



OUR PARISH'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR!!!

A THUMBNAIL HISTORY

Holy Rosary Parish was formed out of portions of the Cathedral Parish in Hamilton, St. John's, Burlington, and St. Thomas, Waterdown. Father Bernard Harrigan was the first Pastor, and the first Mass was celebrated on July 6, 1947 in the chapel of Holy Sepulchre Cemetery. Holy Rosary School was built in 1951. Under the leadership of Father Blake Ryan, a new church and rectory were built. The 400-seat Church was dedicated on May 1, 1955, by Bishop Joseph F. Ryan. In 1987, during the pastorate of Father Anthony Ciavarro, the Church was redesigned, with a 180-degree rotation. Beautiful stained glass, statuary, and sculpture adorn the renewed space. The Parish Centre was built in 1994, during the pastorate of Father Ron Cote. Pastors who have served the parish are: Msgr. Bernard Harrigan (1947-1953); Father Blake Ryan (1953-1964); Father Harold Smith (1964-1975); Father Carlo Bianchi (1975-1979); Father Anthony Ciavarro (1979-1989); Father Ron Cote (1989-2004); Father Frank Trzupsek (2004-2011); Msgr. Murray Kroetsch (2011-2013); Msgr. Edward House (2013-2016); and Msgr. Martin Vallely (2016-present).

DID YOU KNOW.....?

.....some interesting things about the history of Holy Rosary Parish.....as we mark our 75th Anniversary in 2022!

1) Holy Rosary was the second parish established in what is now Burlington, Saint John the Baptist Parish downtown being the first. The whole community of what was then known as Aldershot was to be the pastoral charge of the new parish, stretching from the border with Hamilton over to Maple Avenue, and from the border with Waterdown down to the lake. Those are the parish boundaries to this day. Except for the French community of Saint Philippe, we are the smallest parish in Burlington, with some 700 – 800 registered households, including many senior citizens.

2) Sunday worship took place in the chapel at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery for the first four years of the parish's existence, 1947-1951. Attendance in the chapel grew till it averaged 150 on a weekend. After 1951, Sunday worship took place in the newly-built school hall, until the church was finally built and dedicated in 1955.

3) Several former Pastors of Holy Rosary are buried close to that Holy Sepulchre Cemetery chapel, including Monsignor Bernard Harrigan, the founder, who had led worship there in those early years.

4) For its first 30+ years, the physical orientation of the interior of our church was in exactly the opposite direction from what it is now. The back was the front, and the front was the back! Originally, there was a mural above the altar, depicting the mysteries of the Rosary. The reorientation and redesign took place under Pastor Father Anthony Ciavarro in the mid-1980's.

5) The wonderful mechanical-action, Casavant pipe organ is still relatively new, just over 15 years old. Its entire history is beautifully traced by Vicky Chen in an article still available on the parish website.

6) The parish has a long and noble history of active ministry, service, and outreach. It has been known to be on the cutting edge. For example, we were the first parish in the Diocese of Hamilton to pilot the RENEW program, as far back as 1980. Father Ciavarro oversaw this development, too. The program soon took hold all over the Diocese, and eventually in many places in Canada.

7) Many wonderful pastoral initiatives have been undertaken and flourished through the dedicated shepherding of Holy Rosary's Pastoral Ministers: Sister Rosanne Logel, C.S.J. (1992 – 2007), and Mary Edmondstone (2007 – 2022). The new Youth and Family Minister will be counted upon to continue this work, and lead it into still newer directions for our future outreach.