. James would get together for a farewell Mass and the parish council would feed them hot dogs after the service. I get back to the parish on a day in June one year, the kids from St. James are all there, but everyone, including me, had forgotten that this was the day. It was fine to arrange the Mass, but we didn't have any lunch options for the 120 to 150 kids. Peter Nicholson, the principal at St. James, told his kids to take a friend home for lunch. Needless to say, that caused great consternation in many homes. The next day, I went to St. James, rather sheepishly, admitted I had totally blanked on the matter. I did add the provision that I wished someone had reminded me the night before."

Fr. Donlevy also remembers a Christmas Eve Mass one year "where I have about 1,000 children sitting in front of me and they're squirming. I looked out to the back and there was Vic Clark, in a Santa Claus suit, waving his arms. I thought to myself that if any of the kids turn around, I'm going to lose these kids.

"Given the good-natured spirit within the church, I wasn't going to let Vic off the hook. We were holding Easter Vigil and I had arranged for someone to get a key to the Clark home. While we were all in the solemn liturgy, I had someone take the key and place a live chicken in the Clark's bathroom. The presence of the chicken, although safely within the bathroom, stirred the interest of their barking dog and caught the Clarks by surprise when they went home."

Fr. Michael Koch was appointed pastor of St. Philip Neri in 1985.

Born in Wilkie, he listened to a mission, conducted by Fr. Joseph Michael, when he was 12 years old and he was inspired to pursue the priesthood. It took him another 12 years before he embarked on his journey and he was ordained in 1966. He spent a year at St. Paul's Cathedral before going to rural Saskatchewan where his regular stops included Mildred, Dinsmore, Lucky Lake, Beechy, Elrose and other communities. Returning to Saskatoon, he was appointed Diocesan Director of Religious Education and became pastor at Our Lady of Lourdes.



Fr. Michael Koch became pastor in 1985.

Like most who came to St. Philip's, Fr. Koch brought special gifts.

One was the design and detail of the stained glass work which is now above the sanctuary.

"I designed the work and Lee Brady put it together. The triangle is a symbol of the trinity. The church, within the triangle, is the basis of our faith, a portrayal of the risen Christ. There are symbols of the seven sacraments. Before I came to the parish, there was a cross as

the main wall symbol. With so much glass and so much light available, I thought we could add some colour," says Fr. Koch.

He also led the move for the new baptistry, which allowed for complete immersions.

"Diane Dash was the first child to be totally immersed. The ceremony during an Easter Vigil was a sign of the most spirit and energy I've ever seen at a service. The children were seated in front of the baptistry, the people were standing all around, and I saw people, in their 60s and 70s, standing on the edge of chairs before letting out a cheer. It was like an excitement you'd seen at a football game when the home team scores."

He was enthused by the growth of the some of the community groups and the one which bears his personal imprint was the process of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults.

"I saw the RCIA as a way of getting the entire parish to participate in the formation of a new Catholic. There was a period when the candidates would go to a different Catholic home on each occasion, giving them a chance to get different perspectives. To me, the RCIA was always about Vatican II giving us a tremendous tool for the transformation of the life of a parish. I believe it is a great instrument which is often under-employed."

Launched during Fr. Koch's time was Moms Morning Out, a gathering of moms and their young children, a program which still exists today at St. Philip's.

Fr. Koch later served at Holy Family and Holy Spirit and, sliced in between in 1997, he took a sabbatical, travelling to countries like South Africa, Kenya, India, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines, examining how they used the RCIA and often conducting workshops.

Fr. Len Cyr, who came to St. Philip's in 1991, was a latecomer to the priesthood, at least by most standards. A friend, Frank Thurmeier, encouraged him to think about becoming a priest and after a night of deep thought, he called Bishop James Mahoney. He invited Bishop Mahoney over "on a day that I'll never forget. I told him he better sit down. And when I inquired about becoming a priest, the Bishop replied 'I was wondering when

you were going to do something about it.' He suggested I could go to retreat, then take some studies on semesters. I was ordained after a year-and-a-half of studies, something I don't think had ever been done before and probably never will be done again." He was ordained at the age of 39 in October, 1976.

He began his career at St. Paul's Cathedral, served the areas of Elrose, Forgan and Kyle while maintaining pastoral care at City Hospital, became pastor at St. John Bosco for three and a half years and at St. Anne's for five years.

It was while at St. Anne's that he was recognized as the 1990 CFQC Citizen of the Year. The television station cited him for board of director roles at St. Paul's Hospital, Catholic Family Services and Larson House, as well as a guest lecturer at Calder Centre and Saskatoon Correctional Centre and chaplain at City Hospital and Parkridge Centre.

When he came to St. Philip's, he knew there was serious renovation challenge ahead.

"The need to expand had been discussed for something like 10 years and when I came, I wanted to be sure the parishioners were ready for it. We held a plebiscite and I think most realized the time had come."



Fr. Len Cyr stands with his brother, Rene, amidst the interior construction in 1993.

Construction took place during 1993, masses were held in the school for 10 months, and Fr. Cyr remembers "there was so much rain that summer, it was so depressing. So much water poured of the roof into our main church area. It was a mess every day it rained and I often mopped up until midnight."

In the end, Fr. Cyr says the parishioners got what they needed.

"We had a spacious place of welcome. We had more meeting room space. I wanted the fountain in place. I wanted Michael's stained glass art to be the centrepiece above the altar and sanctuary. I liked greenery, arguing that greenery means life, and architect Maurice Soulodre was very sensitive to our ideas."

A stained glass window, which had been given to him from the people of St. Anne's, and the Child of Prague statue, which had also been a gift to him, were built into the chapel area.

Fr. Cyr always wanted lights left on in the church, signifying there was always "lights and life in the church."

Fr. Cyr always appreciated the rectory was attached to the church "because whenever the choirs came to practice, I could go and join them. I love music and it has always been soothing to me."

When he left in 1997, it was a sad time.

"Maybe it's because I grew up in a family of 10 children, I really loved the children. A child seems to know right away whether you like them or not. I think back today and can say that if there are good times in one's life, many happened while I was at St. Philip's."

He was later assigned to St. Paul's Cathedral and, in his retirement years, is active at St. Mary's Church.

Jim Jelinski was among those who recognized the parish population was rapidly growing. More than 20 organizations within the parish were juggling schedules to get bookings within the two available meeting rooms. The expansion, which was first discussed in the early 1980s, needed to happen. Jelinski, the chair of the building committee, and his committee were caught right in the middle of the parish's biggest dilemma in history.

There were many hurdles to overcome. The City of Saskatoon was a stickler on property lines and street allowances and it took two appearances before an appeals board to finally get permission to expand. The Saskatoon Catholic School Board was involved because some of its property was involved. The diocese of Saskatoon expressed concerns over the financing, concerns which were only alleviated when a number of parishioners made pledges to offset the debt load.

"We started off with the dream of a \$500,000 expansion," says Jelinski. "We knew we had three priorities—more meeting rooms, a large kitchen, and a chapel. The biggest challenge was how to accomplish all of our goals without a lot of extra space being available to us."

"At one of the meetings, Ted Miazga got up and suggested we change the interior of the church 180 degrees—moving the altar and sanctuary from the south end to the north end, which also necessitated that we change all of the seating in a different direction. In effect, we were going to gut the interior of the building and then add on a chapel in the northeast corner, more waiting areas and office space to a main entrance along Munroe Avenue."

"There were numerous challenges, working around the 12x12x12 cement blocks in the northwest and southeast corners of the building, adding a basement which needed to have wheelchair accessibility, and every time, we added something new, it meant we had to raise the building codes of the old sections so they would match the new building codes."

In the end, the renovations and additions would cost \$1-million. The contract was awarded to Fasttrack General Contractors..

"There were many heroes along the way," says Jelinski, "One of them was Maurice Soulodre, who attended every meeting, put in incredible hours beyond what was normal, and really took the the expansion on as a personal project."

The work began and took the better part of a year. Regular masses were moved to the St. Philip school auditorium. The altar and the sanctuary were built from scratch. The choir loft was new, and its location alongside the west wall meant eliminating 80 seats from the previous count. Fr. Koch's stained glassed work retained its prominence above the sanctuary. Fr. Cyr's flair for plants added a special effect above the sanctuary and, also from his recognition of aesthetic qualities, came the stained glass windows in the chapel. The seats were stored in a warehouse and refinished.

Totally new were the spaces for offices. The kitchen area was enlarged, including the acquisition of a second stove. Bathroom facilities were redone on the main floor and added in the basement. The furnaces were changed. A transformer went into the basement to accommodate the changing power supply needs.

"Some people believed we were being too extravagant," says Jelinski "and there were some unhappy ones. We tried to give them a say on every issue. The committee spent hours and hours in meetings over a two-year period. In the end, I would call it an adventure. I learned much from all the people involved. I really think we took a visionary approach and, as it stands now, our facility is meant to adjust to the needs we might face over the next 50 years."





The renovations, which cost about \$1-million, provided new looks in the sanctuary, chapel, the baptismal font and kitchen.



Fr. Brad Bodnarchuk was called to serve as pastor of St. Philip Neri in 1997, and there was a familiarity with the neighbourhood.

He was born in Halifax and came to Saskatoon with his parents just as he was approaching high school age. He attended Holy Cross from 1970 through 1973, but hockey temporarily interrupted his pursuit of a Grade 12 diploma. He played junior hockey for the Saskatoon Blades, then for Cornwall, Ont. He remembered his Saskatoon influences like Fr. Cyr and Fr. Emile April and Bishop James Mahoney, entered St. Pius X Seminary in Saskatoon for three years and continued studies in Edmonton. He took a year of special studies on pastoral counselling at the Atlanta School of Theology. He was ordained in 1982.

When Fr. Bodnarchuk came back west, he served as an assistant to Fr. Donlevy at St. Philip's, beginning in August, 1983, and a year later, was assigned as administrator at Beechy, Lucky Lake and Milden.

He later became pastor at St. Michael's for seven years, St. Peter The Apostle for six years and after training with Professionals in Residence, an alcohol and drug treatment centre at Hazelden, Minn., he was appointed to St. Philip's.

"St. Philip's was an active community, and a caring community," says Fr. Bodnarchuk. "Upon arrival, the church was faced with an \$852,000 debt because

of building renovations but we burned that mortgage by the time I left. Some of it was through Brad's Baked Beans fund-raisers."

The burning of the mortgage was acknowledged during the parish's annual summer picnic but Fr. Bodnarchuk chose a ceremonial route by setting some mortgage papers aflame in the sanctuary during each of the three Masses on one notable weekend.

"The people participated as we developed a social consciousness. I remember a couple of missions on spirituality and recovery where we had overflow crowds. We built a passionate relationship with the multi-faith community and were twinned with Redeemer Lutheran. I hired Pat Clarke as for youth ministry and we had a room called The Youth Pit. We started investigating the possibility of building a nursing team."

All the while, he was going through his own period of recovery and strongly "preached the principle that it's in our shared weakness that we are the strongest.

"I stated quite openly, and sensitively, that alcoholism is a disease that neither plays favourites nor grants favours. Clergy can offer a tremendous front-line presence for individuals and families who are affected by addiction. Knowing that I was priest going through recovery relieved many friends of guilt, shame and embarrassment."



Fr. Brad Bodnarchuk presided at the 2000 Easter vigil and during the immersion of a baptism.

Fortier's home and even more after a retreat at Muenster. He sought the advice of Father Ray Kleiter and then Bishop James Mahoney. He joined the seminary, spending two years in Saskatoon and four in London, Ont. and he was ordained May 9, 1986, at Holy Spirit. His mother had undergone a long struggle with multiple sclerosis and she died eight months after his ordination.



Fr. Les Paquin became pastor in 2003.

Fr. Paquin was assigned to St. Paul's at first, worked rural parishes, was chaplain at City Hospital, chaplain at the Correctional Centre and taught at St. Joseph's High School.

"All the while," says Fr. Paquin, "there was a call within a call to serve as a missionary. I spoke openly about going to Brazil to Bishop Mahoney. One time when I was visiting Bishop Mahoney at the Royal University Hospital, he told me I could go to Brazil but I couldn't stay there forever. It was early in 1995, just before the bishop died."

Fr. Paquin went to Brazil, joining Father Macgillivray and Father Emile April in Uniao. He was asked to come back to Saskatoon in 2002, serving at St. John Bosco for a year, and then received the appointment at St. Philip Neri.

"Bishop Albert Legatt wanted me to stay six years at St. Philip's but I was quite open with the parishioners and they knew I'd someday want to back to Brazil. I talked about Brazil in my sermons, exposing the parishioners to a different culture and a global vision. The parishioners grew to be more outward reaching, they supported the Brazil mission and became more active in refugee sponsorship.

"I always found the parishioners to be very welcoming, very accepting, and we had strong lay participation. One of the steps we took was providing lay ministers for the prayer vigils."

With the help of his friend, Fr. Ted Hughes, a liturgist, they developed a plan where the presider at the Masses would become closer to the congregation.

Fr. Paquin stayed until 2006, then returned to Brazil, and went on medical leave in Saskatoon since the spring of 2008. He now serves St. Anne's parish.

Fr. Leonard Morand came to St. Philip's parish in 2006, bringing with him a history of a remarkable Canadian Catholic family which produced six priests.

Edouard and Marie Morand lived in Tecumseh, Ont. where they raised a family of six boys and two girls. The father was the mayor of the community at one time. All of the boys attended Assumption High School in Windsor and St. Peter's Seminary in London, Ont. Lionel was the first of the brothers to be ordained in 1949. In succession, Edward was ordained in 1955, Leonard in 1956, Blaise in 1958, Daniel in 1959, and Patrick in 1960.

When Fr. Leonard and his brother Blaise came to Saskatoon, two others moved to Winnipeg and two stayed in London, Ont..



He moved to St. Patrick's parish in 2003. Then, realizing he was at a crossroads in his personal life, he went on a retreat in Ontario and reached the decision to take leave from the priesthood. He became a counsellor for addictions recovery, grief and loss, and is with Penney Murphy and Associates. He married Carla Scharback in June, 2008.

When Fr. Les Paquin became pastor at St. Philip Neri in 2003, it was like a homecoming. As a boy, and up until the age of seven, he attended St. Philip's school, attended Mass and once recalls riding a toboggan down the sloped roof of the church.

His family moved to Holy Spirit parish, he went to Holy Cross and by Grade 12 started to have feelings of what his purpose was on Earth. There were more stirrings in his soul when he and friends gathered on Sunday nights at Michel



Fr. Leonard Morand became pastor in 2006.

Fr. Blaise recalls that “when I got a call, as bishop of Prince Albert, to visit the Holy Father, it was one of the few times where we, as brothers, ever had our picture taken together later in life. John Paul II called me in first and then he said let’s bring in your brothers. Dan was in Peru at the time and couldn’t make the trip to Rome.”

Fr. Leonard served in many capacities. He and Fr. Robinson were among the first to celebrate Masses at St. Ann’s Home and Fr. Leonard was named

chaplain there in 1961. He was well-known as a high school teacher at St. Paul’s High School and Holy Cross, worked with students at The School for Deaf, established the early learning centre at Guadalupe House, and often took turns at hospital chaplaincy. He served in rural parishes and his strong of assignments with Saskatoon included Sts. Martyrs–Canadiens, Holy Family, Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Paul’s Cathedral. He was a diocesan administrator in 1995 and 1996 and was named vicar general.

Fr. Leonard took ill during his stay at St. Philip’s and died June 4, 2007.

Bishop Blaise remembers his brother with much affection.

“He was gentle, extremely kind, soft-spoken, very reflective, a tremendous reader. He could not stand to see people suffer. I don’t know of another priest who was more committed to visiting the sick. He was constantly at the hospitals. He also had a tremendous concern for the Aboriginal people.”

Fr. Beechinor says Fr. Leonard was “very good at relating to the priests in the diocese. He was a gift to us. Whenever a priest would need some counselling, he’d go to Fr. Len, who understood everything with a clear perspective. He was a prayerful man, very disciplined—going to bed at 9 every night, up at 5 every morning. He was a physical presence, too. He played handball until just before he became ill and he played against most who were younger than him. He didn’t like to lose.”

Fr. Paquin knew Fr. Leonard as a mentor, an associate in years at St. Paul’s and, then in turn, as Fr. Paquin went to Brazil in 2006, Fr. Leonard succeeded him at St. Philip’s.

“He was a disciplined man of prayer, faithful in the ministry, taught us to be conscious of the plights of aboriginals and immigrants, and he possessed a tremendous sense of humor,” says Fr. Paquin.

It wasn’t an incident that happened at St. Philip’s but Fr. Paquin, in welcoming his successor, delighted in telling the story about the night a bat played havoc with a service at St. Paul’s. Fr. Paquin was hearing confessions, Fr. Len was celebrating the Mass. A bat started flying around the church and Fr. Len told the congregation not to worry about getting hit. As it turned out, the bat almost hit Fr. Len, who immediately stopped in the middle of his sermon, stepped back to grab his tennis racquet, swatted the bat and floored it, and went back to his sermon, without missing a beat.

Upon the death of Monsignor Morand, the diocese of Saskatoon decided to make a change in the pastoral leadership at St. Philip Neri. From its first days, the parish always had a resident priest. But in 2007, it took a different approach—appointing Pat Clarke as the parish life director and Fr. Joseph Nsiah as the priest moderator.

Clarke was born in Uranium City, moved to Dewberry (near Lloydminster) and enrolled in a two-year theology program at Victory Bible College in Lethbridge. Upon graduation, he spent most of three years at Medicine Hat, another at Lac La Biche, and then settled in Saskatoon.

“I’d been working for two years in sales when Fr. Bodnarchuk invited me to become the youth minister in 1998,” says Clarke. From there, he was shifted to the role of a pastoral associate and then came a meeting with Bishop LeGatt in 2006.

“I was at an After Confirmation committee meeting when Bishop LeGatt called me aside for five minutes. He knew at the time that Fr. Morand was seriously ill and would never come back to active ministry. He wanted to know if I would consider a two-year commitment as parish life director and said Fr. Joseph would be in charge of all of the sacramental ministry.”

Parish life directors had been appointed at other city parishes—there are now five in Saskatoon—and parish life directors are probably more common in rural parishes.

In his role, Clarke is administrator of finances, human resources, staffing (which includes seven others), ministerial programs and the challenging task of being directly responsible to Bishop LeGatt.

“Among the first things I tried to do was building strong teams, like choosing four on the finance committee, and another five on the building committee.”

He has declared St. Philip’s to be “first, and foremost, his family’s home.”

He has found the parishioners to be “incredibly supportive in all phases and exceedingly generous. I remember a time when a family from Peru asked for help for some of their people who were being affected by earthquakes in their home country. It was a natural thing to funnel the funds through our parish to the Canadian Bishops’ Development and Peace organization. We talked at the three Masses, there was an impulse response, and from the limited exposure, we received \$6,000 in cash and cheques. That’s the kind of parish spirit that we have.”

Fr. Nsiah first sampled life in Saskatchewan in 2001 when he and a fellow priest from Ghana answered a recruiting call from Saskatchewan bishops and were posted in Prince Albert.

The two returned to Ghana in 2003 but, in his double role as a priest and educator in Ghana, he and his own bishop recognized the value of coming back to Saskatoon.

He enrolled at the University of Saskatchewan in order to pursue a masters degree in education. To help pay his way, he was a priest at Holy Family for one year and a priest serving Allan, Viscount and Colonsay for two years. With a masters degree in hand in 2006, he began working on a PhD and, in the process, came to St. Philip Neri in July, 2007.



Fr. Joseph and Pat Clarke welcome Scott Bailey at the 2008 Easter Vigil.

It was with a tremendous sense of sharing that three of the most distinguished priests at St. Philip Neri became important links to the Brazilian mission.

Fr. Macgillivray and Fr. Ogle were two of them, both settling in the parish of Uniao dos Palmares in the northeast part of Brazil on Dec. 22, 1964. Fr. Macgillivray recalled in a StarPhoenix interview in 2003 how "it was really a leap in the dark, maybe a leap in faith for us. Each of us was dispatched to three different points within the large parish. I think dawn was breaking just as I returned to Uniao and the three of us sat around, looked at each other and wondered what was about to unfold in our lives."

The launching of the mission was the result Bishop Klein meeting an archbishop from Brazil during a Second Vatican Council session. "He came back to Saskatoon, asked for volunteers and left us in a position where it was

an open ticket to come home anytime," said Macgillivray. "I was advised by friends to pass on the trip because I was 40 years old, I'd been a priest for 14 years. Some thought I was too set in my ways and some believed the language and the culture might be barriers."

Fr. Nsiah says Ghana celebrated its 100th anniversary of the presence of the Catholic Church in 1980.

"We were influenced by missionaries, along with traders, who came from Portugal into the south of our country and later by German missionaries who came from the east. My father received the first Catholic missionary to our village. He brought the missionary into our home, fed him, and the missionary asked for a table from which he said Mass.

"Our home became a regular stopping place. My father was the parish council chair and, because of that, I saw priest after priest coming. With that influence, combined with religious values deep in our family, it seemed natural I would become a priest," says Fr. Nsiah, who was ordained in 1988.

At some point, Fr. Nsiah will serve again in Ghana.

"I will go back into a high school, as a principal or educator, depending where our diocese sees the need. The state operates the school system but the church has the capacity to deliver a quality education. Future vocations will come out of our school system and I will continue to play a role in both church and education."

Fr. Nsiah has appreciated his time in Saskatchewan.

"You encounter human conditions which are quite similar in both Ghana and Canada. Some are always feeling the pain. I see the martyrs every day and they keep on pushing. I see the people practising their faith so deeply. From what I have seen of the structure in Canada, I can say the church is alive and well. People do care," says Fr. Nsiah.

"For me, the learning never stops. There is much I can take back to Ghana. One idea I will borrow from St. Philip's is the parish nursing. We don't have homes for seniors in Ghana. What I have seen at St. Philip's can help the church in Ghana galvanize how we take care of our aged."



Bishop Klein with his first Brazilian mission team.



Fr. Ogle during his stay with the mission in Brazil.

Fr. Macgillivray became the most durable of all the Saskatoon missionaries, staying just under 38 years until he returned to live in Saskatoon in February, 2002. He died in 2008.

Fr. Ogle, in an autobiography called North/South Calling, remembered "On Easter Saturday, 1964, I was just leaving the Catholic Centre to visit a patient at St. Paul's Hospital when the bishop called me into his office. We had just finished building

the Catholic Centre and his new office was located there. 'Sit down,' he said. 'We're sending priests to Brazil. Almost everyone has volunteered but I've decided to send you, Father Don Macgillivray and Father Bernard Dunn.' There it was. No discussion, no chance for the three of us to think about it or talk about whether we could work together or anything. It was decided for us and we obeyed, I was thrilled to be going."

The three priests said Brazil was the most underdeveloped area they'd seen. The villagers were mostly illiterate, suffered from poverty and disease and were enslaved by the sugar cane industry. Fr. Macgillivray said, "You never get used to seeing the people hungry, the children with their bloated stomachs, and I think we were among the poorest of the poor. One time I asked a mother how many children she had. She told me she had three here and five in Heaven." One of Fr. Ogle's prime accomplishments was building 50 homes, complete with running water and electricity, in one stretch of 100 days."

No one ever regretted the experience in Brazil. Each shared in the love and emotion of an adoring people, each considered the trip a turning point in their lives, and each found ample reason to console and comfort the poor and give spiritual care to the aged.

The influences of Fr. Macgillivray and Fr. Ogle opened the door for Fr. Paquin to embrace the Brazilian experience as well. He went south twice. His first assignment was in Uniao along with Fr. Macgillivray and Fr. April.



Fr. Paquin's picture of life during his work in the Brazilian missions.

"After four months in language school, I went right into it. At first, I was enchanted by everything but then I started to recognize the culture shock, the inequalities, the injustices and the corruption. I had a spiritual awakening. I tried to accept some things but, at the same time, I tried to get parish prepared for the future, instead of relying upon the will of the politicians. We had one RCIA class of 120, baptized but not evangelized. Rebuilding the church community was a learning experience."

When he went back in 2006, his assignment was in Ibateguara, "and it was like turning back the clock 20 years—illiteracy, domination by sugar cane mill owners. The big difference I saw the second time was the increase in violence, many more murders, the danger of going out for a walk at night, drug use, more corruption, failure of the water system."

Fr. Paquin admits, "There was still joy, warmth and earthiness in the people, incredible hope and faith, the times we'd celebrate festive occasions or land reform. There was hardly a dull moment." His regret is that, because of multiple health issues in the last year and a half, he will probably never get to serve in Brazil again.

St. Philip Neri's place in Saskatoon Catholic church history is well-defined. As it celebrates the golden anniversary in 2009 of being selected as a parish, it ranks ninth among Saskatoon Catholic churches which have reached that milestone.

The longest-serving Catholic churches in Saskatoon are St. Paul's, which opened its doors for the first time on July 16, 1903, in a site where the chancery now sits. St. Mary's, the eldest on the westside, opened in 1920. St. Joseph's, the first on the eastside of the South Saskatchewan River, opened in 1928 as did St. Martyrs Canadiens, the French parish. There was a long spell before any expansion happened. Then, in rapid succession, came St. Michael's in 1953, St. Francis in 1954, Holy Family in 1958, and both St. Philip Neri and St. John Bosco in 1959.

St. Philip Neri Church has existed under the spiritual care of four bishops — Francis Klein, James Mahoney, James Weisgerber and Albert LeGatt. There have been 10 resident pastors plus Fr. Nsiah in his current role as priest-moderator. Three, John Robinson, Blaise Morand and Leonard Morand, have held designations as monsignors during the time they spent at St. Philip's.

Ned Powers has been a journalist in Saskatoon since 1953, almost all of the years spent with the StarPhoenix. He was a member of the first St. Joseph's Parish Council, which was elected in 1967, twice served as its president and was also chair of St. Joseph's golden anniversary celebrations in 1978. He and his wife, Ruth, joined St. Philip Neri parish in 2005.





St. Philip Neri Church in 2009



KNIGHTS EXTEND REACH FROM *parish* TO *community*

by Rick Murza

FOUNDED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF CHARITY, UNITY AND FRATERNITY (AND PATRIOTISM IN THE 4TH DEGREES), THE OBJECTIVE OF THE THE ST. PHILIP NERI COUNCIL #9539 AND ITS MEMBERS IS TO BE INVOLVED IN AND OF SERVICE TO THE COUNCIL, CHURCH, FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND YOUTH.

Council members have provided service to many church functions such as Mother's Day and Father's Day activities, parish breakfasts and annual parish celebrations. Funds have been raised and shared with such organizations as Pro-Life, Teen Aid, St. Ann's Home, Friendship Inn and many others. In the community, the knights have been involved in painting at Friendship Inn, spring and fall clean-up at Extendicare, assisting at Extendicare Bingo's and providing an outing for Extendicare residents for coffee and dessert at Market Mall.

The Council is extremely involved with the youth of the parish and St. Philip School, Pope John Paul II School, Sion Catholic Middle School and Holy Cross High School with such programs and activities as the annual soccer challenge, basketball free throw contest, a poster and an essay contest. In addition, the Council provides manpower and financial support for the Blackstrap Youth Camp, the Knights of Columbus Indoor Games, and the annual Christmas Carol Festival.

The Council also provides a post-high school scholarship of \$500 and the recent winners have been Melanie Harding in 2005, Brennan Shivak in 2006, Emma Cey in 2007 and Zandrae Witzaney in 2008. The Council has also recognized altar servers and youth choir members for their contribution to the parish.

A meeting, chaired by Frank McGrath, was held at the St. Philip school auditorium on April 1, 1987, to determine the feasibility and interest of a council. District Deputy, Wally Servetnick, explained the necessary steps required to form a Council and 30 initial members would be needed.

Following a first degree initiation, a new Council was formed on April 22, 1987 with 52 charter members under the guidance of Servetnick.

The first elected council included Fr. Michael Koch as worthy chaplain, Frank McGrath as grand knight, Wilf Croteau as deputy grand knight, Tom Quinn, Reg Reiter, Bill Coumont, Dan Rooney, Bill Perret, Brad Enright and the three trustees, Emmanuel Bertsch, Ed Benesh and Ted Miagza.

In over the last two decades over 200 Catholic men of St. Philip Neri parish have been members of Council #9539. As of January, 2009, there were 125 members.

The success story has been due to many active knights during the last two decades. Some notable ones include Don Keindel, Don Hauser, Bill Coumont, Joe Simonot, Del Lummerding, Jim Wilson, Frank MacKinnon, Tom Brophy, Alex Resch, and Mervin Schneider.

An extremely active knight and internationally-recognized is Marty Schneider, who has been a knight since 1960 and a member of St. Philip Neri Council since 2000. He served as a State Deputy from 1988-1990, helping to establish 17 new councils. In 2001, he was elected as the Charter Faithful Navigator of the Justice Emmett Hall 4th Degree Assembly which in 2002-2003 won the prestigious "To Be A Patriot" award, one of only three awards made available to the entire order. Then in 2002, the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus (Ceremonial Department) recognized Marty's dedicated service as a Conferring Officer and appointed him as a Supreme Council Ceremonials Coordinator to review other Degree Teams and report to the Supreme Council. When he has some free time, he may be seen at many parades promoting the Knights of Columbus on his highwheeler bicycle.

St. Philip Neri Council has received many awards in the last 20 years; the awards include the Father McGivney Award for recruiting, the Founder's Award for promoting a successful insurance program and the Columbian Award for service programs.

The Council has received the prestigious Star Council Award on three occasions 1993-94 when Jim Wilson was grand knight, 1994-95 when Joe Simonot was grand knight, 1995-96 when Nico Butzelaar was grand knight, each award recognizing outstanding participation and involvement in membership, insurance and service programs.

The Council holds regular monthly meetings on the third Wednesday of the month at St. Philip's church and invites all Catholic men, 18 years and older, to join the ranks of the Catholic fraternal organization.



Current leaders of the St. Philip Neri Council

KNIGHT OF THE YEAR

ST. PHILIP NERI K OF C COUNCIL #9539

1987-88	Kornelius Nijssen
1988-89	Bill Coumont
1989-90	Jim Wilson
1990-91	Bill Perret
1991-92	Don Pion Nico Butzelaar
1992-93	Fred Lapointe
1993-94	Walter Michalko
1994-95	Lyle Burkell
1995-96	Walter Michalko
1996-97	Don Hauser
1997-98	Gordon Pickett
1998-99	Frank MacKinnon
1999-00	Alex Resch
2000-01	John Lanctot
2001-02	Tom Brophy
2002-03	Del Lummerding
2003-04	Robin DeRoo
2004-05	Bill Coumont
2005-06	Frank MacKinnon
2006-07	Rick Murza
2007-08	Marty Schneider
2008-09	Paul Tremblay



Marty Schneider brings a K of C presence on his highwheeler bicycle in summer parades in Saskatoon, Regina, Edmonton and Calgary.

GRAND KNIGHTS

ST. PHILIP NERI

K OF C COUNCIL #9539

1987-88	Frank McGrath
1988-89	Ted Miazga
1989-90	Albert Kline
1990-91	Vic Clark
1991-92	Fred Lapointe
1992-93	Lyle Burkell
1993-94	Jim Wilson
1994-95	Joe Simonot
1995-96	Nico Butzelaar
1996-97	Tom Brophy
1997-98	Don Keindel
1998-99	Don Keindel
1999-00	Don Hauser
2000-01	Don Hauser
2001-02	Ted Miazga
2002-03	Bernard Bitz Bill Coumont
2003-04	Bill Coumont
2004-05	Ron Denis
2005-06	Marty Schneider
2006-07	Marty Schneider
2007-08	Robin DeRoo Ken Martin
2008-09	Ken Martin Paul Tremblay

50 YEARS OF

Liturgical music

by Joanne Lysyshyn

IT MUST HAVE BEEN A JOYOUS OCCASION WHEN THE FIRST OFFICIAL CHOIR SANG ON CHRISTMAS EVE, 1960 IN ST. PHILIP'S SCHOOL CHAPEL. FR. DON MACGILLIVRAY WAS THE PASTOR, MARG LEIER, THE CHOIR DIRECTOR AND A SMALL NUMBER OF PARISHIONERS LED THE SINGING. MASSES WERE HELD IN THE SCHOOL UNTIL THE CHURCH WAS COMPLETED IN 1964. CHOIR PRACTICES SOMETIMES TOOK PLACE IN FATHER'S RECTORY AT 1927 MUNROE AVENUE.

The first Mass in the new church was on April 12, 1964 and the official blessing of the church was on Tuesday, May 26 on the Feast of St. Philip Neri.

The only keyboard in the church at that time was an organ in the choir loft. When a youth choir sprang up equipped with guitars and drums, they sang from the main floor.

Vatican II was upon us. Churches were revising rituals, remodeling and moving musicians out of choir lofts in order to have more active participation of the laity.

The first Canadian hymnal, the Catholic Book of Worship, had been published and choirs were encouraged to use their gifts and talents to lead the gathered assembly in sung prayer.

Groups came and went as did music coordinators, directors and accompanists. There were numerous people who gave generously of their time and talents; duos, trios, small groups and large choirs.

In the fall of 1979 it was moved to purchase a new hymnal and the Catholic Book of Worship II was soon in the pews. The first Glory & Praise Hymnal was added in the 80s. This was a much more contemporary style of music than churches had been accustomed to.

It was also in the 80s that the first piano, a concert vertical, was purchased and another new choir began singing, using guitar and piano. At this point there were four active choirs varying in age and numbers and also in the style of music they were singing. Traditional four-part hymns, contemporary and folk style masses were common. The Resurrection choir, as it became known, was open to anyone. They rehearsed occasionally but showed up regularly to lead the singing at funerals.

Christmas concerts occurred in the early 90s with all choirs participating in the annual Gift of Song. The welcome area was added and the entire worship space was turned around. This meant a whole new set up for the music ministry. Risers were built adjacent to the sanctuary with microphone jacks wired in. An electric

piano was added at this time. This keyboard was portable and could also be used in the chapel for funerals and weddings.

Liturgical music was being published like never before and the Catholic Book of Worship III was purchased for the parish. Music workshops were held to teach musicians and choirs some of the new music. In 2003 the latest edition of the Glory & Praise hymnal was purchased. This gave us a wealth of new songs to sing.

The job of coordinating the music ministry had been, up until the late 90s, a volunteer position. At this time it became a part of one of the pastoral worker's portfolio and in 2005 Parish Council approved a one-quarter time position for the role of a music coordinator in the parish. This person would be responsible for scheduling all choirs for liturgies, looking after maintenance of keyboards and equipment, purchasing new equipment and music, facilitating workshops, training cantors and playing for funerals. It was also in this year that a new 16 channel mixer was purchased along with two choral microphones.

We have come such a long way. Fifty years later, the building has changed, the people and the music have changed but the Mass remains constant and the music ministry remains strong.

There are currently six active choirs in the parish, including a youth choir and a variety of instrumentalists. It is not uncommon to hear flutes, violins, drums and trumpets during mass. There are still two people singing today who were in that first choir that sang so many years ago. We give thanks to all of you for your dedication and commitment over the years.

**"Let every instrument be tuned for praise
Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise
And may God give us faith to sing always:
Alleluia!"**



Marge Koep and Josephine Barry have been members since the earliest days of St. Philip Neri choirs.

ST. PHILIP NERI: A

place of refuge

by Mary Nordick

SINCE 2005 ST. PHILIP NERI PARISH IS ON RECORD AS SUPPORTING ONGOING REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP.

However, our journey in sponsorship began many years earlier in 1979 with welcoming the “Boat People” of South East Asia. St. Philip parish welcomed two Vietnamese refugee families: one, parish-sponsored, the Van Thanh Duong family, under the guidance of Kathy Lambert and Edith Quinn, the other, the Vuong family, sponsored by the St. Jude group of about 10 parish families under the guidance of Rose Ann Keindel. Other parish members were involved in sponsorship outside the parish, for example, an ecumenical group based at the Catholic Centre. Sponsors helped the families with language, accommodation, learning how to use the bus, school, finding employment, all the activities of daily life in Canada. Some challenges of this sponsorship were: Language—most spoke no English and language programs were not immediately available, cultural differences—very polite, would say they understood when they really didn’t. The parish group welcomed a new baby into their family and helped the family grieve the death of a daughter. The St. Jude group started with four young Vietnamese and grew to seven when they discovered the mother and two younger siblings in another camp (later they brought their father to Canada). Eventually many Vietnamese families moved to the West Coast or to the East. Most quickly became contributing citizens of their new country. Members of the parish-sponsored family still live in Saskatoon.

St. Philip’s next official foray into sponsorship occurred in 1999 with the Kosovo experience. This was an extremely difficult sponsorship as people were airlifted from a recent war zone, unlike most refugees who come from long-term camp stays; they had the option to return to Kosovo, which is not usually the case, and the government paid their way. I was chair of the Kosovo committee. The family, the Begiris, consisted of the parents, six children ranging in age from six to twenty, and the father’s younger brother. All except the brother, Feti, returned to Kosovo in the fall of 1999. Feti became a Canadian citizen and returned to Kosovo two years ago, where, sadly, he was killed. Members of the sponsoring group are still in touch with the family. While this sponsorship was a demanding one, the group learned many positive lessons, the most important being the need for prayer and how to work together effectively.

St. Philip’s third sponsorship began two years after the Kosovo experience with the JAS (joint assisted sponsorship) sponsorship of the Kamara family from Sierra Leone. Unfortunately it took nearly two years for the family to arrive, which put a great strain on the organizing committee, originally headed by three people, Yvonne Colleaux, Colette Simonot, and Michael Marciniak, but by the time the sponsorship actually took place headed by only one, Yvonne. This family adjusted

well and is now self-sufficient. They are friends with many members of the sponsorship group and parish members who have met them over the years. This January the Kamaras hosted a combination house warming party and birthday celebration for Isatu (the mother), which saw their house filled with people from the parish whose lives they have touched. Note: Marge Koep quickly became grandma to the family. A bonus in this sponsorship was the hands-on involvement of our pastor, Fr. Les Paquin.

In 2005 the parish applied for its fourth sponsorship and in July of 2006 welcomed a mother and her young son from Iran. Mary Anne Mitchell and Gertrude Rompre headed the committee and in 2008 Dale Scott took on the chair, while Mary Anne, with the aid of Ed Ryan, concentrated on ongoing correspondence with Immigration. The sponsorship became complicated when we learned that Neeku had left a baby behind with her new husband. Efforts were then directed to reuniting the family, especially bringing the baby girl to Canada. Despite their effort to learn language and settle in Canada, separation from family members made it most difficult for the mother and son to fully engage life in Canada. The committee discovered a new ally, The Canadian Council for Refugees, and with its assistance, in September 2008, little Neekta finally came to Canada with her mother. The committee continues to work to reunite the family with their husband and father. Finally, four years ago parish council agreed to support financially two brothers from Eritrea whom we hope to welcome this spring.

There must be something to sponsorship since people keep coming back for more.

Refugee sponsorship has brought many blessings to St. Philip Neri Parish and has enriched the lives of both sponsored and sponsors. Our generous parishioners have willingly answered the call to share money and goods. Some have given an even greater treasure, their time and friendship. All have learned from our sponsored families. We have learned of their strength in facing unimaginable difficulties, their resilience and adaptability, their love of family, and their unfailing hope. The gratitude of the sponsored overwhelms us and we are humbled by their willingness to share, their welcoming our involvement in their family joys and sorrows.

Refugee sponsorship is a ministry of Welcoming the Stranger in our parish and a stranger is simply a friend whom we have yet to meet. Long may St. Philip Neri Parish be a place of welcome and refuge!

service FOR THE BETTERMENT OF ALL GOD'S *people*

by Mary Nordick

IN 1959, SHORTLY AFTER THE PARISH BEGAN, A GROUP OF INTERESTED LADIES MET TO FORM THE ST. PHILIP NERI PARISH COUNCIL OF THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA.

MRS. HOGAN BECAME THE CHARTER PRESIDENT AND 98 MEMBERS JOINED THAT FIRST YEAR. MEMBERSHIP WAS \$1 AS WAS THE LEAGUE MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION.



St. Philip's women are active in making prayer shawls and Teddies for Tragedies

Since it was a new parish, fundraising played a large part in the CWL in the early years. The CWL furnished the kitchen in the school and contributed to the building of the parish. Over the years, the league held pie sales, looked after funeral lunches, and assisted with parish functions. CWL contributed financially to the Girl Guides. The council sponsored speakers and programs of interest to the parish at large as well as to members. Members helped staff the nursery, supported the Red Cross, visited the sick at home and in hospital, and helped families in need in the parish. On the diocesan level, members attended meetings and conventions, and worked at the CWL Clothing Depot, which is located at the Friendship Inn.

After a dozen or so years of hard work and service, membership dropped, interest waned and several active members moved to the new parish of Holy Spirit. For several years the league was inactive in St. Philip Parish.

Then in late fall 1982, Fr. Paul Donlevy, a former Provincial CWL spiritual advisor and pastor of the parish, got three phone calls about reactivating the CWL. He put the women in touch with each other. I was invited as chair of a steering committee of Helen Desmarais, Denise Schmitz, and Doris White and later, Edith Quinn. We began investigating the feasibility of reactivating the League in the parish. Calls to CWL national office showed that the St. Philip Neri CWL Council Charter had never been returned and, therefore, a simple motion to reactivate and payment of memberships would be all that was necessary.

In May 1983 the committee, with the assistance of the diocesan president, held a well-attended meeting to discuss the possibility of reactivating. One major concern was the possible impact on the Love Your Neighbour group that was successfully operating in the parish, looking after funeral lunches and other charitable works. Those present decided that the CWL would not try to take anything away from Love Your Neighbour; the focus of the CWL would be community building and spiritual development for its members. At the end of the meeting those present voted to reactivate the CWL Council and I continued as chair until elections in the fall.

One of our first activities was helping with hospitality at the national convention held in August in Saskatoon. Since its reactivation the CWL has contributed service, treasure and prayer to the parish.

While not a fundraising group the CWL does hold pie sales and sells calendars, both as a service to the parish and as a means of raising some funds to support worthy causes. For years the CWL supported Impact House, a safe haven for women wishing to leave the streets. We support Development and Peace, Canadian Catholic Missions, pro-life causes, and most recently Station 20 West. We participate in parish events such as the bazaar, The Mission, special occasions, and Fathers' Day. We give an annual scholarship to a Grade 12 graduate from the parish. We form an honour guard at a member's funeral. Many members are busy knitting Prayer Shawls and Teddies for Tragedies, which are distributed within and far beyond the parish boundaries.

ST. PHILIP NERI PARISH COUNCIL OF THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA PRESIDENTS

1959-61	Mrs. W. Hogan
1961-62	A. Hudson
1962-64	R.K. McDonald
1964-66	A.J. Daley
1966-67	K.V. Dean
1967-69	A.C. Voellmocke
1969-70	F.L. Moonie
1970-71	No President
1971-82	Inactive
1983-85	Mary Nordick
1985-87	Eunice Jacobs
1987-89	Terry Trevisan
1989-92	Doris White
1992-96	Caroline Aiken
1996-98	Mary Lenz
1998-00	Liz Miazga
2000-02	Eunice Jacobs
2002-04	Yvonne Colleaux
2004-06	Fran Clarke
2006-	Doreen Gallagher

The Catholic Women's League of Canada unites Catholic women across our great country in service to God and Canada. At the diocesan level, members help at the clothing depot, host the Our Lady of Good Counsel potluck, participate in retreats and provide hospitality for the Chrism Mass, the Mental Health Dinner and diocesan events such as ordinations. They are also active in attending and working at diocesan, provincial and national conventions.

One of the league's main functions is service for the betterment of all God's people. At the National and Provincial level, the league meets with government to present our concerns. These concerns take the form of resolutions, which are debated and passed at each level. Once passed these resolutions become league policy.

Over the years St. Philip Neri Council has worked on several resolutions, for example, on bullying, decriminalization of marijuana, oppression of women under the Taliban, overmedication of the elderly, support for single mothers, workmen's compensation, to name a few. We have also studied and taken action on resolutions passed at national. Some members are currently working on a resolution on eliminating child poverty. At our monthly meetings, we often have a speaker on spiritual or justice matters, for example, small Christian communities or human trafficking. Members from our council have gone on to serve at the diocesan, provincial, and national levels of the league.

Above all the league is an opportunity for women of the parish, from 16 years and onwards, to gather for prayer, service, support, and friendship. Its greatest blessing is the friends we make, friends in our parish council, our diocese, our province, and across our country.



Once known as the Young Mom's group, then the Mom's group, and finally the Women's Group, these women still meet once a year. This photo, from 1994, was taken at retreat in Muenster.

PARISH GIVES EXPRESSION TO CHRIST'S

healing ministry

by Michel Thibault

AMONG THE MANY SERVICES PROVIDED BY ST. PHILIP NERI PARISH, THE PARISH NURSE MINISTRY STANDS OUT.

FOR OVER 2000 YEARS FAITH COMMUNITIES HAVE REACHED OUT TO THE ILL, THE BROKEN, THE SCORNE, THE SUFFERING AND OFFERING THEM HEALING—THROUGH TOUCH, THROUGH THE KIND OF LISTENING THAT EMPOWERS, AND THROUGH PRAYER. THROUGHOUT THE AGES, THESE COMMUNITIES OF FAITH PROVIDED THE CARE, COMFORT, COMPASSION AND HOPE THAT CAME TO BE KNOWN AS “HEALTH CARE.”

Advances in science however have increasingly led to a health care system which often only deals with the physical part of the person.

The scientific separation of the body, mind and the spirit has conditioned many of us to believe that the parish is not a place for a nurse, but there is a natural relationship between the parish and the ministry of the church in healing and in health.

The Benedictine rule states: “The care of the sick is to be placed above and before every other duty, as if indeed Christ were being directly served by waiting on them.” Mother Teresa lived a similar rule.

With the creation of a Parish Nurse Ministry, St. Philip Neri Parish community is giving expression to Christ's healing ministry.

The ministry owes its genesis to Deb Bauche and Ethna Martin, two registered nurses who enrolled in the Inter Church Health Ministry Parish Nursing training course in March, 2003.

In November, 2003, they were permitted to complete the practicum portion of their course at the parish. With the encouragement of Fr. Les Paquin,



Deb Bauche and Ethna Martin deliver nursing services

the nurses, convinced that this service would meet needs in the parish, enlisted the support of persons from the parish community who, together with the nurses, in April, 2004, prepared and presented a proposal to parish council to hire a full time parish nurse, and Deb and Ethna were each hired to a half time position.

The parish nurses do not ordinarily provide hands-on care, perform invasive procedures, administer medications or seek to replace any existing health services.

Parish Nursing pursues a concept of health that moves beyond merely combating disease, and encompasses a broader vision: a commitment to whole health—body, mind, and spirit. The achievement of harmony in the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of life, a healing possible even without cure.

Services our parish nurses do at St. Philip Neri include:

Health education, Church Bulletin information, prompting health checks and advice on health-related issues, symptoms and conditions such as blood pressure, weight management, blood sugar levels, addictions information, medic alert identification, advanced health care directive and living wills.

They have organized blood pressure clinics at the church, men's and women's health brunches.

They meet with people, who want to talk about any health concern with a caring professional.

They provide health information and support for patients and their families prior to, during and after hospital stays. They do home, hospital and nursing home visits. They accompany people to hospital appointments and advocate for them with health services.

At prayer visits during illness, they provide information, prayer and support when dealing with chronic illness, accident, terminal diagnosis. They meet with families before and after a death, provide medical information and spiritual preparation for the end of life. They provide information and support for long term caregivers and caring assistance when having to place loved one in nursing, long term care. They help elderly members adapt to life and related health changes. They provide referrals to community resources and assistance such as GPs, dieticians, counselors, home care, social service departments and voluntary agencies.

They explain the relationship between body, mind and spirit, including prayer and discussion of spiritual issues, as part of the parish pastoral care team.

They, within and as a part of the Parish team, assist with co-ordination of liturgical services for the benefit of those in need of healing. They pray with the sick and connect the community with the sick through congregational prayer.

In everything parish nurses do, they affirm the church as a "healing place." They continue to walk in the footsteps of Jesus to help us care for all who are sick, be that sickness spiritual, mental, or physical.

SCOUTS SET UP CAMP AS EARLY AS 1965

THE CHARTER DATE OF THE SASKATOON IROQUOIS DISTRICT, ST. PHILIP'S 8TH SCOUT TROOP, WAS 1965. TOM BROPHY WAS THE SCOUTMASTER, RUDY SHERWIN AND ORVIN KENT WERE ASSISTANT SCOUTERS, MR. HENDRICKS WAS AN ASSISTANT, ANDY GELOWITZ WAS THE TREASURER AND CLARENCE SCHULTE WAS IN CHARGE OF LOGISTICS AND FOOD.

The meetings were held at the St. Philip's School auditorium on Wednesday nights and some nights, the boys were building natural shelters on the banks of the South Saskatchewan River. The first adventure camp was during the summer of 1968 at Anglin Lake. The camps lasted one to two weeks and during the northern trips, Don Brophy was the youngest person in attendance. One summer weekend, a full-blown scout camp was set up on the church parking lot and the scouts held a church parade.

The earliest of the scouts were Laurie Fraser, David Wiggins, Walter Brophy, Wayne Kent, Bob Brophy, Keith Sherwin, Don Gray, Gary Gray, Gordon Beliveau, Gary Sherwin, Glenn Sherwin, Donald Beliveau and David Carr. The troop colours were a red scarf with a black border.

In May, 1968, four members of the troop, Walter Brophy, Gordon Beliveau, Glen Sherwin and Donald Beliveau, were presented with Queen Scout badges and certificates in front of the Legislative Buildings in Regina.

After four years of leading the troop, Tom Brophy was posted to assistant district commissioner and the troop was disbanded. It took until 1996 when Mark Thomson, John Lanctot and Ronald Denis decided to revive the colours again and at that point, St. Philip's 8th became part of the Chippewa district in Saskatoon.

In September, 1997, there were 20 Beavers led by Thomson, about 24 Cubs led by Kevin Hartery and the six scouts led by Lanctot. A group committee was formed, with Norma Denis as chair and Caroline Lanctot as treasurer. Ken Meier and John Schatz also became deeply committed.

Camping activities took place at Camp Seeonee near Pike Lake, the Knights of Columbus Blackstrap campground and the Anglin Lake semi-wilderness area. The Knights of Columbus were strong supporters. Provided were swimming, canoeing, hiking, tobogganing, skating, camping and many badge-working functions.

The troop stayed in operation for nine years, the last charter was registered with Scouts Canada on 2001, and it seemed like the doubling of the scout insurance played an effect on no one registering in 2002.

VALUE OF *youth* MINISTRY *highly* APPARENT IN PARISH

by Patrick Clarke

MANY HAVE SAID, "THE YOUTH ARE THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH." I PERSONALLY AGREE WITH THIS SENTIMENT, BUT I BELIEVE A MORE ACCURATE STATEMENT WOULD BE: "THE YOUTH **ARE** THE CHURCH."

At any rate, all the baptized, regardless of their age, are part of the church and indeed, our future would look bleak if the youth of today are not engaged. Hence the intrinsic value of youth ministry makes itself apparent.

St. Philip Neri has a rich and diverse history of youth ministerial activity.

Gerry Grimard was the first person to be hired by St. Philip Neri parish as a youth minister. Gerry has since moved on to the role of pastoral associate at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish.

Brett Powell was hired by Fr. Len Cyr in the fall of 1992 as a half-time youth minister and eventually went full-time in 1994. Brett stayed at the parish until January, 1995.

Brett had various groups meeting; Kingdom Kids (ages 5-7), Kids for Christ (ages 8-13) and Club Neri which was high school/young adults (ages 14-20).

Youth group events consisted of 'Slurpees for life', various social outings like bowling and wall climbing. Brett not only provided social opportunities but also focused on teens developing their faith life through Bible studies and the Hour of Power in the chapel at Holy Cross.

"One week we almost filled the chapel with high school kids, it was awesome!" Brett also started a bi-weekly Mass and social night called Prime Time that was open to everyone. This event proved to be a big hit. Attendance ranged from 40-250, depending on the activity that followed Mass.



Pilgrims posing by the grotto in the parish backyard at an Our Lady Queen of Peace mini-pilgrimage. It was a day complete with rosary making and Mass.

"We had everything from social justice projects like Think Fast to pure social events like karaoke or a dance. Interestingly the most popular event was always Mass followed by Eucharistic Adoration. Various priests from around the diocese celebrated with us."

Volunteers were called "Key Core Members" and consisted of Danielle Pion and Todd Gaucher. As teens grew up, they became leaders as well: Patrick Fletcher, Catherine Fletcher, Pam Buchner, Mark Matthews, Nicole DeRoo among them.

"My hope was to create environments that foster relationships where they could have a personal encounter with God, be formed in the Christian life, build community to help navigate their way through life and find their voice and place of service in the church. I am most pleased with hearing how many have gone on to serve in various capacities," says Brett.

Michael MacLean was hired by Fr. Len Cyr in 1996 as a full-time youth minister. "I was so excited to be working there! When I signed on, I was the only full-time youth minister in Saskatoon, and was also able to advocate for paid youth ministry in other parishes, like St. Augustine's in Humboldt," says Michael.

Michael inherited some very active youth groups. He also coordinated and taught Sacramental prep for confirmation students at the Grade 6 level, and visited the two schools, St. Philip and St. James.

Michael operated by a 'needs-based' model, and he surveyed the community to see what the needs of youth and their parents were at that time. This proved to be quite fruitful as he was able to identify a need for a Vacation Bible School. When Fr. Bodnarchuk became the new pastor, he asked Michael to add a Thursday Night Drop-in to the program. The drop-in was to be a place where kids from the parish could stop by and chat, play ping pong, or just hang out.

Michael served St. Philip Neri parish as coordinator from May, 1996 to August, 1998, when he moved on to join the St. Thomas More College Campus Ministry team.

My personal involvement with youth ministry at St. Philip Neri began after I had a brief meeting with Fr. Brad Bodnarchuk in the summer of 1998. The purpose of our meeting was to discuss my return to the Catholic Church. (I was baptized Catholic and received both my First Reconciliation/First Eucharist as a child but my family left the Church for an Evangelical church before I was confirmed.)

When Fr. Brad learned that I served as a youth pastor in an Evangelical/Charismatic church for four and a half years, he asked me if I would consider coming on staff as a part-time youth minister.

For the first two years, I worked as a full-time sales-rep for a construction equipment company and continued working part-time here at St. Philip Neri until I became St. Philip's full-time youth minister in 2000. My duties included visiting our two schools (St. Philip and St. James and when St. James closed, Pope John Paul II).

The first order of business was to assemble a team of volunteers. This was especially important for the first two years, seeing as I was responsible for three youth groups (Kingdom Kids – Grades 3-5, Kids 4 Christ – Grades 6-8 and Club Neri – Grades 9-12) working part-time hours.

Over the years I had many volunteers work with one or more youth group. To name a few: Tanya Clarke (nee Szautner), Sonia Cyrenne (nee Blechinger), Liane Fifield (nee Pinel), Tanya Kliebor, Jon and Danielle Farthing, Curtis and Julie Anne Hilton, Anna Schell, Chad Wasyliniuk and Regan Coulter and Kelly Hagen-Neilson.

As a team we tried to focus on meeting the needs of the 'whole' Catholic young person. We had times of catechesis, prayer and reflection, social events and social justice events.

One annual event that stands out in my memory was the "Lit Nite" events put on by our senior high school students. Members of the parish were invited to participate in a talent show featuring music, skits and stand-up comedy. All of this good fun was to raise awareness of poverty in Peru and provide clothing to a Peruvian orphanage that Francis and Elizabeth Kreiser worked at as missionaries. We supported the orphanage two years in a row and in the third year we raised money for Sonia Blechinger and Liane Pinel to spend time as missionaries in The Gambia, Africa with the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary.

In 2000, Terry Cratty (youth minister at Holy Family at that time) and I started a monthly youth gathering called the Nite Life Youth Liturgy. The concept was to gather youth from as many parishes as possible for an event

which included a talk on Catholic teaching, a Liturgy of the Word or Mass followed by a major activity. The first Nite Life was hosted by St. Philip Neri, Fr. Paquin was visiting from Brazil and say Mass that evening, speaking on the power of love and using a quote from Mother Teresa's address to the UN to drive the point home. Over the years many other parishes came on line in terms of sponsorship and planning and today this event is called the Diocesan Youth Event.



Participants enjoying some praise songs at a NET ministries retreat for grades 3-5.

In 2004 I phased out of youth ministry and took on the role of pastoral associate. Shane and Dawn Doyle took over as a part-time youth ministry couple and they helped grow our two junior youth groups.

Shanna-Lee Connel was hired as a pastoral associate and youth ministry was part of her portfolio. After some time, Shanna-Lee took a position out of province and we hired Joel Willick, who served as youth minister for eight months before he moved to pursue his post-secondary education.

In 2008, we received an application from Candace Forcier, who came on staff (half-time) in the summer of '08 and quickly won the hearts of youth and parents alike.

In a short period of time, Candace assembled a team of volunteers and went to work re-building our youth ministry. Today she and her team oversee three successful youth groups: Kingdom Kids, Chronicles of Neri and Nite Life.

On April 1, 2009 Candace accepted a full-time contract as our youth minister. Her future plans for youth ministry include a regularly-scheduled youth mass complete with contemporary praise and worship music, and a college and career ministry (ages 18-35).

THE BUILDING OF.

parish councils

by Frank Vella

AFTER I ACCEPTED AN INVITATION MADE TO ME RECENTLY TO WRITE ABOUT PARISH COUNCILS AT ST PHILIP NERI PARISH, I FELT THAT I MAY HAVE ACTED RASHLY. YES, ME AND MY WIFE LENA, HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN AT LEAST THREE SUCH, HOWEVER WE DID NOT KEEP ANY RECORDS AS WE ACTED WITH AN EYE TO THE PRESENT RATHER THAN TO THE FUTURE. HOWEVER, EVERY HUMAN MEMORY CARRIES WITHIN IT IMPRESSIONS OF ITS EXPERIENCE OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES. THESE BOTH OF US HAVE AND IT IS THESE THAT I WILL DESCRIBE BRIEFLY HERE.

This parish was established during the heady and optimistic days of the Second Vatican Council (VCI) which had been called by John XXIII within just three months of his election to the papacy. After almost four years of intensive preparation, the Council opened late in 1962. Pope John died barely nine months after this opening, but the Council was continued, and was concluded late in 1964, under Paul VI. (1)

We came to the parish as a young family in September 1965 when the parish priest was Msgr. John Robinson. At that time an annual parish meeting was held at which a small group were nominated and appointed to assist the parish priest in a largely advisory capacity in financial matters and in the organization of social events within the parish. Lena was roped in to serve as recording secretary for a year during monsignor's time.

It took several years for the recommendations of the VCI to be actively analysed and discussed so that guidelines could be developed for their implementation. These recommendations were so different from the traditional understanding of the role of lay persons in the church that this delay was essential and unavoidable. For example, about the laity, the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity stated: "Their activity is so necessary in church communities that without it the apostolate of the pastors is generally unable to achieve its full effectiveness" (2) and "The laity should accustom themselves to working in the parish in close union with their priests, bringing to the church community their own and the world's problems as well as questions concerning human salvation, all of which should be resolved by common deliberation. As far as possible the laity ought to collaborate energetically in every apostolic and missionary undertaking sponsored by their local parish" (3)

Fr. Bob Ogle became parish priest in 1970. He strongly believed that these recommendations required a good understanding by the parishioners of the role described for them by the VCI. He felt this could best be achieved, in part, through the greater involvement of parishioners in the preparation of the students in the Catholic schools within the parish boundaries for the sacraments of Penance,

Holy Eucharist and Confirmation and through a broadly-based educational program within the parish community.

He set up his first parish council with a group of selected married couples as members and spent a lot of time with them to enhance their understanding and to develop ways for implementation. Responsibility was gradually assigned to them for preparation of parents for baptism of their newborn children, and for preparation of school children for Penance, Eucharist, and Confirmation. He also believed that members would become leaders in this re-education program within the parish. The male members were trained and commissioned as the first distributors of Holy Communion with the female members following a short while later. In subsequent parish councils open nominations for membership from, and voting by, the parish community were instituted.

Although this was largely a period (mostly happy but sometimes painful) of experimentation, education and the changing of attitudes, it has formed the basis for the role of subsequent parish councils in which the emphasis is largely on pastoral affairs but with attention also to financial and social activities.

We also served in parish councils when Fr. (later Msgr.) Blaise Morand and then Fr. Paul Donlevy became parish priests. In this time the mission of the parish council which started under Fr Bob Ogle became well accepted within the parish. The administration of and focus on parish needs evolved to reach their present level.

Parishioners have not been slow in nominating suitable persons or in accepting to serve on parish councils. Those elected since St. Philip Neri parish was established have given good, willing and commendable service for the faith and welfare of their community.

1. The Documents of Vatican II, W.J. Abbott (general editor), 1996, The America Press, New York, pages xv and xvi

2 Ibid, page 500

3. Ibid, page 501.

AVENUES OF *enrichment* THROUGH RCIA AND RCIC

by Rose Ann Keindel

THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA) PROCESS HAS DEVELOPED OVER THE PAST YEARS SINCE VATICAN II BUT FR. MICHAEL KOCH TELLS ME THAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ENVISIONED THIS PROCESS SINCE 1955.

Fr. Michael was very instrumental in implementing the RCIA, as we know it today in our parish and indeed throughout the Diocese of Saskatoon. In the early 1980's, he was very active in the rite's beginnings. He and Sr. Adeline Boehm were part of the North American Forum of the Catechumenate, which originated in the USA.

In 1983, A Beginnings and Beyond Institute was held in Saskatoon and Cristiane Brusselmans, a woman from Austria, was the facilitator. The RCIA was the vision of this woman and the participants went back to their parishes and began to implement this process. During the institute participants were immersed in the conversion journey by assuming the role of catechumens, sponsors, catechists etc. and each experienced his or her own conversion.

In the years proceeding the RCIA private instructions were given by the pastor and / or classes were provided at the Catholic Centre. Baptism and / or Confirmation and First Eucharist took place at the Cathedral with the Bishop presiding. Eventually all of the Initiation Sacraments were celebrated in the catechumen (non baptized) or candidate's (baptized in another Christian denomination) respective parishes at Easter.

In a bulletin sent out to various parishes in the Diocese in 1965-66 it read:
Inquiry Course In Catechism: Sixteen weekly lectures and discussions (led by a diocesan priest) at the Catholic Centre, Co-instructed by laymen (some of whom were women). Four additional classes were provided for those wishing to become Catholic. Four weekends were offered four times annually for those entering into "mixed marriages."

In St Philip's Parish, the RCIA model was introduced and grew from 1975 forward. Over the years the process grew from one of about eight weeks of pre-catechumenate (inquiry) and six months plus of catechumenate, which was the final preparation for initiation into the Church. In the early years it was "a program" with designated topics to be lectured on and learned. Today it is a "process" of conversion, an ongoing journey of faith happening over a period of at least a year and a half to two and a half years. It is much more a discussion and sharing of life experiences. It revolves around the church year and the Sunday lectionary (official readings of the Church)

Once the inquirers have made the decision to become "Catholic" they attend a Sunday liturgy as a group and after the homily are "dismissed" and go with a catechist to further "break open" or study The Word.

At various stages of the journey official "Rites of Passage" are celebrated usually with the community present. The idea is to immerse the catechumens and candidates in the community in order to make them feel welcome and a part of the parish. Over the years

hundreds of people have taken part in the RCIA as catechumens, candidates, sponsors, catechists and prayer patrons. Also included were those accompanying the inquirers.

Lent has been seen as the immediate preparation with the Easter Vigil being the occasion for Baptism and/or Confirmation and Eucharist. After initiation the Neophytes (new ones) are encouraged to take their place in ministry in the parish and throughout the diocese. The journey never ends but is a lifetime process of conversion.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Children (RCIC) came about as the church became aware of many children of Catholic parents who were baptized or had never been baptized and never completed their initiation by Confirmation and Eucharist. The RCIA process was adapted for children seven years and older beginning at whatever level they were at and taking into account family circumstances.

In the beginning catechumens and candidates were always part of the same process but with slightly different Rites of Passage and initiation at the Easter Vigil. This has evolved and now the candidates (the already baptized) are on a separate journey for a minimum of a year and a half years and are received at a time other than Easter.

On January 25, 2009 Jackie Peacock was received into the Church, Confirmed and received First Eucharist at the 5 p.m. Mass before the entire community.

Baptism by total immersion is encouraged but until 1989 most Saskatoon parishes could not offer this possibility. Thanks to Fr. Mike Koch we have an immersion baptism. On March 25, 1989 at the Easter Vigil, Dianne Dash was the first adult to be baptized by immersion in our parish.

St Philip's has had an RCIA facilitator since 1981. Those who have served are: Arlene Boulanger (1981 to 1984), Sr. Loretta McDonnell (1984 to 1986), Rose Ann Keindel (1986 to 2002) and Patrick Clarke (2002 to the present).

The pastor has a very important role in the catechumenate process by helping to discern conversion, as a catechist, celebrating the Rites of Passage, and of course in administering the sacraments of initiation. He also has an important task in encouraging everyone on the parish team and keeping the entire parish aware of the process.

St. Philip's Parish Community has become richer over the years because of those journeying in the RCIA and RCIC. In particular Lent and Easter would not be the same without the Catechumenate process.

CHANGING THE COURSE OF *marriage preparation*

by Adele and Jim Longstaff

FOR THE FIRST 25 YEARS OF ST. PHILIP NERI CHURCH'S EXISTENCE, MARRIAGE PREPARATION WAS CONSIDERED TO BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARISH PRIEST ALONG WITH THE DIOCESE OF SASKATOON, CATHOLIC FAMILY SERVICES AND CATHOLIC ENGAGED ENCOUNTER.

There were various resources available, such as a six session course at the Pastoral Center for couples entering a "mixed marriage," a weekend course sponsored by the Diocese and Catholic Family Services that dealt with topics that were pertinent to couples preparing for marriage and an Engaged Encounter Weekend offered by a team of married couples and a priest.

Parish based Marriage Preparation began at the parish in 1983 when Fr. Paul Donlevy and Vic and Fran Clark began offering a six-week program called Evenings for the Engaged. This program was offered at the Clark home. It was designed to have a married couple share their experiences with the engaged couples and to become mentors to them. It also gave the engaged couples a connection to the parish by providing prayer couples for each engaged couple throughout the six week course.

In 1985, the diocese, under the direction of Bishop James Mahoney, put together a committee to set up a parish-based Marriage Preparation Experience. The result was a 12-session program that was designed to alternate between the parish and the homes of the lead couples. The parish priest was to be involved in a number of the sessions directly. The goal of the program was to connect the engaged couples to the parish before they were married, have them feel at home in the parish and provide for mentorship and friendship with other couples in the parish.

In 1986, we, as a couple, and Fr. Mike Koch implemented this program at St. Philip Neri. A team of three or four couples assisted us. In 1991, when Fr. Len Cyr became pastor, Pat and Andy Fontaine became the team leaders and continued,

with the assistance of numerous other couples, to direct this program until 1997. About the time Fr. Brad Bodnarchuk became the pastor, Mike and Mary Grevers assumed the leadership of this program, a role they retain today.

Over the years several changes have been made to the Marriage Preparation Program. It now consists of nine sessions which are all held in the parish. There are still small group sharing sessions. The parish is always aware of the program as a picture of those attending hangs in the Place of Welcome. Each engaged couple also has a special prayer couple who prays for them and is aware of their journey as they prepare for marriage.

The Marriage Preparation Experience outline was updated by the Diocesan Task Force on Marriage in 2005, and now makes provisions for couples who are entering a second or "subsequent" marriage.

Since the inception of this parish based Marriage Preparation at St. Philip Neri, hundreds of couples have been offered this experience. There has been one or two sessions offered annually for the past 23 years.

Many married couples have been part of the team. Several of the couples who have been or are on team have participated previously as an engaged couple.

The Marriage Preparation Team has become a vital part of the ministry of the parish. It continues to welcome, evangelize, and build up the community of God within the parish.

IN SEARCH OF *social justice*

by Mary Nordick

WHEN HE CAME TO THE PARISH IN 1997, FR. BRAD BODNARCHUCK ASKED FOR THE BEGINNING OF A SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP. I WAS AMONG THE FOUNDING MEMBERS ALONG WITH MARY ANNE MITCHELL AND BARBARA PAVELICH. OVER THE YEARS THE GROUP WELCOMED CAROL BEAUREGARD, BONNIE BEAVIS, IRENE DANAHER, FIONA HAYNES, DORMA GUEDO, KEN AND HELEN SAUNDERS, AND COLETTE SIMONOT, A SMALL BUT DEDICATED AND ACTIVE GROUP.

Our first activities were educating the parish about MAI (multilateral agreement on investment) through presentations and signing petitions, and helping the Youth Group bake cookies for the Crisis Nursery.

We participated in the Wear Fair program of Development and Peace and Oxfam through bulletin inserts, signing cards and raising awareness about where the clothes on our backs come from and the conditions under which they are often produced. A Lenten "Clothes Closet" project urged parishioners to read the labels on their clothes, to become more aware of injustices in the clothing industry, and to do an inventory of their closets, donating good used clothing to the CWL Clothing Depot or the Mennonite Central Committee store.

Fair trade was encouraged through requesting that the parish purchase only fair trade coffee, a request that was made at a parish annual meeting and later ratified by Parish Council. Unfortunately, that decision has been reversed. Presentations about fair trade were made to the parish and opportunities to purchase fair trade products were given.

We have been a part of the Good Friday Walk for Justice and Peace, participating and encouraging participation by parishioners and, on at least two occasions, writing and presenting the prayers and meditations for one of the stations.

Concern for children and our inner city led us to host presentations and conduct a poster campaign in the parish on the issue of child prostitution, under the title "It's not Child Prostitution; it's Child Abuse."

Refugee sponsorship has been a large part of the Social Justice Committee work. The committee decided to participate in the sponsorship of the Kosovo Refugees

and enlisted parish support. From this experience the committee dreamed of one day making the parish an ongoing sponsor of refugees, a dream that was realized in 2005 when Parish Council agreed to support in principle the concept of ongoing sponsorship. The committee was instrumental in forming the sponsorship group for the Kamara family. As that sponsorship neared its end, the committee organized a series of meetings to educate the parish about refugee sponsorship. As a result another refugee committee was formed and still continues with our current sponsorship. An advent evening of prayer and sharing by refugees, Ibrahim and Isatu Kamara and Anthony Angu and Vicky Angua, led to the involvement of the pastor and a parishioner in the formation of Friends of Loa, a group dedicated to rebuilding a school in Sudan. St. Philip parishioners have generously supported this project.

The committee participated in and promoted the following activities during its existence: the diocesan Social Justice Group, justice conferences, peace conferences, parish justice events (e.g. Poverty Meals, Lenten prayer services) bulletin board displays on refugee issues and social justice concerns, the most recent being the 2008 Advent promotion and fundraising for Station 20 West and Friends of Loa.

Unfortunately, the committee ceased to meet regularly as of February 2006 when the original chair could no longer continue and no one came forward to take on leadership of the committee. In fairness, several committee members were by then in the thick of refugee sponsorship, which continues to enrich the parish today.

Hopefully, the Social Justice committee of St. Philip Neri Parish is simply lying fallow and will rise again to carry out this most important Gospel call.

TAKING THE LEAD IN *grassroots. ecumenism*

by Ken Saunders

THE SASKATOON CENTRE FOR ECUMENISM WAS ESTABLISHED BY BISHOP JAMES MAHONEY IN 1984 AS THE ECUMENICAL OFFICE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE FOR SASKATOON, UNDER FOUNDING DIRECTOR, FR. BERNARD DE MARGERIE.

Individual parishes were invited to become informed and to participate in the ministry of reconciliation and unity as prayed for by Jesus at the Last Supper and newly-mandated by Second Vatican Council. St. Philip Neri parish was in the forefront of exploring grassroots ecumenical relationships with neighbourhood churches. In 1985, a small group became a parish committee for ecumenism and sought ways to reach out to neighbouring congregations.

Through prayer, study and fellowship, a relationship built among our local churches. A most visible and well-known activity is the annual Lenten Morning Prayer service, begun in 1994. St. Philip Neri has been hosts of the prayer services three times in its 16-year history, the most recent being 2008. Many other ecumenical events have taken place, including pulpit exchanges, choir festivals, inter-church bible studies and studies like the joint declaration on the doctrine of justification between the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation.

Foundational to our desire for Christian unity is baptism. All the main-line churches recognize the baptism as celebrated in others' churches as valid baptisms. The reception or transfer of membership among these churches does not require a second baptism. This understanding is shown in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults process within the Roman Catholic Church. The distinction is made between the catechumen, who is a non-baptized person; and the candidate, who is already baptized. The catechumen is received through a profession of faith and baptism and other sacraments of initiation, whereas the candidate is received through the profession of faith, eucharist and communion.

Accordingly, the meaning of baptism was studied for several years, first by participation in the study of BEM document (baptism, eucharist and ministry) from the World Council of Churches as arranged through the Saskatoon Centre of Ecumenism, followed by workshops on baptism in 1992 and 1999. A joint letter of welcome from the Nutana area churches was prepared to be given to each newly-baptized person.

Inter-parish covenanting was the subject of much study and reflection for several years. In the end, no formal covenant was signed. However, from our earliest days, our congregations had twinning relationships wherein two or three congregations engaged in shared activities from pulpit exchanges to potlucks. St. Philip Neri has been twinned with Redeemer Lutheran Church for several years. When the Waterloo declaration established full communion between Canadian Lutheran and Anglican churches, St. Timothy's Anglican Church joined the inter-parish committee.

The tri-parish committee has worked to promote ecumenical co-operation through prayer, study and fellowship, and an example of activities has been signing up as volunteer workers with Habitat for Humanity.

Over the years, the St. Philip Neri committee has blended into a tri-parish committee while the leadership and nurturing of the ecumenical spirit has been embraced by the Parish Pastoral Council and parish staff. Ecumenism is an important ministry in our parish life.

A toast to us!

When St. Philip Neri Parish celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1984, a special gift was made to a future generation, a gift which would allow us to toast ourselves on the 50th anniversary.

The gift was a case of port from the pastor, parish council and parishioners, whose names on a letter include Tom and Del Brophy, Barbara Cardenas, Lorraine Cheke, Carmen Couture, James Couture, Gerry Grimard, Gerry and Peggy Jean, Frank and Ethel McKinnon, Bob Martin, Deborah Miazga, Ian and MaryAnne Mitchell, Henry and Deanne Neinaber, John and Heather Perret, Frank Roy, John and Elizabeth Suter and Fr. Paul Donlevy.

The gift came with the hopes that the 50th anniversary be a special time of blessing and thanksgiving.

Members of the Opimian Society gathered recently to open and test the port, which passed the test, and it is being served at the reception following the 50th anniversary Mass on May 26.



A case of Churchill's Vintage Port, donated 25 years ago, carries a "Do Not Open Until 50th Anniversary" message from Fr. Paul Donlevy.



Curtis Hilton, Paul Tremblay and Patrick Clarke were among those present for a May 26, 2009 wine sampling.

st. philip neri staff 2009



back row (l-r): Simone Swayze, Sandi Lamborn, Ethna Martin, Candace Forcier
front row (l-r): Joanne Lysyshyn, Patrick Clarke, Deb Bauche

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Jim and Adele Longstaff, Michel Thibault

special thanks

To all of the pastors who shared their memories of service at St. Philip Neri.
What a remarkable collection of servants and many of us
have been honoured to know them all.

To Fr. Ron Beechinor, who knew all of our priests and bishops, and brought
a sense of history and liturgical awareness to this project.

To Shawna Kunz, for the uplifting and creative leadership in the graphic design.

To Rick Murza, who assembled a 25-year newspaper on the history of the parish
in 1984 and provided us with the blocks on which we could build.

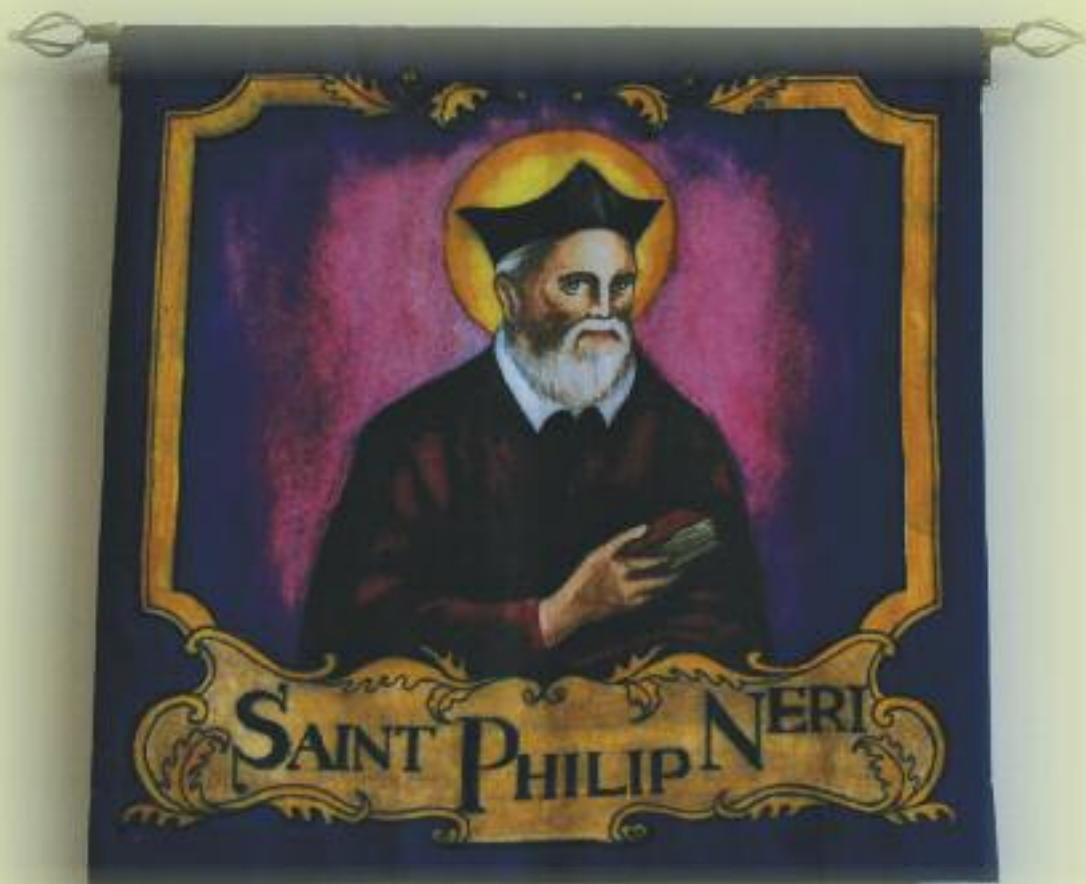
To all who provided ideas, stories, worked on the collection of pictures
over the years, and made this publication truly a team effort.

Lord, as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of
St. Philip Neri Parish in Saskatoon, we rejoice that you have
blessed us and called us together in this community.

We thank you for the blessing of St. Philip Neri who encouraged
those around him to be humble and obedient and to take
themselves less seriously, to worry more about what God thinks
and less about what other people think.

Teach us not to take ourselves too seriously, to pray for your
plans, not our own, to carry our difficulties with dignity, and to
live life with humour, for humour and joy are gifts from God.

**Composed by Ed Gibney,
Parish Pastoral Council chair**



HEAVENLY FATHER, YOU GAVE US ST. PHILIP NERI TO BE FOR US AN
EXAMPLE OF HOLY JOYFULNESS. WE ASK YOU TO FILL US WITH THIS
JOY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AS YOU DID WITH YOUR FAITHFUL SERVANT
PHILIP NERI. THROUGH HIS INTERCESSION, MAY OUR HEARTS BURN
WITH LOVE FOR YOU. MAY WE GLORIFY YOU THROUGH YOUR SON,
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BEFORE
ALL THE WORLD. AMEN.
