



Holy Mass is celebrated on Sunday at 11 am
The Rosary is recited on Sunday at 10:30 am



The Old Catholic Church of B.C.

(St. Raphael's)

+ Rt. Rev. Gérard LaPlante, Bishop

Fr. Jürgen Schmode, Priest

715 East 51st Avenue;

Vancouver, BC V5X 1E2 Canada

Phone (604) 325-9193

FAX (604) 327-1066

The Little Church

The Bishop's shirt hangs on the clothes line
A few loose nails stick out from the pews
It's another Sunday morning
The little Church holds its breath
As parishioners open its
Wooden front doors.

The Priests have side jobs here,
No stipends from higher ranks,
A breakaway Church with more
Heart and character
Than the regal Cathedral
Downtown.

Everything has its place
In this small house of
Worship
The busy walls of crosses,
The Jesus portraits, the plastic
Altar flowers, the candles,
The incense, even the
Cold air that seeps
Through the cracks.

Everyone is welcome too,
Of all colors and faiths,
Of all ages and backgrounds,

During the sermon, lines around
The Bishop's eyes speak of
The struggles he's fought
To spare his Church
His sanity
His parish.

From a boisterous laugh
To notes of stern rebuke
His presence fills the room,
Always final words of
Encouragement to be
Charitable, loving and true
A meekness of his Saviour
Filtering through

And as the singing peaks
And the hymn lifts up their hearts
Standing by the front door
With staff and smile,
The Bishop and the Priests
Kiss them on their way
To do good deeds.

A former customs official
With mixed ancestry
His deep caroling voice
His searching eyes, his
Broad chest,
As it to say:

Remember, I built this Church
On a rock. Like my body, this
Church was planted with blood
And nails - the same nails
That holds this Church together,
Holds my frame together.

The little Church is quiet.
The organ has stopped playing.
The shirt is sun-dried.
Blue paint peels at the front door.
A handful of nails lie
On the front steps.

Samuel Thomas
October 2005