

# *50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*



*Immaculate Conception*  
1962 - 2012

*All for God  
And  
His People*



# FOREWORD

Into your hands we would like to offer this book as a token of our appreciation to those who have dedicated their time and lives, to build a community of God in the Parish of Immaculate Conception. It was a great task to put together all the events and efforts of so many people; from the beginning of the Parish till present time. This book contains only a small amount of information attached to our fiftieth anniversary. We would like you to find your footprints in the process of building up our Community.

In the Roman Catholic Church, a parish is the lowest ecclesiastical geographical subdivision; from ecclesiastical province to diocese to deanery to parish. A parish needs two things under common law to become a parish: First a body of Catholics within a fixed boundary and a named priest with responsibility for that parish.

At the end of the fifties then Archbishop of Pretoria, J.C. Garner, established a new place for the Parish of the Immaculate Conception. From this moment, a big responsibility was taken by the Oblates Fathers, especially Fr Omar de Vos; the first Parish Priest and the builder of our Community.

The parish is the centre of most Catholics' spiritual life; since it is there that they receive the sacraments. The parish generally has a busy schedule, although this depends on size and culture. The sacraments are the centre of parish life. Traditionally, there is daily and Sunday Mass determined by the pastoral need. Confession is offered, as well as other forms of prayer and social events; their nature depends on culture and circumstances. The Parish Priest is the proper clergyman in charge of the congregation of the parish entrusted to him. He exercises the pastoral care of the community entrusted to him under the authority of the diocesan bishop, whose ministry of Christ he is called to share, so that for this community he may carry out the offices of teaching, sanctifying and ruling with the assistance of lay members of Christ's faithful, in accordance with the law. In addition to the Parish Priest, it is common for the Parish to have a group of lay people. For example a parish council, appointed by the Parish Priest. This council is essential for building up this Mystical Body of Christ. The whole heavy burden of social life is carried by the members of this council.

The Church is not only a building but a unity of hearts of those who belong to it. May the Lord be praised for such a great community of the Immaculate Conception Parish. God bless.



*Fr Bogdan Wilkaniec SChr, Parish Priest.*



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# ORIGINS AND LOCATION

## The Beginning



Immaculate Conception

Catholic Church

Pretoria

South Africa

411 Alter Street.

Pretoria Gardens

PO. Box 48124

Hercules 0030

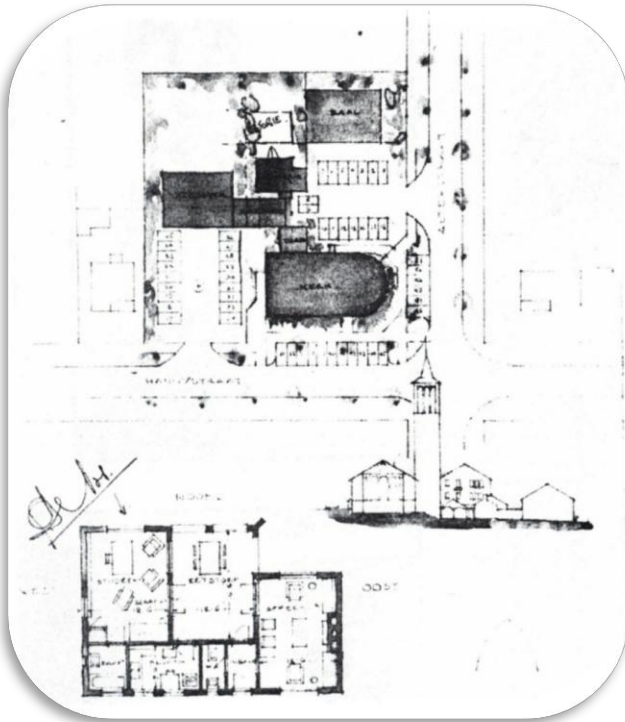
The following news was received “A new parish is in process of formation. It is to include the suburbs of Pretoria between the Daspoort and Magaliesberg ranges, west of the Pretoria-Pietersburg railway line, viz;Pretoria Gardens, Hermanstad, Daspoort, Claremont, Booyens and part of Mountain View. This parish has been entrusted to the Oblate Fathers of Mary Immaculate, and Father O.J. de Vos, O.M.I., has been appointed Parish Priest. He is at present resident with the Oblate Fathers at Lady Selbourne.”

The "Oblate Fathers" enjoyed a long and happy association with the Capital City of Pretoria. The Oblates were held in the highest esteem by many thousands of the faithful of all races to whom from the earliest days they had brought the message and comfort of our Holy Faith.

Father O.J. de Vos, O.M.I stated “I was very happy, in 1958, to accept His Grace Archbishop J.C. Garner's invitation to the Oblate Fathers to assume the spiritual care of souls within the boundaries of a new parish in the North Western suburbs. It was a source of pride to the Oblates, a joy to the people of the Moot valley and an occasion of fraternal welcome from the clergy.”



His Grace Archbishop JC Garner



*The original plans for the church and  
presbytery*

The area chosen, bounded on the north by the Magaliesburg and on the south by the Daspoort Rand, presented the Oblates with a challenge, but the project being entirely in harmony with the fundamental apostolic aims of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the challenge was gladly accepted.

When the Archbishop declared that the parish would be dedicated under the spiritual patronage of 'the Immaculate Conception', no more happy or secure mark of God's blessing and the approval of the Church could have been given.

It was happily found that the boundaries of the new parish would include one of the oldest missions in Pretoria, and one which had always been served by the Oblate Congregation. At 'Lady Selborne', so named after the wife of a Lt. Governor of the Transvaal, the very atmosphere is fragrant with the memories of so many Oblate Fathers among whom are those rightly regarded as pioneers of the Faith among the African, Coloured and Indian people of the Archdiocese. But sad to say, because of the re-grouping and resettlement of peoples, most of the present parishioners would soon be moved away. They would leave behind them a beautiful Church built by Father Joseph Verot, O.M.I., one time Vicar General of the Archdiocese, and now living in retirement in his native France owing to indifferent health.

The new parish, known as that of HERCULES, would therefore have two churches, a distinction that will give it proud pre-eminence of its name for other reasons also. By its charter it guarantees the full use of both official languages in worship and instruction. In addition, His Grace had entrusted the Oblate Pastor with the Chaplaincy of the Dutch, Flemish and Afrikaans speaking Catholics in Pretoria.

Sincerely and humbly we gratefully acknowledged the evident blessing of God and the intervention of Mary Immaculate in the astonishing progress that had been made, for virtually 'ex nihilo' has arisen a fine modern Church with hall and presbytery in the short space of three years among a Catholic community limited in number and means. So we turned in admiration to the person of the Oblate Pastor, the Rev. Father Omar de Vos, O.M.I, who has created this modern masterpiece of parochial development. This genial



and persuasive Oblate originates from Flanders as did the co-founder of the Lady Selborne Mission, the late Father Camille de Hovre, O.M.I. Father de Vos though is no stranger to Pretoria. Soon he had gathered around him a group of enthusiastic and generous parishioners and friends, who with him today shared the joy and pride of their achievement.

In this new parish His Grace the Archbishop had given yet another and enduring mark of his affection for the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Here too lie his hopes that the Oblate Fathers would be able in the course of time to establish an Oblate Centre at Hercules as a permanent tribute to the Oblate Bishops, Priests and Brothers whose bones now mingle with our South African soil and whose deed and memories are forever cherished by the Church in Pretoria.



## Hercules' Beginning

It was in November 1958 that V.R. Fr. P. Erasmé, Provincial, invited me to come and stay at Victory Park for a few days: "We will give you V.I.P. treatment", he added. Naturally my suspicions were aroused at once. He called me into his office one day; a map of Pretoria was spread out on his table: "The Oblates have been offered this parish, he said, pointing at red lines around the Hercules area. Would you be prepared to take on the job, Father?" At the end of our interview I was saddled with a problem. But problems are made to be overcome and I did not unduly worry about it as I knew I had a good number of old friends there!

His Grace the Archbishop had bought a piece of ground in Daspoort for a church, but now that Lady Selborne Location was to be removed, a more suitable place had to be found and fortunately, Mr. T. Kelly offered an Erf in Pretoria Gardens.

The first Meeting of the new parish was called together in the Capital Park Parish Hall on February 4th, 1959, and 21 parishioners attended a small group perhaps, but they were most enthusiastic. As shortly afterwards I went overseas, it was not until October 20th, that we had another meeting of the parishioners, at the Residence of Mrs. M.

Sinovich. It was then decided to establish a Mass Centre at the Sinovich Farm and from November 8th, we have had our H. Mass in the Parish every Sunday. It was a great day. We all felt proud to be 'pioneers'. Committees for finances and building operations were formed and the Ladies organised themselves also to raise funds. On March 13th, we were happy to see His Grace among us. He said the 10 a.m. Mass, preached and met the parishioners afterwards.

As I expected, the 'old friends' shared my problems. In March we started building the Presbytery on the erf donated by Mr. T. Kelly. Mr Joe Vallero sent all the bricks he could help us with. M.T. Kirkness donated the face bricks and feeling that the building went too slowly, Mr. L. Correia organised a group of Portuguese builders who worked every Saturday. Mr. A. Solomon took charge of everything electrical, Mr. F. Pijper and Mr. F. Haas also came to the rescue and in August I could leave my "caravan" and move into the new Presbytery.

It was before the House was completely finished that His Grace, the Archbishop, came one afternoon, made me kneel down on the concrete floor in front of a chair before a crucifix and after I had made my profession of Faith, etc. I was canonically installed as Parish Priest of Hercules!

We left the Sinovich Farm and from October 2nd, we had our Sunday Mass in the lounge of the Presbytery.

As the ground we occupied was below street level, we thought of building a Hall first, on top of which would eventually come the Church. Plans were drawn up, approved and on we went with the building programme: we had our Christmas Midnight Mass in the Church Hall!

One would think that our people now would want to sit back a while and relax.



We are certainly not the pretentious type in Hercules, but we have ambition! True we form the lower middle class group and we are only a small band of Catholics in the area, but the parishioners were not prepared to develop a complex



about it! The Bank was willing to grant a loan of R30,000 for 20 years - so we decided to carry on and build the Church as well. This way, everybody in the parish would be able to pray and offer H. Mass in the proper atmosphere and we would all enjoy the fruits of our sacrifices and efforts. Our men organised themselves and went from house to house every month, collecting the Building Fund contributions. It worked wonderfully. In November 1961, the tenders for the building of the Church were received and Messrs. Bevilacqua and Romani (Mr. A Romani is a parishioner) were the lowest at R24,400. This did not include the floor, altar and baptismal font. They started in February 1962 and have given us first class workmanship for which Mr. A Romani deserves the gratitude of the whole Parish.

And so it came about that Hercules can boast of a beautiful little Church, modern and impressive. The generosity of the parishioners and friends made it a place of worship worthy (humanly speaking) of Almighty God. Only the best was good enough for Him. So we thank Mr. K.J.M. Verhoef for making the plans and Mr. Tom Baker for helping us in the execution of those plans. I repeat, all parishioners viewed the Church-building as a personal responsibility and were most generous. Some donated particular items as well: the Altar, the Baptismal Font, the Altar rails, the rails around the Font, the Organ, the Monstrance, the Ciborium, a Chalice, artistic candlesticks, flower vases, the Our Lady's and St Joseph's shrines, the 7 foot crucifix over the Altar, Crib, etc. Truly, Our Lady is looking after her Parish in Hercules. When I think back of the day in November 1958 when I roamed around the area looking for a suitable place and, seeing here and there small Churches, wished I could only have something like that. Fathers De Vos stated "I do feel very guilty now and say to myself: Man of little faith."

## Building the Church

**The following letter was received from Father De Vos on October 28th 1959**

*"My dear Friends*

*We had our Parish Meeting on October 20th, and I was very happy to find such a fine spirit among the 25 Parishioners present. They eagerly accepted the challenge of building a new Parish. For sure you have already "worked" for this parish while I was overseas as from the monthly contributions collected, from the Jumble sale, from Raffles, etc. we have already well over 400 pounds in the Building Society. From overseas, I brought back some things for our Church too. Stations of the Cross on glazed tiles (10 by 12), doors for the Tabernacle, candlesticks, bell, complete set of vestments and altar linen, etc. As soon as my cases arrive, I'll make arrangements for you to see all these*

*things. In my view however, the most important decision of the Meeting was to have a Mass Centre as soon as possible. Private premises were preferred to a public hall and in response to the meeting Mrs May Sinovich kindly offered us any suitable building on her property where I would like to say H. Mass on Sundays. This was gratefully accepted by the meeting and the time*



*suggested for Holy Mass was 7 am and 10 am. His Grace, the Archbishop, wholeheartedly approved our plans and consequently we will start saying Holy Mass for the Parishioners in the parish, at the Sinovich farm, Caledon Street, from Sunday, November 8th.*

*Yours very sincerely. O.J. De Vos, O.M.I.*

*Parish Priest"*

**The following letter was received from Father De Vos.**

*"My Dear Friends, For some time I have felt that I should give you some Parish news, but I hardly ever find time to sit at my desk. The building pre-occupations in the last few months have prevented me from doing much Parish visiting, a thing I want to concentrate on, but as the Presbytery is now nearing completion and as I can fully settle here, I am sure things will soon be different. First of all I wish to thank all the people who have helped in building the Priests House. It is the outcome of many people's efforts. Some have really been wonderful! The house looks "grand" and yet it will not cost the Parish very much money though it may have made a bigger or smaller hole in the pockets of some parishioners and personal friends. They can rest assured that the good Lord will replenish some other "pockets" and they won't be the losers as you can't beat God in generosity! I do hope that the cost of the building will not exceed 1 500 pounds. This is greatly due to the generosity of the Portuguese members of our community who so gallantly spent their free Saturdays knocking the Presbytery out of the ground. They*



*certainly deserve a special “thank you”! His Grace the Archbishop visited me last week and said he would like every Presbytery to be built on these lines – it is ideal! However, my dear Friends, there are a few things I feel I should mention:*

*The house needs furniture of course. Now I am not going to beg. I hate begging. I’d rather go without than begging for it. But if I buy furniture, some of you may come to me afterwards and say: Why didn’t you tell me, Father, I could have helped you, I have some to spare. So my suggestion is: if you have some furniture you don’t need and I could use here, please, let me know. Do you realize that the Priest has to live on the Sunday Collection?! I have to pay Lady Selbourne 20 pounds for board and lodging for the last 4 months. Soon I’ll have to pay for my telephone, water and lights and food.... You really don’t want me to go begging, do you? I have heard that some of you know that the Priest has to live from the Sunday Collection. Well, it is a fact. That’s why it is nice to have a big and rich Parish !!!! So please, be a little more generous on Sundays so that I can make ends meet, at least”*

## Church Opening

**The following letter was received from M. DOCHERTY, O.M.I.**

*“It is with pleasure that we join in the happy celebration of the opening of the new Church of the Immaculate Conception at Hercules. On the 19th of January 1959, his Grace, Archbishop Garner, very kindly and generously gave this parish to the Oblate Fathers. In the name of our Father General, Most Rev. Leo*



*Deschatelets and on behalf of the Oblates of the Transvaal Province, I express sincere thanks and assure his Grace of our full co-operation and loyalty at all times. Father de Vos was installed as the first Parish Priest of Hercules on the 9th February 1959. It is a tribute to his zeal and earnestness that in less than four years he has built the complete parish set up; a Hall, a Presbytery and now the new Church, dedicated to Mary Immaculate, the Patroness of the Oblates. We offer him our congratulations and a prayer for good health and strength to continue for long to come, the good work so well begun. Without the help of Parishioners and good friends, a Priest is not able to achieve much. These fine and imposing buildings bear witness to the generosity and interest of the people of Hercules. The Oblate Fathers are proud of their parish and pray that God will reward you and Mary Immaculate protect you."*

*"May I offer my sincere congratulations to you and your Parishioners, on the Opening of the new Church at Hercules - to you, for your zeal and leadership, and to your Parishioners, for their close and fervent co-operation. It is a happy omen that the new Church and Parish are under the patronage of Mary Immaculate, since the pioneers of the Archdiocese of Pretoria were the Oblates of Mary Immaculate; and it is a special happiness to us all to know that the Oblate Fathers have now a permanent establishment in our midst. May Our Lord and Our Lady bless you and your Parishioners; and may the Parish of Mary Immaculate become a model for the whole Archdiocese.*

*Yours very sincerely in Christ"*

**The following was printed in the local press under the heading "New Parish at Hercules" on November 25 1959.**

"PRETORIA – The first Mass in the new parish of Hercules, a suburb of Pretoria, was celebrated on Sunday, November 8, in a hall on Sinovich Farm. At present there is no Parish church, Fr O. De Vos, O.M.I. , is parish priest. The Mass was offered for the late Mr George Sinovich, who





worked hard for the Church during his lifetime and gave generously to Catholic institutions, and for his family and their intentions.

### DONATIONS

The 63 Catholic families living in the area have no transport, to reach the nearest church, St Columba's, Capital Park. Though Hercules is a comparatively poor parish, some of the essentials for starting to build a church- the site, bricks, concrete – have already been donated.

It is hoped that building operations will start in January, the church to be dedicated to the Immaculate Conception.”

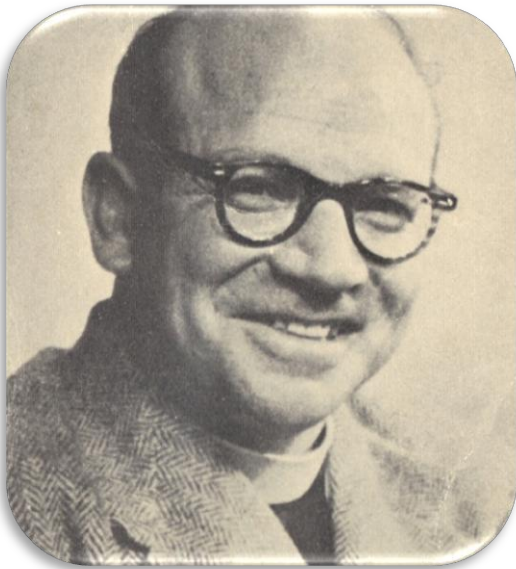


*His Grace, Archbishop Garner – The First of July 1962*

## PARISH PRIESTS

Fr Omar de Vos OMI  
Fr Jan Molenaar OMI  
Fr JR Hughes  
Fr Neville Armstrong  
Fr Cyril Schulpen  
Fr Ralph Milburn  
Fr Stan Lipski SChr  
Fr W Swiatkowski SChr  
Fr Jan Westfal SChr  
Fr Bogdan Wilkaniec SChr

### Fr. Omar de Vos



He joined the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1930 he made his first vows in 1931 and was finally professed in 1935 in Nijmegen, Netherlands.

He arrived in Pretoria, South Africa in 1937 where he worked at the Church of the Sacred Heart until 1942 when he became Parish Priest of St. Columba from 1942 to 1946. During that time he made many improvements, such as building the hall and the garage at the back of the church.

Across the road from the church was a vacant quarry, which he then bought for the church grounds. Sometime later, the Provincial Administration then needed the ground to extend the hospital. At that time the archdiocese was trying to establish a church in the Waverley area. The administration then agreed to exchange the vacant quarry for a piece of land in Waverley, where the Church was built and opened in 1956.

He left for Douglas, towards the end of September 1958, OFS where he was Priest-in-charge until 1959.



Besides being a parish priest, he had to care for the patients in hospital. Fr de Vos returned to Pretoria from Kimberley in 1959, to establish and build the church in Hercules. He remained there as parish priest until his death on April 4 1975. Today his parish flourishes.



*Father de Vos with Dutch friends on a motorcycle outing*

### **Down memory lane with Father O. DE VOS by Elsie van der Sman**

My parents knew Fr. De Vos since 5th September 1938. He was not only a wonderful priest; he was a wonderful and sincere family friend.



*Elsie van der Sman, third from the right and Fr de Vos fifth from the right at Elsie's wedding in 1961*

He was very much involved with the Dutch community, and I read some minutes dated 1962, when he was Parish priest at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Hercules. My mother had helped him with the recording and following up of the address register.

On looking through the few mementos I have left of Fr. De Vos I came across a quite interesting fact.

1959 the Box number was 124

1972 the Box number was 18124

2012 the Box number is 48124

There was also a Mission Sunday held at Immaculate Conception in 1963.

Before I was born, (1939) Fr de Vos accompanied my parents and their Dutch friends on some outings over weekends – on their motorcycles and Father was a very young priest with an already receding hairline. He also attended my marriage in 1961. We were parishioners of the St Columba Catholic church in Voortrekker road at this time. As a child, my family visited him in Douglas in Cape Province, and as kids we had a lot of fun as only kids can have, and to top it all, staying with a priest!! Many, many years later, when he came driving down Flowers street, Capital Park, he often popped in at the house for a chat and coffee. To this day I will always remember him saying “There are many things twixt Heaven and Earth that cannot be explained or understood”.



*Elsie van der Sman*

I also sadly remember the day, when my Dad passed away in 1968. Fr de Vos was going to do the funeral service, which was at St. Columba's, Capital Park, but Father was so emotional, that Fr Steyn, the then parish priest there took over. My mother had also donated a beautiful old upright piano, to the church, which was standing in the hall downstairs. Whatever happened to it remains a mystery.



Fr de Vos died as Parish priest of Immaculate Conception, Hercules in 1975. To this day I still remember attending his funeral which took place at the Sacred Heart Cathedral, Skinner Street, Pretoria, where the church was bursting at the seams that the people were standing outside.

These are just a few thoughts, but the memories are never forgotten. It is fitting that after so much time has

passed, I end up at the same church, where he was the first Parish priest.

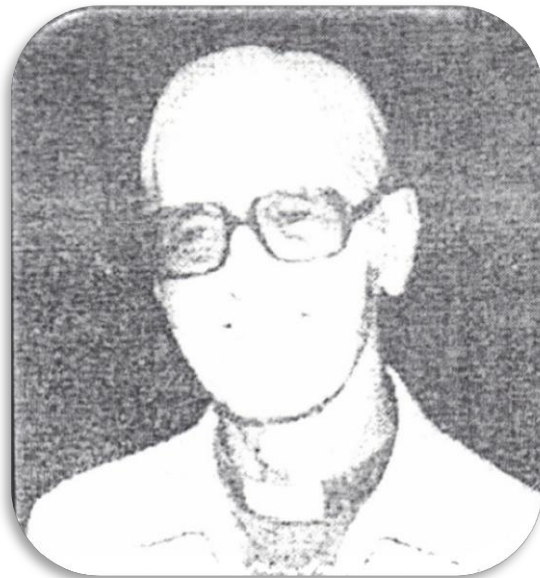
*Elsie van der Sman*

**The following was printed in the Pretoria New on April 5 1975.**

“On 5 April 1975, the battered and bloodied body of Father de Vos, age 63, was found in the bedroom of his home in Hercules by a maid, Miss Norah Ledwaba, who worked for Father de Vos for the last 14 months. A police spokesman at the house said that Father de Vos’s hands had been bound with a tie and he was still in his pajamas when his body was discovered. He also said that Father de Vos had been struck on the forehead and back of his head with a metal instrument. Colleagues said he was a kind man who never spoke a harsh word and “did not deserve that kind of death”. According to Mrs D Pyott, a close friend, Father de Vos was a quiet spoken and dedicated man.”

## Fr Jan Molenaar

Father Molenaar was born 21 March 1912 in Harlen, Holland. He was professed on 24 September 1940. He was Ordained on 29 June 1945 in Ireland. He served in our Parish from 1975 to 1977 during which time he performed 19 baptisms. He served at many places in the diocese of Johannesburg. He built churches in Coronationville and Bosmont.



Finally he built a church in City Deep, Johannesburg. His main pastime was metal work making, tabernacles, candle stands and church benches.

He died on 2 May 1997 in Kenridge Hospital. He stayed in Pretoria for only two years.

## Fr Neville Armstrong

Father Neville Armstrong was born in Cape Town in 1919, educated at the Sea Point Boys High School and Christian Brothers College, Green Point, where he was among the first sixty pupils enrolled when the College opened in 1935. After matriculating in 1938, he worked for a year before being called up for active military service in 1940. He served in East Africa, Somaliland and Ethiopia. His final posting in

South Africa included Langebaan and Robben Island. After demobilisation in 1946 he took up a position with the Department of Labour.

He was active in Catholic societies in Cape Town, Bloemfontein and Pretoria, where he came on transfer in 1954. He was a Knight of Da Gama, and a member of the St Vincent de Paul Society and of the Men's Sodality of Our Lady in the days when they founded and maintained the Catholic Enquiry Centre. He entered St John Vianney's Seminary as a "late vocation" for Pretoria Archdiocese, and was ordained on 29 June 1962.

He served as secretary to Archbishop Garner, as well as the Parishes of Waterkloof (1963), Pretoria West (1964), Cullinan (1966), Waverley (1968), Hercules (1980), Capital Park (1985). He joined the army as a military chaplain (1971) and served Voortrekkerhoogte. During his time at Hercules parish he performed 47 baptisms.

He also served as chaplain to Prisons 1963 to 1971. He was appointed Dean of the Central Deanery in 1981. It was his initiative, as chaplain to the KDG, that led to the formation of the "CLERGYMEN" scheme for the care of Priests.

When he could no longer function actively, he was cared for by the Sister of Nazareth in Pretoria. After years of gradually declining health, he died peacefully on 16 July. Archbishop Daniel presided at his Requiem at Nazareth Chapel on Wednesday 22 July, and he was buried in the Rebecca Street cemetery.

## Fr Cyril Schulpen



Father Cyril served the Hercules community from 1985 to 1986 during which time he performed 31 baptisms. He has retired and lives a peaceful life at the Holy Cross Home in Suiderberg run by the Sisters. Memories of Fr. Schulpen

He was born in Maasbracht, Netherlands on 17<sup>th</sup> of June 1920. I had known Fr. Schulpen for a long time. He was the Parish Priest at St. Columba Church, Capital Park. I was the secretary there for a while. We lost contact for quite some time, until I started working at the Holy Cross Home, in the office during the 1990's and again in 2002/6, and met up with him again. I still remember the day he blessed my car, which I am still driving to this day. We got on very well, we were both Dutch, and had many a good laugh. He was admitted to the Holy Cross Home Frail Care on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1998, and I often used to pop into his room and have a quick chat. He passed away on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2006. (*Elsie van der Sman*)



## Fr Ralph Milburn

### PASTORAL ASSIGNMENTS

1982-1984 at Capital Park

1985 Chaplain at CBC

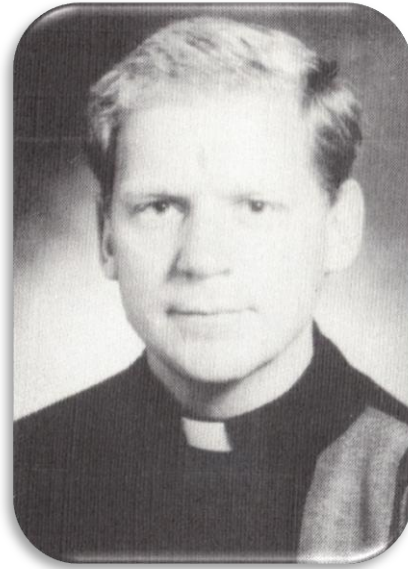
1985 in December he took up residence at New Queenswood Rectory as assistant to Fr McKay

From 1987 to 1990 he served in Hercules Parish during which time he performed 34 baptisms.

He held the offices of Youth Chaplain and School Chaplain. He was especially interested in youth, small Christian community's laity, and crisis ministry and involved in the Pretoria City Prison.

Father Ralph passed away peacefully at the Holy Cross Home in Lady Selbourne, at noon on Sunday 5 July 1992, at the age of 39 years. He was interred at the Rebecca Street Cemetery, 9 July, after a Requiem Mass in the Cathedral, presided over by Archbishop George Daniel, celebrating with many priests from Pretoria and Johannesburg.

He was born in Pretoria, on 27 March 1953 and baptised in the Cathedral. He served at the altar in Capital Park Parish. After matriculating, he worked for a year before leaving to test his vocation at Benedictine monk at St Michael's Abbey in Farnborough and St John's at Womersley.



*Norma de Abreu &  
Jovce Enos*

However, after ordination as Deacon, he asked to return to pastoral work, and after dispensation from monastic vows was accepted for the Archdiocese of Pretoria, being ordained Priest by Archbishop Daniel, 19 March 1983, in the Sacred Heart Cathedral.

He served pastoral assignments of varying duration in the parishes of Capital Park, Cathedral, Waverley, Queenswood, Hercules and Voortrekkerhoogte. He was also for a time Chaplain to the CBC, and Youth Chaplain for the city parishes.

He had a long history of medical treatments, for kidney and related ailments, in the UK, Ireland and in

South Africa. However, he passed fit to serve in the SADF, first as a part-time, and from 1988 as full-time Chaplain to the parish of Our Lady Queen of Peace.

Periods of hospitalization grew more frequent, and as he saw his health collapsing in recent months, he prepared for death, and tried to prepare others for what might come. He apologized to his parishioners for the absences which made him “half a priest” to them.

During the funeral ceremony, a letter for Father Ralph was read out in which he gave thanks to all those who had assisted and supported him with medical or spiritual care. Many trophies and parents give witness to the effectiveness of Father Ralph’s apostolate of caring for the national servicemen.

## Fr Stanislaw Lipski

Father Lipski was born in Bienki Nowe, Poland on 15 February 1943. He was ordained in Poland on 8 June 1968. He served mainly as Chaplain to the Polish communities in Australia – Sydney, Gippsland, Newcastle, Adelaide, Melbourne and South Africa (Johannesburg, SACBC, Secunda, Kriel, Witbank, Ermelo, Newcastle and Hercules). He served until 1992 during which time he performed 27 baptisms.

He was the first Polish Priest to join our community in 1990. In the years 1993-1999 was elected as a Provincial of Society of Christ in Australia and New Zealand. After fulfilling these duties in the year 2000, Fr Stanislaw came back to South Africa and took over the Polish centre in Johannesburg (Norwood). In 2005 he returned to Australia and at present, Fr Stanislaw is a Polish Chaplain in Service Paradise in Queensland.



## Fr Wojciech Swiatkowski

He was born on 22 April 1954 and was ordained on 25 May 1982. Before he came to South Africa, he fulfilled his priestly duties in Poland and Australia. He served in our parish from 1992 till 1994 during which time he performed 33 baptisms.

After two years of his presence in Pretoria, he took his post in Cape Town in Parow Valley and after this he went



to Iceland and United Kingdom. At present he serves as a Provincial of Society of Christ in the Province of England.



## Fr Jan Westfal



Father Jan was born on 9 March 1935 and ordained on 26 May 1963. He joined our community in 1994 till his untimely death in 1999 during which time he performed 42 baptisms. Through the years we got to know him as a quiet and heart loving man. He always had a soft word and sunny smile.

Our community was deeply shocked by his tragic and sudden death in a car accident on 24 October 1999 in Natal. In our hearts we are still missing him dearly.



## Fr Bogdan Wilkaniec

After the sudden death of Father Jan Westfal, Father Bogdan officially joined our community on 01 December 1999 until the present day and during this time he has performed 146 baptisms.



Father

Bogdan was

born on 29 April 1955 and ordained on 26 May 1981 in Poland.

Before he came to South Africa, he served Polish Communities in Australia in Brisbane, and Yallourn North (Victoria). In 1988 he arrived to Vanderbiljpark, after two years, he moved to Johannesburg and opened a new Polish Centre in Bryanston. In 1995 he moved to Evander and was appointed as a Parish Priest until 1999 when Fr Westfal died in the car accident. Since 1990, Fr Bogdan was appointed as a local superior of the Society of Christ in South Africa.

# THE PARISH YEAR BY YEAR



Immaculate Conception

Catholic Church

Pretoria

South Africa

411 Alter Street.

Pretoria Gardens

PO. Box 48124

Hercules 0030

## Introduction

The following are extracts from the Keys and Sunday Bulletins which were issued monthly and provided news regarding happenings in the various parishes. The below are extracts regarding the Immaculate Conception Hercules parish.

The Calica family Supplied flowers to the church for many years, which was then arranged by Peggy Stipinovich, Agnes Toich and Sally Popich.

Mr McKay did all the woodwork for the church. Mrs Mckay was very involved with Mrs Grobbelaar and Agnes Toich giving catechism classes to children from the government schools. Their eldest son Roy became a priest.

Mr Stipinovich (snr) donated the marble for the altar. The eldest grandson Angelo also became a priest. Angelo's sister Eleanor used to play the organ at Sunday Masses.

The Stiponovich family was very involved in the church and also very generous to the church. Prior to the church being completed 50 years ago Mass was held at the home of the Sinovich family, moving to the priest's house once that was completed.



The parish then moved to the church hall, where Nick and Sally Popich got married 51 years ago. Their eldest son Roko was baptised when the church was completed.

Our church has always been a true family; sadly many have left as families grow and others pass on.

The late Fr de Vos was the founder of our church and many other priests have come and gone, some have passed away like Fr Jan and Fr Armstrong.



*The Parish hall that was originally used while the Church was being built.*

Fr de Vos intended to build a crèche and old age home on the premises as well – but sadly he passed away before it could be done.

## 1959

After many years of praying, waiting and hoping, our dreams and hopes are to materialise; we are to have a church of our own under the spiritual guidance of an old friend of Pretoria, Father De Vos, O.M.I.

The first meeting of this new Parish took place on Wednesday evening, 4 February 1959. Our Parish Priest and the Very Rev. Father Brannigan, O.M.I. was present, and 21 parishioners attended.

We were pleased and thankful to report that both the ground and the plans for our new church have been approved and passed by the City Council.

We thanked all our parishioners who had given so generously towards the building fund. We hoped to build up an outstanding banking account by the time Father de Vos returns.

We were very sorry to hear that both the Senior and Junior Toich families were involved in a motor accident one Sunday while on their way to Mass. No one was seriously injured. The hope was expressed that little Anton Toich fully recovered after his collision with his mother's display cabinet.

We were pleased to hear that Mrs Cassidy was up and about after seventeen months of illness. We pray that she would enjoy good health. Mrs Cassidy was well known for her Church work and was one of the foundation members of the C.W.L. Capital Park.

Heartiest congratulations went to Mr and Mrs Vatta on the arrival of a son, and to Mr and Mrs Romani on the arrival of a daughter. Mr and Mrs Vatta had the honor of having the first baby to be born into this new parish and very best wishes were extended.

Mr and Mrs de Vos, the parents of our Parish Priest, kindly donated a magnificent bell for our new church. We thanked them most sincerely and requested that God bless them for their kindness.

A late report brought news of the death of Mr. Alfons de Vos. R.I.P

During October it was reported that during the July holidays, Ray McKay had written and produced a musical comedy. After performing the play a silver collection was taken and the McKay family donated this to our building fund, for which we thanked them. We hoped Roy would repeat this effort and make more use of his talent.



A meeting of parishioners was held on 20 October, and it was decided to form three committees to deal with church affairs and the building of the new church.

**BUILDING COMMITTEE:** Father de Vos (chairman), Messrs. G. Sinovich, P. Toich, Romani and J. Vallero.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Father de Vos (chairman), Messrs. McKay, A. Soglanich, H. Grobbellar, T. Kelly and McMenamin.

**LADIES COMMITTEE:** Mesdames M Sinovich, Y. Sinovich, A. Toich, E. McKay, J Vallero, D Soglanich, J. Grobbelaar and Miss J Nizetich.

Our Parish Priest, Father De Vos, O.M.I was welcomed home. After seven months overseas and much difficulty in obtaining a return booking, we were thankful that he was with us once again.

It was with deep regret that we bade farewell to Mr and Mrs M Vatta and family who went to live in Cape Town.

## 1960

As from Sunday 2 October Mass was said at the Presbytery until the Church Hall was completed.



*Nicholas, Ivan Popich &  
Salomina Johanna Meyer – 04<sup>th</sup> February 1961*

## 1961

Heartiest congratulations went to Salomina Johanna Maria Meyer and Nicholas Popich who were married in our Parish on Saturday 4 February. They had really made history as they were the first couple to be married in our new Parish.

On 17 February, the feast of the Oblates was celebrated at Hercules parish. Mass

was said at 10 a.m. It was attend by the Oblate local Superior, Rev. Father Branningan, O.M.I., all the Oblates of the Archdiocese of Pretoria, and also by the Ladies of the Grail.



*First Sacrament of Marriage:  
Nicholas, Ivan Popich &  
Salomina Johanna Meyer –  
04<sup>th</sup> February 1961*



The blessing of the house and hall took place on Thursday, 13 April and was performed by His Grace the Archbishop. We hoped that the Pretoria clergy who attended this ceremony liked our place. Many thanks went to Mrs Henry Besaans who attended to the catering. With this blessing we hoped our parish would flourish!



Parishioners were pleased to know that a Bell Tower was being erected to carry the beautiful bell kindly donated by the late parents of Rev. Father de Vos.

On 4 June we were honoured by a visit from His Grace the Archbishop who came to bless our church bell which was named “Anna”. After the blessing His Grace met the parishioners socially.



We took this opportunity to thank Mr John Kirkness for the donation of bricks and Mr Correira and Mr Forseca who kindly built the bell-tower in their spare time.

Heartiest congratulations went to our Parish Priest, Father de Vos, on the 25th anniversary of his ordination. We all wished him many more fruitful years. It was asked that God bless him with a long life and that he may stay in Hercules for a long time.

## 1962

From our small parish we had three children at the New Afrikaans convent, St Paulus Klooster, at Brummeria. We hoped and prayed that this convent would flourish. The Dominican Sisters had our good wishes and prayers.

Heartiest congratulations to Bruno Vatta (our organist of the future!) who received 100% and to Betty Ciocatti who received 97% in a London Theory of Music Examination.



Father de Vos had started an Afrikaans Inquiry Class and had a group of five interested persons. Anyone who would have liked to join the class was asked to phone Father de Vos.



The foundation stone of the new church was blessed on 1 July.

The Building of our church was progressing like wildfire. The tiles were being put up on the roof.

Building operations were coming into their final stages. The ceiling, the painting, the glass, and the altar were being completed. We looked

forward to having our midnight Mass there at Christmas.

The search was on for people to join our Choir. Choir members did not necessarily have to be people with excellent voices as even those with little talent were welcome.

One of the oldest residents of the parish passed away on 2 October, a few days before her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. We would have liked to have seen Mrs Anna Magdalena McMenamin present at the opening of the new Church but this was not to be.

Mr and Mrs McMenamin built their home in Hercules over 40 years ago, at the time, and there was mostly veld. Nearly 30 years ago Mrs McMenamin lost her husband and was left alone to bring up her 11 children.

They used to climb the hill to attend Sunday Mass at Bantule and later went to Lady Selbourne.

## 1963

The day of great solemnity, of course, was the 17th when his Grace, only just back from Rome, came to bless the new church.

On the 4th Mrs S Popich, (snr) passed away and was the first parishioner to be buried from the new church. Congratulations to Roy Mackay who finished his Novitiate at Germiston and made his first vows on 17 February, at the Oblate Feast. He went to Cedara to start his course in Philosophy.

On 4 May His Grace visited our Parish to administer the sacrament of Baptism. The 9<sup>th</sup> Child of Mr and Mrs Toich was baptised and the ceremony was carried out during Mass to give all parishioner the opportunity of witnessing it. Father de Vos gave commentary.



## 1969

Manuel and Maria Barbeta were married by Fr de Vos on 8 March 1969.

## 1974

Our first Parish Meeting for 1974 was held in February. A new committee was elected namely: Chairman Mr R.C. McKay, Vice Chairman Mr A Zabbia, Mr T. Kelly remains responsible for the books and finances, and Mr J. McKay holds on as Secretary.

The Committee members were: Mesdames M Sinovich, S Hayden, S. Popich, S. Lohrentsz, B. Stiinocich, F. Lavarinhas, and V. Clocatto.

It was also decided at the meeting that we should have a Mass in Afrikaans in the Parish. There was, maybe, no apparent need for it, but it was thought it might “draw” some people. Rather than add an extra Mass the last Sunday of the month would be in Afrikaans. When the Parish was established in 1959, His Grace, the Archbishop, intended it to be an Afrikaans-medium Parish.

The parish committee decided finally to go ahead with the repair to the roof of the church, under the supervision of Mr U. Feluca. The sum total of the “damage” will be R4 310. The slates will be replaced by Everite Tiles.



Holy Communion 1980 – Jennet Rodrigues; Sally Popich - teacher

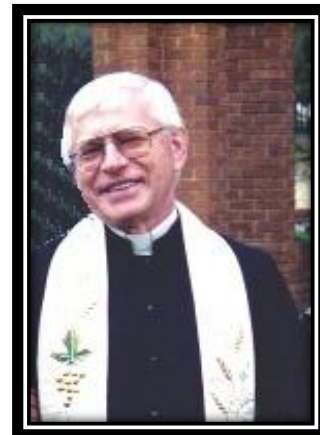
It would have cost R4 500 to put Mazista slates on again. Mazista did the work initially when the church was being built. This setback was most disappointing now that, in spite of the “disappearance” of so many parishioners, we had managed to bring our debt down to almost R7 000. As we were always taught: “Trust in God! God will provide”. So our ladies took the initiative and organised a successful Jumble sale on 29 June.

## 1999

Fr Bogdan arrived after the tragic car accident of Fr. Jan Westfal.

Fr. Jan Westfal, on his way to Marian’s Shrine in Ngome, just before the little town of Melmoth was involved in the fatal car accident. On behalf of the Society of Christ, Fr Bogdan Wilkaniec SChr, addressed these words:

*“I would like to express my deepest thanks, firstly to God Himself, for Fr. Jan’s life; His joyful personality*





*and priestly experience which helped us a lot in our emigration pastoral work. I would like to address special thanks to His Excellency Most Reverend Archbishop George Francis Daniel for his truly fatherly care upon polish emigrants. Very often Fr. Jan expressed an admiration for the depth of His spirituality.*

*To all priests gathered around the altar, whose presence symbolizes a brotherly bond, and for you my beloved people to whom Fr. Jan served by preaching, giving the sacraments, sharing his priestly life to the end. Thanks are to God."*

## 2000

Due to the accident of Fr Jan, the Parish council had to buy a new car. It was a great task because we had no money and the Archdiocese didn't help us with finances.



Holy week: The polish custom is to bless the food for the Easter table.

Polish celebration on 7 May commemorating the Polish Constitution from 1791, papered by Dr. Elzbieta Osuch.

September 2000

The Sacrament of Confirmation took place on 1 September.





Fr Bogdan was appointed on 13 September as a Prison Chaplain in Pretoria Central and in every prison where Polish offenders were.

### October 2000

Full of joy and prayer a Sunday school outing was organised on 6 October.

## 2000 - 2001

A New Year ball was organised by the Polish Community in our Parish Hall.

### March 2001

As preparation for the celebration of Easter, a retreat for the Parishioners was arranged on 1 March.

### May 2001

Fr Bogdan with a group of pilgrims went to Majagore as a chaplain from 17 May till 29 May.

### June 2001

Fr. Bogdan celebrated his 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priesthood on 17 June.

### September 2001

17 September – A special ministry to the Knights of da Gama took place on 17 September.





## November 2001

Confirmation took place on 10 November.

A retreat took place from 19 to 23 November.

The Polish dance Andrzejki was organised on 30 November.

## December 2001

Fiesta in the Parish took place on 8 December.

## February 2002

On Saturday, 9th February, at 19:30 the Youth from our Church invited the Parish to join them for a Dance and Cocktail Snacks in celebration of Valentine's Day. This took place in the Parish Hall.

Entrance was R40.00 per couple, R20.00 per single person and R10.00 for children under 15 years. The dress code was cocktail/smart casual. Enquiries and bookings could be made by Adri or Fred.

The organisers arranged for parishioners to bring plates of snacks which had to be delivered not later than 6.00 pm on the Saturday to the Parish Hall. Tickets were up for sale to win a teddy bear.



From 20 February till 15 March a visit of Provincial Fr. Krzysztof Tyliczszak SChr occurred. Due to the visit of the Provincial of The Society of Christ, from England, on Sunday 24 February 2002, a combined Mass at 10:00 am was held. After Mass everyone was

warmly welcomed for a bring and braai.

In February Fr Bogdan and his team, completed the Hymn Book which would be used during the liturgy. A number of people were involved in the compilation by writing the words of the liturgical songs in English and Afrikaans alike. This is literally "our hymn book".

## March 2002

The Youth had a coffee bar on 3 March 2002, at 19:00 till 21:00. Everyone was invited and asked to bring along the following: a pillow to sit on, a packet of biscuits, all ideas and all friends. Flyers were put up at the entrance of the Church.

At the entrance of the Church you would find a prayer intention book, visitors book and Mass intention envelopes. Everyone was asked to please make use of them; especially the prayer intentions which are regarded as very important in our daily lives.

A Lenten Parish retreat took place on the following date namely 8 to 10 March, Tuesday 19 March, Thursday 21 March and Friday 22 March at 19:00.

On 17 March there was a Children's Mass.

## April 2002

The Kameeldrift Dutch Reformed Church invited everyone to a Passion Play on 28 April. The price per ticket was R25.00 and leaflets in this regard were made available at the entrance of the Church.

## May 2002

The printing of the new hymns books took place.

The Parish council received suggestions from parishioners who wanted to have House Mass. The list of available evenings for these Masses was placed at the entrance to the church. It was stated that it would be like Shelter seeking; the difference was that no food would be made by those in whose homes the Masses would take place. What was wanted was to have prayer with friends and family members, a bit of singing and laughing. Parishioners were urged to put their names on the list if they would have liked parishioners to come into their homes for these special Masses.

The first House Mass was celebrated in Heidi Mellet's Home in Daspoort.

## June 2002

Corpus Christi was celebrated on 2 June.

On 16 June parents and their children were



invited to give their names to Veronica van den Berg if they were interested in doing the readings during Mass. Anyone else who was interested in reading was also asked to give their names to Veronica.

On reaching the half term of the financial year the Parish Council Treasurer reviewed the financial statements. It was decided to give thanks and gratitude to all Parishioners who pledged their contribution towards the Planned Giving Envelope Campaign. The following Sunday letters were placed at the entrance of the Church addressed to all Parishioners who pledged their contribution towards this campaign.

### July 2002

Fr. Bogdan and the Polish Youth from across the world went on a Holyday in Durban from 6 to 12 July. Fr. Bogdan was wished a very lovely time with the Polish Youth who had gathered from right across the world to be together for a Spiritual upliftment retreat.

Due to this trip there was no Morning Mass or Tuesday and Friday evening Mass celebrated. All problems were directed to Manuel de Abreu, our Parish Chairman.

### August 2002

A retreat for all teachers was held on 3 August. The Polish community went on an outing on 10 August.

### September 2002

The fundraising committee, together with the Catechism Teachers organised a Spring Dance on 28 September. It started with children entertainment and was followed by a chicken braai and dance. The disco was supplied by Chris Borruso. Donations towards the event were collected by Tanja Maitland. The Spring Dance realized ticket sales of R1,520.00 with the games and cakes realised R335.00 for a total income of R1,855.00.

On behalf of Fr. Bogdan and the Parish council sincerest thanks and gratitude was expressed to the people listed here for their kindness and service during the Spring Dance:



Lionette Spinola, Sophia Da Silva, Roger and Dadu, Frank Dos Santos, Marie Slater (food), Norma De Abreu, Margaret & Ernst Sigl, Sally Popich, Veronica v/d Berg, Sandy and Richard Robson, Annette De Abreu, Jaco Tiquin, Olga Gast, Sr. Jacinta (Candles), Mr and Mrs Ciacatto, Rodrigues family, Nelita and David Lira, Holy Cross Sisters (Money) and all those who actively helped to make the day an enjoyable and happy parish family gathering.

Special thanks went to Mark and Tanja Maitland, Richard Robson, the Sigl family for providing the braai, Chris Borruso who kept everyone on their toes all night with a great assortment of music and all the youth and ladies who together with Fr. Bogdan washed the dishes.

### October 2002

An outing with the parish children took place from 25 to 27 October.

### December 2002

Confirmation was held on 7 December

The parish celebrated the feast of the Immaculate Conception on 8 December during which the beautiful pictures painted by Mr. Zenon Rozycki were blessed. After the liturgical celebration the parish had a braai.



### May 2003



A celebration regarding the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pastoral Work of the Society of Christ in South Africa took place on 4 May.

The celebration took place in the Immaculate Conception Church in Pretoria Gardens. This event was celebrated in Polish and English.



Mr Zenon Rozycki beautifully decorated the church and there were hardly any empty seats available.

The feast was concelebrated by: J. E. Ks. Abp Szczepan Wesoly, Protector of the Polish Emigrants from Rome. Ks. Tadeusz Winnicki SChr., General Superior of The Society of Christ from Poland. Ks. Krzysztof Tyliczszak SChr., Provincial from England. Ks. Włodzimierz Pajak SChr., Treasurer of the Society of Christ from England. Ks. Bogdan Wilkaniec SChr., parish Priest from the Immaculate Conception. Ks. Stanisław Lipski SChr., Polish Chaplain from Johannesburg.

The following people were also welcomed to the celebrations: His Excellency Most Rev. Abp Blasco Francisco Collaco, Nuncio Apostolic Pretoria. His Excellency Most Rev. Abp Georg Francis Daniel, Archbishop of Pretoria. The Polish Government was represented by: Speaker of the Polish Senate RP Jolanta Danielak. Mr. Wiesław Osuchowski,



Director of the Polish Migrants from the Polish Senate. Mrs Ewa Czerniawska, Director of the emigration office in Poland. General Consul of Poland in South Africa, Mr. Marian Bark. Deputy Consul of Poland in SA, Mrs. Anna Brabander. Honourable Consul of Poland from Maputo in Mozambique, Alberto T. Mabjaia. Chair Lady of the Polish Communities in Southern Africa, Mrs dr Jadwiga Dubla-Kalinowska, Chairperson of the Polish Association in Johannesburg, Mrs. Barbara Kukulska. South African Ambassador of Poland, Mr Victor Zazera.

### December 2003



Over the Christmas period Zenon Rozycki coordinated and taught parishioners how to make decorations for the Christmas crib. The Parishioners were very excited to make their own decorations. The Christmas Eve Mass in Polish which followed the English Mass was a highlight of the Christmas celebrations.

## January 2004

According to tradition we welcomed in the New Year by a joyful dance evening.

The Chairman of the Parish council and Fr Bogdan went to Johannesburg on 16 January to buy a new Parish car.

## February 2004

The Polish and English communities came together for a dance evening on 13 February to celebrate Valentine's Day.

## March 2004

The new parish car, a Polo 1400, which had been bought in January, arrived on 1 March. The monthly payments remained the same as the previous car.

On 18 March the parish welcomed Fr Krzysztof Tyliczszak, Provincial of the Society of Christ, from England.

A parish braai was held on 21 March.



During Lent time the Celebration of the Passion of our Lord includes the Stations of the Cross. This prayer is emotional because everybody has a chance to share with others their own reflection.

On Holy Thursday we celebrated, with a whole community, a Passover meal including the washing of the feet.

On Good Friday the Stations of the Cross in English were conducted in celebration of the Passion of the Lord.

The death of the Lord was celebrated in Polish.

On Holy Saturday we had a blessing of the food and the celebration of the Easter Vigil.

The Sunday we celebrated the Resurrection Mass.

## April 2004

A few parishioners, under the supervision of Richard de Abreu, decided to install an irrigation system. The installation of the irrigation system in the parish garden took place on 27 April.

## May 2004



The Polish Community celebrated the great feast of the Polish Constitution from 1791 and feast of Our Lady, Queen of Poland, and the entry of Poland into the European Union on Sunday 2 May.

The following priests joined the celebration: Fr Zbigniew Rakiej, Vicar General from Poland.

Monsignor Jan Jaworski and Fr. Stanislaw Lipski from Johannesburg.

Mrs Elzbieta Osuch, chairlady from the Polish Sunday School, together with the children performed a children's play to explain these important events. It was a great experience to learn more about these important events concerning Poland.

After the liturgy parishioners had a joyful time in the Parish garden with polish cuisine and musicians' from Vanderbijlpark who played polish traditional songs.

Parish Bingo took place on 21 May to raise funds for the church.

## December 2004

A Carols by candlelight evening was held on 2 December.

Father Christmas arrived for the children on 4 December.

The Polish Children went on an outing to Hakuna Matata between 5 and 10 December.

Confirmation was performed on 12 December.

## January 2005

The parish church and hall was painted on 10 January.



## April 2005

Pope John Paul II passed away on 2 April 2005.

A Solemn Requiem Mass was held in our church on 8 April 2005, the day of the funeral of Pope John Paul II.

## May 2005

Parish Bingo took place on 27 May to raise funds for the church.

Corpus Christi was celebrated and a braai was held on 29 May.

The Parish Council arranged a big fund raising event on 17 September. It was a music festival known as “Oppipark 2005”. A lot of preparation and work went into the event but it did not realize the expected success that was sought.

## September 2005

On 9 September the Mass was recorded for broadcasting via the radio.

## October 2005

The recorded Mass was broadcast on 16 October on SAFM 105.7.

The building of the Grotto for our Lady was in full swing on 23 October 2005 and it looked amazing. Thanks were given to Frank Dos Santos (Snr. & Jnr.) for supplying the workers to build the Grotto and the building materials. Mr. & Mrs. Trollip were also thanked for donating the base and the statue of Our Lady.

The Holy Cross Fete was held on 29 October to raise funds for the fragile care centre at the Holy Cross Home.



Appeals were made for the donation of eggs, oil and vinegar needed for the pancake stand. All parishioners were invited to come and enjoy and have fun. The attendance of parishioners on the day at the Holy Cross Home was greatly appreciated.

### November 2005

The Pious list, for mass to be said everyday during the month of November for members and loved ones of our families who passed away, was made available. Parishioners were asked to make sure that they filled in the list and return it before 1 November.

The Mass for all Souls was said on 6 November. It was a Mass after which everyone who would have liked could go to the cemetery. The souls of the deceased were blessed in the Zandfontein Cemetery. The Mass was honoured by the presence of the Knights of Da Gama.

On 11 December Archbishop George Francis Daniel conducted the Sacrament of Confirmation for the following candidates: Thabang Magongwa, Lee-Ann Camara, Hiromi Usuki, Mark Du Toit, Tanja Da Silva, Charlotte Du Plooy and Veronica Gouws.



The Grotto was blessed after the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist. Everyone was welcomed to join in prayer near the Grotto.

## December 2005

A GLOW IN THE DARK evening was arranged on 31 December. Parishioners were reminded to put on their glow and come and have supper and champers for R30-00 (children under 12 years free). It was remarked “It was truly what we needed to kick start a bright new 2006”.

## January 2006

Fr. Bogdan travelled to Poland for the opening session of the Polish Senate on 29 January. It was a private invitation from the Chairman of the Senate. All the expenses of this new duty, of Fr. Bogdan, including travel fees, are covered by the Polish government.

During his absence there was to be no early or Polish Mass, neither daily prayers nor Mass. Only one Mass was celebrated on Sunday's and that was the 09h00 Mass.

## February 2006

All celebrated the LOVE on Valentine's Day, 17 February. All Parishioners and their friends and family were invited to join us in the Hall to share this time of the year. Tickets were sold after Masses by Heidi Mellet for R30 which included a meal and kids under 12 were free. Margaret Sigl took bookings.

The hall was decorated with love, the food was prepared with love and the togetherness of our parishioners blossomed with love. Thanks went to everyone who had worked hard to prepare the evening and for each and everyone who attended this event.

An invitation was received from the Physics department of Unisa to Elzbieta, wife of late Krzysztof, Vice-Chairlady of our Parish council and their two sons, to the Memorial service for the late Professor Krzysztof Osuch, on Friday, 24 February 2006 in the Theo van Wyk building, Z.K. Mathews Hall, Unisa.

## June 2006

Winter Bingo was held on 16 June! Everyone was invited and requested to bring their friends, family and neighbors. Soup and sherry was served to scare away the winter cold. Beautiful prizes were won by the lucky ones.



We had the honor of having Fr. Bogdan in our community, celebrating 25 years of being a Priest. To a lot of us he had mentioned that he could not believe that he actually



reached this great milestone in his life. The Lord has given him to the world to spread the Good News of the love, forgiveness and eternal life God offers us. Thanks and praise to God for

sending Fr. Bogdan on this journey and sending him into all the lives he has touched. A special welcome was conducted to all our visiting Priests, Nuns, Knights of Da Gama, the Polish Embassy and representatives of the Polish Communities in South Africa and to everyone who attended this important Mass in our Parish. Everyone was invited to buy lunch for their families after Mass. As this was a special celebration it ended close to lunch time and the ladies from our community had prepared a variety of lunches to enjoy.

The following letter was received:

*"Dearest Parishioners,  
The celebration we had last Sunday was the most beautiful spiritual and festive occasion. Without your presence, generosity and hard work this feast would not have been possible. We would like to thank everyone from the bottom of our hearts for your help, especially those*



*who planned and organised this event – the beautiful clean church, the flowers and decorations – those who participated in the Mass, the musicians, the Mass booklets, the*





*children and those who prepared them for their parts and also those who gave so generously for the gifts we bought for Fr. Bogdan. We would also like to thank you for donations of meat, vegetables, cheese, fruit, cakes, etc. and to those who prepared and served the food. Thank you for lending us the Bain Marie and tables, gas plates, hot-trays, crockery and the transporting of it*

*all. You all gave in love and we really appreciate your help and generosity.”*

Corpus Christi was celebrated on 18 June. A combined Mass was held and thereafter, according to our tradition, the procession to the four Altars took place.

Fr. Bogdan left for Rome and Poland on 22 June. He celebrated the Silver Jubilee with other Priests. He returned on 19 July.

### August 2006

The Pipe Organ in our Church was renovated on 6 August. The cost of this renovation came in at R6,500.00. We received a great discount from the Organ builders as 12 pipes were changed and a thorough service was done. Our organ now sounds like a newly installed organ.



### September 2006

A fun walk day was arranged for all parishioners at the Pretoria Zoo on 16 September. The friends of the Zoo were met and then a 5 km walk in the Zoo took place to celebrate the arrival of spring. Everyone who completed the walk received a Lion medal.



## November 2006

The paving on the premises was completed on 19 November. Umbrellas and tables were set down in front of the Presbytery for anyone who was waiting for children.

## December 2006



The Sacrament of Confirmation and the feast of Immaculate Conception were celebrated on 9 December with the Archbishop George Daniel.

A new year's celebration took place in our Parish Hall. Tickets were sold by Margaretha Sigl and Heidi Mellet for R30.00

## January 2007

The January Parish Council meeting was opened by Holy Mass and the renewal of our commitment to our responsibilities to the Parish.

Veronica van den Berg was thanked for the years she took the responsibility of coordinating the Sunday Readers. Her duty was taken over by Jan Windt.

God's blessings were asked for our newly created Youth Group. They were led by Tamsyn Robson.

On 27 January there was a Youth Vigil throughout the night, for all youth members in our Diocese. This was held at the Madeira Club.

## February 2007



A Valentine bingo evening was held on 17 February, in the Parish hall. Everyone was invited to join us on this evening for some Loving Fun!

A beautiful supper (main course and pudding) was served at R30.00 per person. The Bingo started directly after supper.

## April 2007

The Youth group sold boerewors rolls and cups of cold drinks on 1 April to raise funds. The price of the rolls was R8.00 and cold drinks were sold for R5.00 per cup.

A new sound system was installed in our Church and was used from 8 April. Everyone who had contributed to our planned giving campaign was thanked. These contributions made it possible for Rodney Michael to install the system.

From 29 April and every Friday the Bible Study group gathered to enrich their spiritual life and build a relationship with God! Anyone who wanted to join was welcome.

## May 2007



The Polish Community celebrated their National Polish festival on 6 May. All visitors to our Parish were warmly welcomed. There were stalls with food and other goods after the Polish Mass and everyone was welcome to look at the

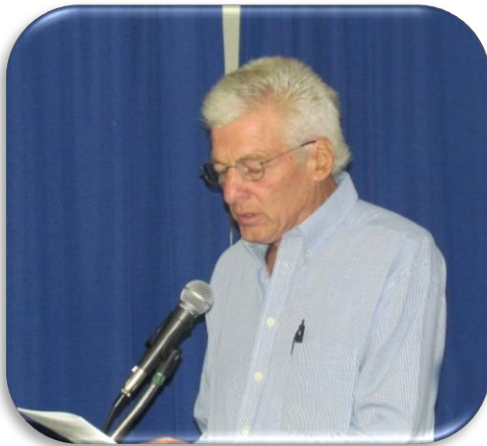
goods for sale. For the English community there was food stalls open directly after the English Mass.

All the Mothers were thanked for all the love and guidance they had given to their children on Mother's Day 13 May. We asked God for a special blessing upon all mothers on the day. The Mother's day hamper draw took place after Mass in the Parish Hall.

## June 2007

Fr. Bogdan left on 10 June for the Pilgrimage to the Divine Mercy. He returned to our Church on 18 June. A prayer was said for God to be with the tour group and it was asked that His blessings be upon this journey. Msgr. Mirek celebrated Mass with us in the absence of Fr. Bogdan.

## July 2007



On 22 July Jan Windt started with the Chronicles of the Catholic Church Immaculate Conception. Anyone who had a story to tell, a photograph to share, current events, past events were asked to please give copies of these to Jan Windt.

On 27 July two stalls were booked at the Cornwall Hill Fete for 6 October. An appeal was made for donations of items that could be sold on this day. Fun toys for children were suggested and it was indicated that no edibles were allowed for selling. The contact person was Margaretha Sigl and Ella Osuch.

## August 2007

On 12 August the Wall of Remembrance plans drawn for our project by Jan Windt were made available at the entrance of the Church for comment. This wall would be built in the shape of an M, which is the symbol of our Parish. The plan was to have the wall finished before 8 December, when the Bishop would be in our Parish to celebrate our feast day.

## October 2007

A retreat for the Catechism teachers was held after which Fr. Bogdan invited all the teachers and participants to join him for a braai as special thanks.

## December 2007



On 9 December the Sacrament of Confirmation was celebrated. The confirmation candidates were Piotr Osuch and Mateusz Ziolkowski, who received the gifts of the Holy Spirit from the hands of our Archbishop George Daniel. On the occasion Msgr Mirosław Adamczyk Counselor from the Embassy of the Holy See was welcomed. After the

Sacrament of Confirmation everyone was invited to assemble at the Wall of Remembrance to receive a special Blessing from Archbishop George Daniel. Thereafter everyone gathered in the Parish Hall for a finger lunch.

The Parish year end function was held on Monday, 17 December and all the Parish council members and the Catechism teachers were invited to the function. The Parish Chairman and Fr. Bogdan wanted to give thanks and gratitude to all the council members and teachers, who assisted them in building our community on a physical and spiritual level.

### April 2008

All Parishioners were asked to join the parish council for a bring and braai at the Church on 5 April. The council thought that was necessary for the parishioners to get together again and just have some good fun.

### May 2008

On 25 May we celebrated The Body and Blood of Jesus Christ (Corpus Christi). The following parish groups assisted in preparing the four Altars for the day's celebration. First Altar



prepared by the Parish

Council (Grotto) Second Altar prepared by the Sunday School (Gate) Thirds Altar prepared by the Polish Community (Big tree) Fourth Altar prepared by the Altar servers (Bell). Everyone brought their baskets and joined the Parish family for a bring and braai after the celebrations.

### July 2008

Fr. Bogdan went on leave for two months from 6 July. This is a requirement by the Society of Christ for Father to be in Poland after three years to serve in a certain



community. During this time he was with his close family and served time in the seminary.

### October 2008



The Society of Christ celebrated their 25th Anniversary in South Africa on 26 October. Lunch was sold at R20.00 per person and it was a spitbraai (lamb, pork and Portuguese chicken), together with salads and vegetables.

Stalls were sold at R50.00 a stall to those who wanted to sell items on the day. A tea garden was set up and cake sales took place on the day.

### November 2008

On 1 November, the Polish Embassy invited everyone to a film of the late Pope John Paul II and the 30th year of his Pontificate as Pope. This event was in English and the Embassy provided snacks and drinks during the film. Holy Mass for all our departed Brothers and Sisters was celebrated afterwards, as we were celebrating All Souls day.

A confirmation retreat was arranged on 8 November for all confirmation candidates, sponsors and catechism teachers.

First Holy Communion took place on 9 November during the celebration of the Eucharist.

On 23 November the change of the Mass order, requested by the Catholic Church in Southern Africa started. Pamphlets reflecting the changes of the Mass were made available.

Archbishop George Daniel was welcomed to our church on 7 December to celebrate and confirm members of our community in the Catholic faith. Time was taken

to thank him for all his years served in our Diocese as Archbishop. As of January 2008 Archbishop Paul Khumalo would take over from Archbishop George Daniel.

The yearly Parish braai for council members and our catechism teachers took place on 16 December. Everyone was invited to bring their spouse and enjoy a bit of relaxing after all the hard work done during 2008.



### January 2009

A call was made to all parishioners willing to assist with catechism classes. The class lists for 2009 were put up at the entrance of the Church for the children who advanced to the next classes of their journey of faith. Sr. Bernadette or Belinda Bagley could be contacted in this regard. A letter to the parents and teachers, interested in the catechism events for 2009, was placed at the entrance of the church. A Mandating Mass was held on 18 January for all the teachers.

### February 2009

A Valentines dinner consisting of a buffet of cold meat, salads and desert took place on 13 February and tickets were sold at R35.00 per person. Music was played for those wishing to dance.

### May 2009

A Soup and Sherry Bingo evening was held on 29 May. Appeals for nice and interesting gifts were made to parishioners so hampers could be made up.

### May 2009

On 5 July Anton Nienaber of Kyocera, Tswane Digital Solutions(TDS), donated a printer to our Parish. He had attended Mr. Marais' funeral and heard about the problem with our copier.

## September 2009

A big thank you went to Martin Lourens on 13 September as he had offered and attended to the Church garden. He had people working in the garden to get it back on track for three days during that week.

On 20 September a Question book and pen was made available for parishioners to ask questions, request prayers, share interesting news/facts or put some suggestions forward. It was mentioned that entries could be anonymous and facts stated would first be investigated. Answers to questions would be answered in the book and prayers that were requested would be said during the week.

## October 2009

The Catechism teachers had a beautiful retreat on 17 October. They were thanked for their dedication and their time in proclaiming God's glory in their lives and those of others.

A Mass celebrating all the Catechism children was said on 18 October. The Catechism children had prepared a beautiful celebration for the Mass.

## November 2009

Fr. Bogdan went to the Zandfontein cemetery to bless the graves of loved ones on 1 November and all were welcome to meet Fr. Bogdan in the cemetery.

A catechism outing with the train to Cullinan was undertaken on 14 November. The cost for adults wishing to accompany the catechism children was R100.00 per adult.

Fr Bogdan received The Order of Polonia Restituta in the Polish Embassy on 12 November. It is one of Poland's highest Orders. The Order can be conferred for outstanding achievements in the fields of education, culture, social work, civil service, or for furthering good relations between countries. The Order was established by Grand Master of the Order - Marshal Józef

Pilsudski on February 4, 1921. The Order became Poland's main honour for foreigners and was awarded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Family Tree day was held on 22 November. This came about due to a suggestion that families, who would like to replace missing trees, bring their own trees with them to plant on the church grounds. These trees would symbolize their family. The tree could have beautiful flowers, bear fruit or might reflect the family roots. The responsibility and ownership of the tree would lie with each family.

The walls and sculptures in our church were washed on 28 November. A request was made that the community come and help. Parishioners who could assist were asked to speak to Heidi Mellet.

### December 2009



The Parish celebrated the Feast of Immaculate Conception on 6 December. The newly appointed Archbishop Mandla Khumalo was welcomed for his first Confirmation of the young people in our church. A very special guest the Superior General of the Society of Christ, Fr Tomasz

Sielicki, was present. It was his first Canonical visitation to South Africa. Lunch was sold at R50.00 per person.

Special Christmas greeting envelopes from Fr. Bogan and the parish council were placed at the entrance of the church.

### January 2010

All teachers and parish council members were invited to a braai on 2 January. This braai usually takes place in December but this year it was moved to the New Year.

A Mandate Mass for the Catechism Teachers in our Church was celebrated on 24 January. God our Father was thanked for giving these people to us and made them willing to teach our children about faith and leading a life in the light of God. We prayed that they would be protected and blessed for this beautiful gift they give to our community.



## February 2010

David Boyes who had enquired about painting the walls inside the Church arranged to start the painting on 7 February. He was additionally thanked for installing the new water pump on our premises.

Special thanks went out to the following parishioners on 14 February. Martin Lourens for helping to clean the Church premises, cutting the grass and removing the rubble from the property. Marie Slater and Renée Nel who polished our Church floors, cleaning every corner of our Church.

The first stage of our Church renovations had been completed. The next stage would be to paint the front wall of our Church, the palisades around the premises and the roof of the Presbytery. Dave Boyes who led this project was thanked.



Stations of the Cross were held every Friday evening during Lent from 18h30. In our Parish tradition someone prepared a reflection. These reflections were our prayers in which we remembered the road Jesus walked and how today we still walk this road.

## March 2010



The main gate rail was repaired on 27 March and a start was made to renovate the steps from the sacristy side. The floor at the entrance of the top hall was also repaired.

Marie Slater and Renée Nel cleaned our church on 23 March. Parishioners who were available were called to come and assist with the spring clean.

## June 2010

A bingo, soup and sherry evening was arranged for 4 June. Parishioners were asked to invite their neighbors, family and friends to come and join in the fun. Donations for prizes were called for. All prize donations could be given to Margaretha Sigl or Sofia Da Silva.

## September 2010

On 12 September the parish was led in prayer by the Catechism teachers. This Catechetical Sunday Mass was requested by the Archdiocese of Pretoria.

## November 2010

The Knights of Da Gama had their annual Corporal Mass which was celebrated in our Parish on 7 November.

Fr. Bogdan went to Zandfontein Cemetery to bless the graves of those who had passed away. Anyone was welcome to join him.

A call was made that all First Holy Communion candidates be at the 18h30 Mass, for Confession and Rehearsal on 12 November.

We had numerous requests from parishioners appealing for our traditional Shelter Seeking. This is where we gather in houses of Parishioners every Sunday and Wednesday evening during the time of Advent. Christmas Carols are sung and get ourselves into the Christmas feeling. Anyone wishing to offer their homes and become part of Shelter Seeking was asked to contact Joyce Enos.

A Confirmation retreat, together with Sacrament of Confession was held on 27 November. All Confirmation candidates and their sponsors were asked to attend.

A beautiful Christmas play was performed by the children in our parish. We enjoyed every scene performed and thanked every child who performed on the evening. Special thanks went to Gavin van den Berg and Margretha Sigl, who diligently helped the children to create this beautiful play. The parents of the children, who agreed that their angels can form part of the Christmas Play 2010, were thanked as well.



## January 2011

The children could be registered for Catechism Classes from 9 January. Registration fees remained at R50.00 per child for 2011. A call was made that the adult confirmation candidates register on this date as well.

On 22 January the catechism teachers were appointed by Archbishop Slattery as the “lights” of our Diocese. A Mandating Mass for the Catechism teachers took place on 23 January where they accepted the responsibility in our Parish.

Our Archdiocese celebrated, on 30 January, an installation Mass for the new Archbishop of Pretoria William Slattery OFM, in the Church of the Beatitudes, Atterbury Rd (opposite Mooikloof). He was appointed on 23 December 2010 by the Holy Father. He came to us from the diocese of Kokstad.

### March 2011

A Lenten Retreat was held from 11 to 13 March and everyone was welcomed to join in the deepening of their Faith through Scripture. Our speaker was Fr. Russell. Non-Catholic friends and family were also welcome to listen to how we all should be deepening our Faith through Holy Scripture.



### April 2011

A Catechism camp was held on 15 and 16 April. For the two nights it cost R190.00 excluding the cost of the food. The Parents who sent their children on the camp were thanked. Special thanks went to the teachers and Margaretha Sigl who organised the outing.

### May 2011

Our yearly Bingo evening was arranged on 6 May. A call was made for everyone to come and support this fund raising event.



## June 2011



On 26 June Corpus Christi was celebrated by Holy Mass. During this Mass we celebrated the Baptism of Isabella De Pasquale. After the celebration we had a procession to the four Altars prepared in our garden. The four altars were as follows: Representing the Parish at the

Crosses, Catechism classes at our Grotto, Polish community at the big tree north of our Premises and Altar servers at the bells

## October 2011

The process of painting the Priest house started on 9 October. Martin Lourens and his team were thanked for cleaning our premises and painting our Presbytery.

## November 2011

A Cultural Fun Day was arranged for 5 November. Food, slip-slide, jumping castle, live band, auctions of all kinds took place right through the day. The Knights of Da Gama had their Harley Davidson Team visit us over lunch. Dancers showed us a few moves we didn't know could be done. Lively music and live performers were there on the day as well.



On 6 November Fr. Bogdan went to Zandfontein Cemetery to bless the graves of those who had passed away.

A new translation of the Roman Missal had been released. The order of the Mass was combined in a booklet at a cost of R15.00 and leaflets at a cost of R2.00. The cost of the Missal was R900.00. During the next seven weeks an attachment to the bulletin with the explanation of this new Missal was distributed.



## January 2012

A Mandating Mass took place for the teachers in our parish, who pledged their commitment to teach our children the Will of God. Let us keep them in our prayer for 2012. Parishioners were requested to notify Margaretha Sigl if there was any change of contact details or addresses. Registration fees was R50.00 per child.

Parents were notified that a camp for the children at the same venue as last year, but for 2 nights, would take place the weekend of 17 to 19 Feb 2012. The camp was a retreat for the teachers and children. The focus was on preparing the children for Lent, especially Ash Wednesday, 22 February 2012.



## February 2012

Catechism CAMP: All the children received a letter with information in terms of the . It was mentioned that a deposit for the venue (Die Hoekie) had already been paid and was for 2 evenings. There was only space for 50 people.

## From the Parish Council Meeting -

Sofia Da Silva was thanked for the years she served on the council and it was noted that she would still be available when needed.

New parish council members Martin Lourens, Riana Rolfe, John, Renee & Ian Nel were welcomed.

A call for additional musicians was made to all parishioners. Any parishioner who can play a musical instrument was welcomed to join. Anyone interested was asked to speak to Manuel.

Ash Wednesday was celebrated on 22 February. We had come to that part of the year where we needed to reflect upon our lives and repent for what we had done wrong in our daily tasks. On this Wednesday the symbol of our creation, was made on our foreheads at the Mass celebrated from 18h30. This was a day of obligation and fasting, but most important it was for us to remember our shortcomings and give grace to God who sent His Son to die on the Cross for our sins.

Fr Bogdan led us through all the Stations of the Cross on Fridays during the time of Lent as this was where we as a community could share our Stations amongst our fellow parishioners.

### March 2012

The Archbishop invited coordinators for Phase II Formation to attend a workshop on 21 March at the Bertoni Centre, Pretoria North.

A Parish council meeting was held on 27 March. On this evening everyone who offered to form part of our 50th Anniversary committee was asked to be present.

### April 2012

Parishioners preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage were asked to attend the marriage classes.

The Altar of adoration was decorated for Holy Week. A call was made for the Altar servers and any other Parishioner to assist Marco.

Riana Rolfe was appointed as coordinator of the Immaculate Conception 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee event and she requested all parish members to bring some history they had about our Church. A magazine with 50 years of memories was being created. A request was made that all photos, articles, experiences, memorabilia be given to Riana on flash disks, CD's, e-mails, etc. This material would be used and given back to their rightful owners.

### Easter - Thank you, thank you, thank you!

There was so much thanks to give to everyone in our community. This time of the



year was the busiest in our religious lives. So many days that we are obliged to be at church. So many preparations for each new day; The readers, altar servers, Richard and Manuel playing guitar, Marco the Altar of Adoration, Margaretha and her team of ladies who prepared the food for Thursday, Heidi, Stations

of the Cross, Manuel, Vigil fire, Daleen, Church decorations for Easter Vigil, photographers, attendees, there are so many we would like to give special thanks. May God bless you with His Grace for all this beautiful love of His you share in our community.

Parents were notified that each child would receive a ballot regarding catechism classes being moved from 10h00 to 08h00 on a Sunday morning. It was stated that this would extend parishioners Sundays with an hour.

Winter bingo would be held on 4 May! Our famous soup and sherry games used to ward off the cold was mentioned. A call was made for any gifts parishioners would like to donate as prizes.

Winter started and that means it was time to think of those who did not have. The Catholic Church is fortunate to have the Order of the Knights of Da Gama that help to distribute our generosity and assistance. It was mentioned that at the entrance of the Church there were postcard size pamphlets with the Divine Mercy and at the back a bit more information on how to assist through their annual Blanket Campaign. On 13 May a representative of the Knights of Da Gama visited and a special second collection towards the 2012 Blanket Campaign was held.



Martin Lourens was thanked for the beautiful job he does on our premises. It was reported that 20 bags of refuse was removed in the past week.

## November 2012

In November we prayed for eternal life of all our family and friends who have gone before us. The Pious List was made available at the entrance of the Church. Every day in November prayer was said for all whose names were written on the Pious lists.

On 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> November evening Mass were said for All Saints and All Souls.

The renovation of our wooden doors in the Church started as well as the painting of the ceiling above Our Lady picture.