

Chapter 2

1979 "AUTOCEPHALOUS" INDEPENDENCE OF OUR CHURCH

From the minutes of St. Raphael's Old Catholic Church By an unanimous decision of the board of St. Raphael's Society and the members of the church, because of past difficulties regarding theosophy and continual discord over the philosophy of the said body, and having a continual negative influence on the life of our church, it was voted to become "Autocephalous" (Independent) from the Liberal Catholic Church, International body headquarters - London, England. Bishop Jackson resigned from the International body of the L.C.C. as a member and a Bishop over the disagreement between himself and the Presiding Bishop of the said body, regarding retirement status of Bishop Jackson.

Rev. Fr. Gérard LaPlante, elected as Bishop - Elect of the new body by the Board of the Church. January 8th, incorporated in Victoria, B.C. as the Liberal Catholic Church of B.C. & Society, February 14th. Received "In communion" with the Liberal Catholic Church (non-theosophical) of Ontario, Feb. 15th.

1979

June 3rd The Rt. Rev. D.M. Berry, M.A., of the L.C.C. of Ontario, administrated the Sacrament of Confirmation to Fernand Girard. Twelve years old, son of Mr., & Mrs. F. Girard, parishioners of St Raphael's Church and also to Isabelle, Sandra, and Christine Unghy, daughters of Mr. & Mrs. Jean Unghy, also of St Raphael's.

Bishop Berry received to the diaconate. Rev. Henry Patten Stewart, 6000 Buckiam, Pkwy Apt. 24. Culver City, Cal. U.S.A.. Born December 21, 1943, Shreveport - Louisiana, baptized in Alexandria Louisiana by Rev. H.J. Beckers, Roman Catholic Church. Deacon Henry works for the American Department of Justice (Drug Enforcement) in the USA.

September 30th The Rev. Fr. Gérard LaPlante was consecrated Bishop of the new body, at Blessed

Trinity Cathedral, Hamilton, Ontario, on the 30th of September 1979. The Most Rev. Donald W. Berry was the principal consecrator, assisted by the Most Rev. John H.V. Russell, Presiding Bishop of the L.C.C. of Ontario, thus assuring a valid Apostolic Succession for the Liberal Catholic Church of BC.

Parishioners of the Church were also present. Mrs. Louise Heide, treasurer, Mr. Alain Vaugier, organist and secretary, Mr. Fred Foster, director, Mr. John McDermott, Mr. Marcel Girard, Mr. Eddy LaPlante, brother of new Bishop, Mrs. Laurie LaPlante, his sister. After the service, a banquet was held in the basement the Cathedral with many clergy in attendance and friends of the L.C.C. of Ontario. Photos and films were taken of the event

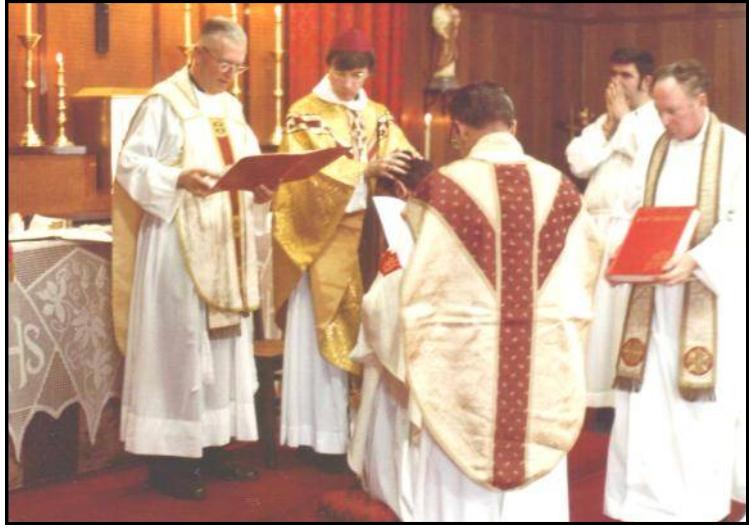
October A new altar is installed at the Church, as the old one over 45 years old, made of plywood, was badly deteriorated and not possible to repair. According to Liturgy it was burned, and few decorative pieces kept for souvenirs, (crosses, eur de lis etc.) The new altar is made of oak and used to be in a Lutheran Church, (Ontario). It cost \$750.00 and was built by the Villarboito Co.-Woodcarvers-(1952). The Villarboito brothers operated the first hand wood-carving business in Manitoba, they came originally from Sicily, Italy. The Speaker's Chair in the Manitoba Legislature was designed by Mr. Carlo Fusetti, who worked with the Villarboito Brothers!

During the Bishop's consecration, the interior of the Church was repainted all white, and a new tabernacle added.

October 7th The first Mass was celebrated by the new Bishop in Causapscal, Québec, with members of the Church present, and parents, friends & relatives of the new Bishop. Over 50 people attended this Mass held in the forest, outdoors.

October 14th Holy Mass in the newly renovated church by the new Bishop.

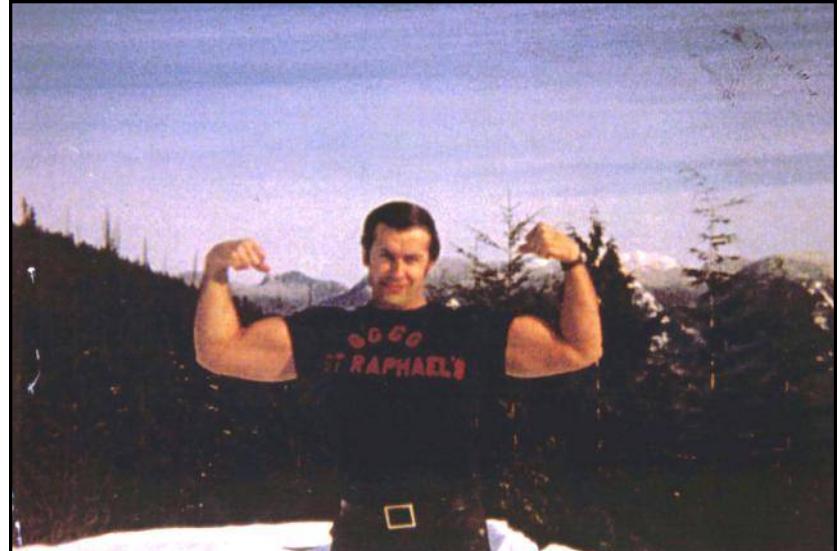
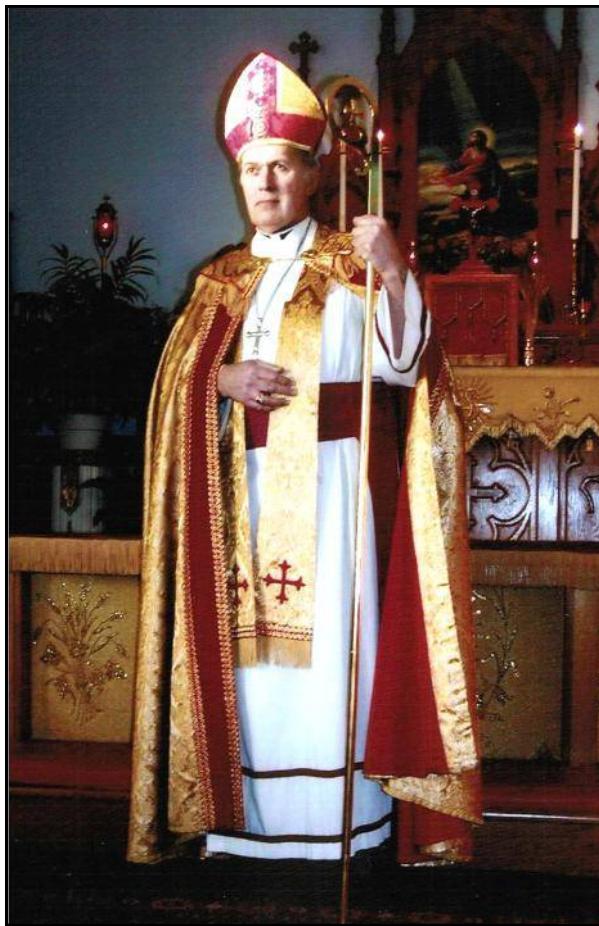
The Old Catholic Church of BC



Bishop Gérard LaPlante

above left: At his ordination to the Priesthood on October 31, 1975 by the Rt. Rev. Ernest. W. Jackson, Regional Bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church in Toronto, Ontario, in the Oratory of the Bishop. Above right: At his consecration to the Episcopate on September 30, 1979 at Blessed Trinity Cathedral, Hamilton Ontario, by the Most Rev. Donald W. Berry and the Most Rev. John H.V. Russell.

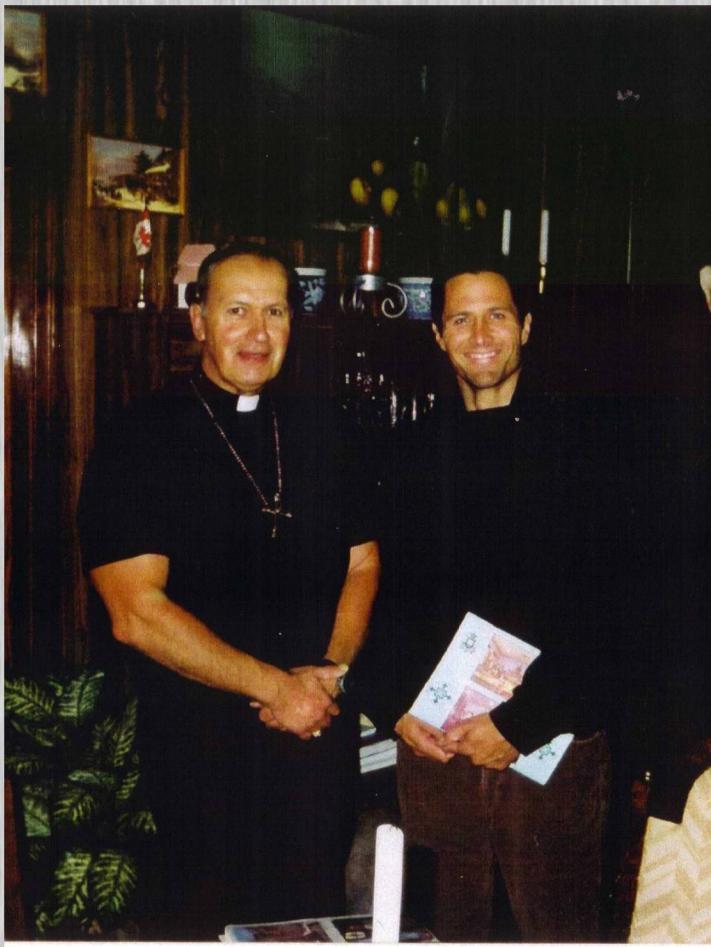
Below: Inside St. Raphael's Old Catholic Church in 2004



Picture above : In Whistler in 1975

Picture below: At his 25th anniversary to the Priesthood in 2000 with left to right: Fr. Jürgen Schmode, Fr. Jim Roberts (Roman Catholic Priest), Rt. Rev. J. Gérard A. LaPlante, Fr. Gordon Hangerud





Bishop LaPlante in many places: top left: with Actor Bob Estes, below left: personal letter from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, top right: At the visit of Pope John Paul II, 1984, in Abbotsford, BC, left to right: Fr. Miroslav Dejanov, Serbian Orthodox Church, Mr. Charles Matson, Rev. Fr. Cyril Bulasevich, Russian Orthodox Church, Bishop LaPlante, Mr. Marc Gosselin, RCMP, Fr. Gordon Hangerud; center right: with Anglican Bishop of Quebec, Rt. Rev. Bruce Stavert, and his wife, Mrs. Stavert; below right: in St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church, Listuguj, Gaspe Coast, Mi'gmaq Reservation, PQ

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

March 15, 2000

Rt. Rev. J. Gérard La Plante
The Old Catholic Church of B. C.
715 East 51st Avenue
Vancouver B.C.
Canada V5X 1E2

Dear Reverend La Plante:

It was a pleasure meeting you in the hotel gym recently. It is so good to know that you are not only spiritually fit, but physically fit as well!

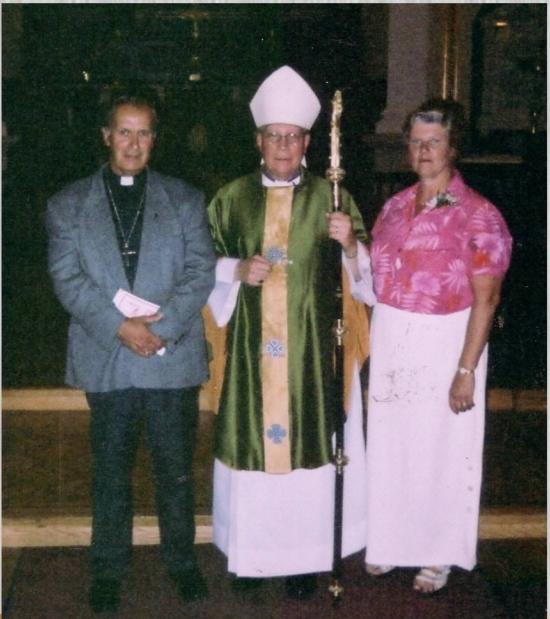
I thank you very much for your nice letter and for the beautiful rosary. I am truly honored and touched by your thoughtfulness. I also enjoyed the brochure about your church, and if I am ever in town on a weekend, I will try to attend Sunday Holy Mass there.

In the meantime, take care and keep up your training routine!

With my best,

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Arnold Schwarzenegger

AS/lm



THE OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH OF BC



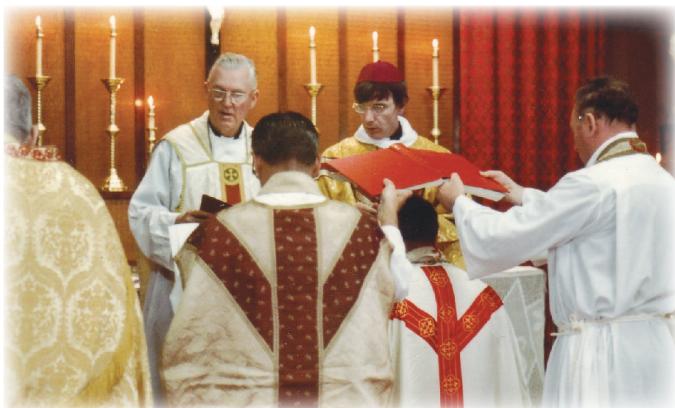
Above: Ordination of Deacon Patten Stewart to the Priesthood April 1980; left to right (clergy) Fr. Jim Roberts, Roman Catholic Priest, Bishop LaPlante, Fr. Patten Stewart.



Above: Visit of Bishop Berry Summer 1979; left to right: Father LaPlante, Bishop Berry, Deacon Patten Stewart.



Above: Death of Fr. Carey 1979.



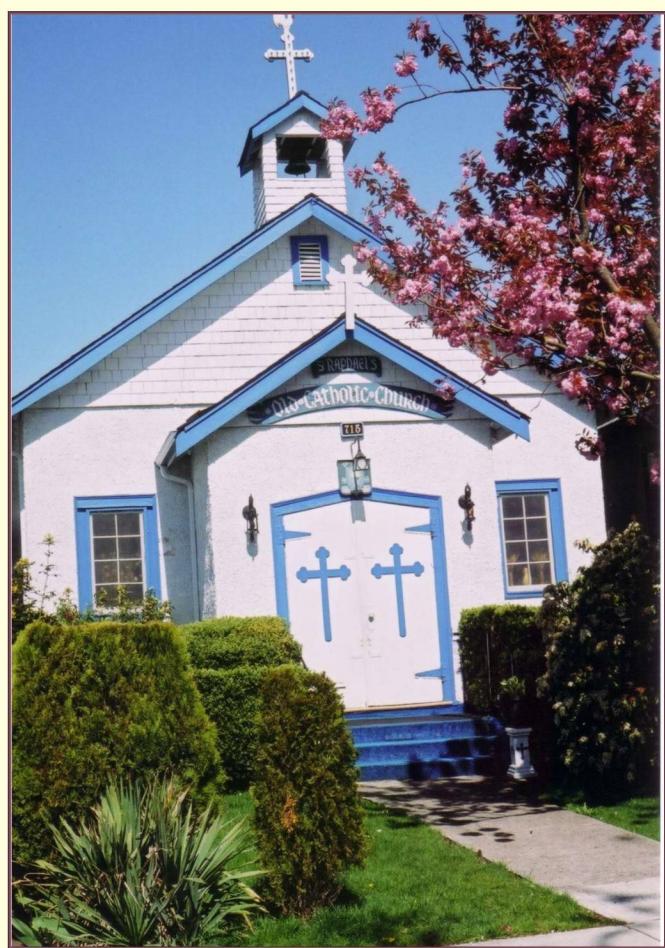
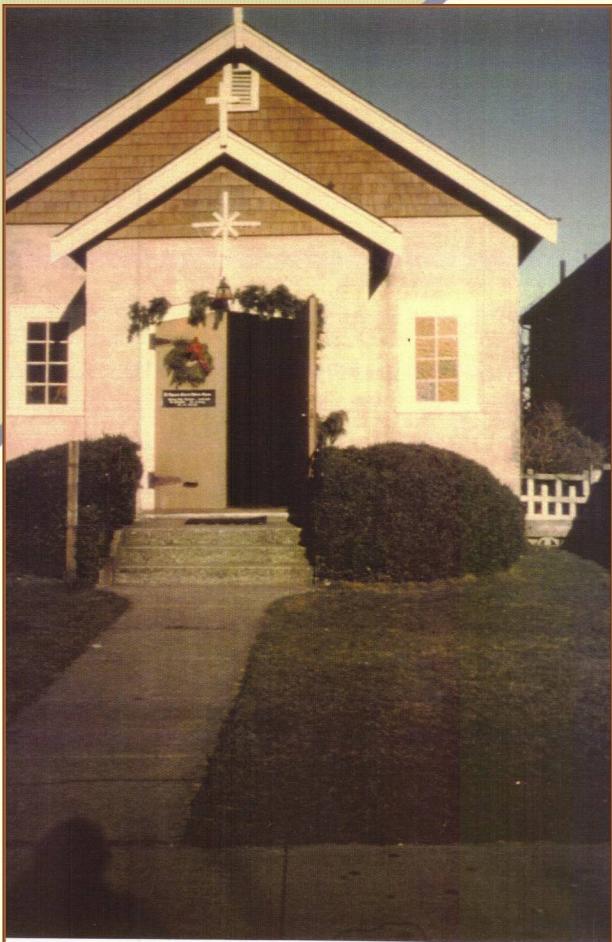
Above: The consecration to the Episcopate of Fr. LaPlante Rev. at Blessed Trinity Cathedral, Hamilton, Ontario, on the 30th of September 1979. Most Rev. Donald W. Berry, principal consecrator, Most Rev. John H.V. Russell, co-consecrator.



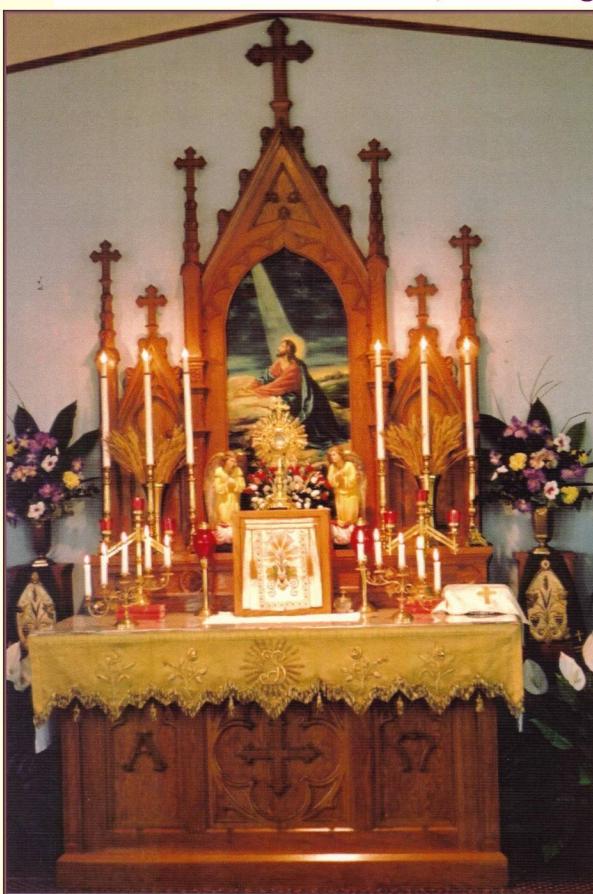
Above: Ordination of Deacon Kevin McKeown to the Priesthood.



Fr. Gordon with Teddy 1993.



St. Raphael's Old Catholic Church, Vancouver, BC;
top left: before Bishop LaPlante, ca. 1972
top right: after the arrival of Bishop LaPlante
below left: the Altar; below right: The Monstrance and Tabernacle



THE OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH OF BC

December 24th Christmas Eve Mass - A full church, over 150 present

December 27th Fr. J. Carey died at St Mary's Hospital, New Westminster, BC. Requiem Mass celebrated by + Bishop LaPlante, January 15, 1980, at St Raphael's Church; burial at Mountain View Cemetery.

The Liberal Catholic Church of B.C. & Society was incorporated under the federal government under the certificate #0546 762 3927. We are now permitted to issue income tax receipts for donations.

1980

April 3rd Bishop LaPlante ordained to the priesthood Rev. Fr. Pat Stewart, deacon, in St. Raphael's Church. Rev. Fr. James Roberts assisted and preached. Rev. Fr. James Roberts, Roman Catholic priest preached at the 11:00 Mass May 4th.

A friend of the church for over 4 years, Mrs. Mathilda Ebner, from Baden Germany, took residence in the living quarters of the church for 6 months. As in the past for over three years, we gave accommodation to people in search of work or having some other problems. Already 15 people have received help from St. Raphael's in that way. Our congregation has now an attendance every Sunday of about 40 to 50 people. We have English speaking, French speaking, German, Arabic, etc., and every Sunday the "Our Father" is recited in three to four languages. The congregation is growing steadily.

"Our work must be one of faith, hope, and above all CHARITY. What does the future hold for the 80's for St Raphael's? Let us put our Trust in Christ and let us remember that as a small Christian Unit, we do

	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals		
1976	4	2	4		
1977	2	0	13		
1978	4	2	15	(to date	
1979	7	2	15	June 14, 1980)	
1980	6	3	12		
Total	23	9	59		

serve a purpose.

Let us ask Our Lord Jesus Christ to continue to help us to do what He asks of us, and Honor, Glory to Him alone. "

+J. Gérard LaPlante

14 June 1980 Vancouver, B.C.

	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals	Confirmations	Ordinations
1981	14	34	30	6	0
1982	15	36	32	4	0
1983	20	42	42	4	1
Total	60	151	126	16	1

1980-1983

From 1980 to 1983 St Raphael's Old Catholic Church has been growing steadily as shown above. We also have a deacon, Rev. Francis Bruce Dalton, who was ordained to the diaconate by + Bishop Gérard LaPlante, July 13, 1983, having received minor orders the previous day.

On the 21st of August 1983, Rev. Fr. Lester Roberge celebrated his first Mass at St. Raphael's. He was ordained to the priesthood, by Most Rev. Michael Johnson Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church of Vancouver, B.C. on the 14th of March 1959. He served at Corpus Christi Parish under Rev. Fr. James Carney, (now RC. Archbishop of Vancouver) 1959 - 1962. Holy Cross RC Church 1963 - 1966. 1966 - 1967 Chaplain to the Sisters of Infant Jesus, North Vancouver, B.C. 67 -70 Powell River as Co-pastor. 1970 -1974 Curate at St Patrick's Church, Haney B.C. Fr. Roberge was born at St Edward, Alberta, May 31, 1929. He attended primary school at Our Lady of Lourdes, Maillardville, B.C. Secondary, St Peter's, New Westminster, B.C. Theological studies at St Joseph Seminary, Edmonton Alberta, and Christ the King Seminary, Burnaby B.C. He is now helping at St. Raphael's with Deacon Dalton.

+ J. Gérard LaPlante

18th February 1984

THE OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH OF BC



Left to right: Mrs. Monique LaPlante, Mrs. Colette LaPlante ,
Mrs. Matilda Ebner, Mr. Duchesne



Mr. Benno Riehl with wife Maria and their daughter.



Birthday party for Bishop Gérard LaPlante 1981

THE OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH OF BC

Baptisms Weddings Funerals Confirmations Ordinations

1984	12	33	45	0	0
1985	19	34	40	4	1

(to the Deaconate: Rev. G. Hangerud,
January 24, 1980)

1986

Deacon Fr. Gordon Hangerud, was ordained to the Holy Priesthood, by Bishop Gérard LaPlante, on Easter Sunday, March 30. 1986. He was presented by members of the Congregation, Mr. Fernand Girard, Mrs. Louise Heide, and Mr. Charles Dumont. Mrs. Allison Carter, (cousin of Rev. Fr. Gordon Hangerud), read a prayer specially written for the occasion by herself, and copies distributed for souvenirs of the happy event. A friend of the newly ordained priest, Rev. Bruce Wannop, former Pastor of Haney Christian Alliance was invited to speak about Fr. Gordon's interests past & present in Church life.

April 1986

PURCHASE OF THE HOUSE AT 721 EAST 51st AVE.
By an unanimous decision of the Board of the St Raphael's Society, the house adjacent to the church, owned by Mr. John Pillar, (who got married in St Raphael's Old Catholic Church in 1985), was sold to the Society for use of its clergy. This is a big "step" for the Old Catholic Church of B.C. & Society. "Thanks to the dedication of its people and with the guidance and protection of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and Saints of the Church another page is turning towards the future, and a goal is set up to continue to grow, expand and bring Souls to Our Lord and Master, Our Risen Saviour, Jesus Christ."

Summer 1986 We received many visitors for Expo '86. Our facilities were well used during that time for these visitors and friends. Shingles were added to the steeple of the church, thanks to Mr. Hector Kelloch, and trimmings of the Church's windows,

doors, etc. were repainted. An exterior green rug was added to the Church's steps outside the Church.

Parish of Saint Raphael's Rector's Annual Report to the Board 1987

Throughout 1986 Saint Raphael's parish continued to enjoy slow but regular growth. Attendance at the regular Sunday celebration of the Holy Eucharist averaged about thirty to thirty-five people. We note with pleasure the steady increase in the number of young families with children who are making Saint Raphael's their home parish.

On March 30, 1986, at the regular Sunday celebration of the Holy Eucharist, Deacon Gordon Hangerud was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Bishop Gérard LaPlante. This ordination enabled Bishop Gérard to travel at some length during the latter part of the year, while ensuring that the sacraments continued to be celebrated at our church. We welcome Father Gordon to the priesthood and to our ministry here at Saint Raphael's.

Deacon, Reverend Fr. Kevin Dale McKeown, continues to reside in Montreal, Quebec, and visits us at least once a year, usually assisting at services just before and during Christmas.

In addition to the regular celebration of the Holy Eucharist, the following rites were observed by our clergy in 1986:

Baptisms Weddings Funerals Confirmations Ordinations

1986	17	8	42	0	1
------	----	---	----	---	---

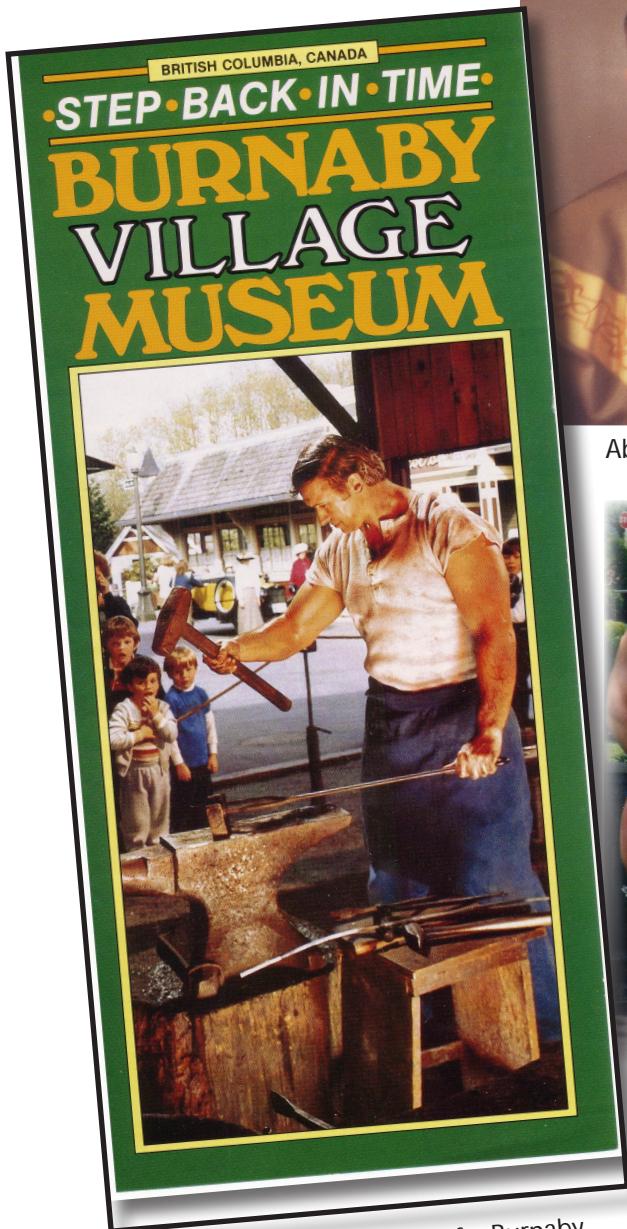
We submit this report with the prayer that God will continue to bless our ministry and fellowship.

Yours in Christ's service,

The Right Reverend Gérard LaPlante
Bishop



Left: After the ordination Bishop LaPlante is shown with Fr. Kevin and his parents.



Above: Bishop LaPlante posing for Burnaby Village Museum 1985.



Above: Fr. Lester Roberge (left) and Deacon Bruce Dalton 1983.



Above: 1988: The Men at Work: left to right: Mr. Jürgen Alsbach, Mrs. Jutta Schmid, Bishop LaPlante, Mr. Don Bakovy, parishioner.

Parish of Saint Raphael's Rector Annual Report to the Board 1988

April 1988

The year 1987 was a good one in the life of our parish and congregation. We enjoyed a steady increase in attendance, and we found that we had a very encouraging mix of new parishioners and faithful members who had been with us for a decade or more.

On Sunday, November 22, 1987 at the regular celebration of the Holy Eucharist, Deacon Kevin Dale McKeown was ordained to the Holy Priesthood. The church was full of parishioners, joined by Father Kevin's parents, friends and family. A lunch was served in the rectory following the ordination service. Our prayers are with Father Kevin for a fruitful ministry in Our Lord's vineyard.

On December 16, 1987, Bishop LaPlante's mother, Mrs. Maria LaPlante (born Paradis) passed away at the age of 85. She was buried on December 19 at Causapscal, Québec. The Bishop was in Quebec with his family at the time. May she rest in peace.

In January of 1988 I accepted the resignations of Father Gordon Hangerud and Mrs. Louise Heide as Directors of the Society, effective the General Meeting in April of 1988. On behalf of the board and the congregation, I thanked Father Gordon and Mrs. Heide for their years of dedicated service to our church community. Father Gordon will continue to serve as our organist, and we know that Mrs. Heide will continue as a valued member of our congregation.

	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals	Con rmations	Ordinations
1987	17	8	40	0	1

The weekly celebration of the Holy Eucharist is now being attended by an average of about 40 people, a modest but consistent increase over last year's attendance. In addition to the Holy Eucharist, the following rites were observed by our clergy in 1987:

	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals	Con rmations	Ordinations
1989	18	9	40	4	0
1990	12	8	37	0	0
1991	24	8	42	4	0

The Church exterior was completely re-painted in June 1991 by Mr. Lee Schulz, who also supplied the paint. This report is submitted with the prayer that God will continue to bless our ministry and fellowship.

Yours in Christ's service,
The Right Reverend Gérard LaPlante Bishop



Handing our information after Holy Mass; seen here are Bishop Gérard LaPlante, Mrs. Louise Heide, Mr. Eddy Ydenberg, in front Mrs. Girard.

THE OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH OF BC

April 28th 1991, C.B.C. Television (French Network), televised the Holy Eucharist from St Raphael's Old Catholic Church coast to coast in "Le Jour du Seigneur" and a write-up of the church history was printed in the "Prions en Eglise" (Pray With The Church) distributed monthly in every French speaking Roman Catholic Church in Canada. The Old Catholic Church of B.C. received many letters requesting additional videos of the service. This was the first time that an Old Catholic Service was on national television - a one hour long program.

1992

On June 13, 1992, our church soloist - Ms. Suzanne Herbert was married to Mr. Peter Kingston by Bishop LaPlante at Jericho Beach in Vancouver.

Our former cook Mrs. Mathilda Ebner, of Baden Baden Germany, passed away. She was 74 years old and had lived at St. Raphael's for 9 years. She was a good friend to the Old Catholic Church and will be sadly missed. Requiem Eucharist celebrated by Bishop Gérard LaPlante for the repose of her soul. "May she rest in peace."

From 1978 to 1992 - The Church has given accommodation to 182 people for a period from one month to 4 years.

December We Welcomed a new cook - Mrs. Orietta Laliberty ("Ricky").

	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals	Confirmations (Adults)
1992	12	8	68	5

	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals	Confirmations
1993	14	8	65	5

Re-painting inside the Church-24th & 25th of June 1993 by Bishop Gérard LaPlante and helped by Mrs. Ricky Laliberty and Mr. Gilles Litalien.

A new roof will be done on the Church in 1993. The Church attendance has been steadily growing, and more Philippinos, Vietnamese and peoples from third world countries are attending.

1993

November 11th

Requiem Mass celebrated by Bishop LaPlante and Pastor Schmode for the repose of the soul of Mr. Werner Alsbach, 30 years old, of Koblenz, Germany, brother of Mr. Jürgen Alsbach, also of Koblenz, who was a former resident of St. Raphael's. He is a friend of Bishop LaPlante, and a member of our Church. He attends the Old Catholic Church of Germany (St. Jakobus Parish, Koblenz, Germany). Mr. Werner Alsbach was the sole brother of Mr. Jürgen Alsbach. R.I.P.

November 14th

Bishop Gérard LaPlante flew to Koblenz, Germany, to participate at the funeral of Mr. Werner Alsbach in the Roman Catholic Church of Rübenach, Koblenz.

December 15th

Requiem Mass by Bishop Gérard LaPlante for the repose of the soul of Mr. Alphonse LaPlante, 89 years old, father of the Bishop. He died on the 14th December 1993 at Causapscal, Québec (birthplace of Bishop Gérard LaPlante.)

December 18th

Bishop Gérard LaPlante participated in the Roman Catholic Church of St. Jacques, Causapscal, at the Requiem Mass of his late father - Mr. Alphonse LaPlante.

THE OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH OF BC



CBC Television "Le Jour du Seigneur" 28 April 1991.



Above: During the taping of Holy Mass.

Below: CBC crew with Bishop LaPlante and Fr. Gordon.

