

# SACRAMENTO DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

Vol 7

Father John E Boll

No 5

## *Sister Michael Henry Moulin, DHS*

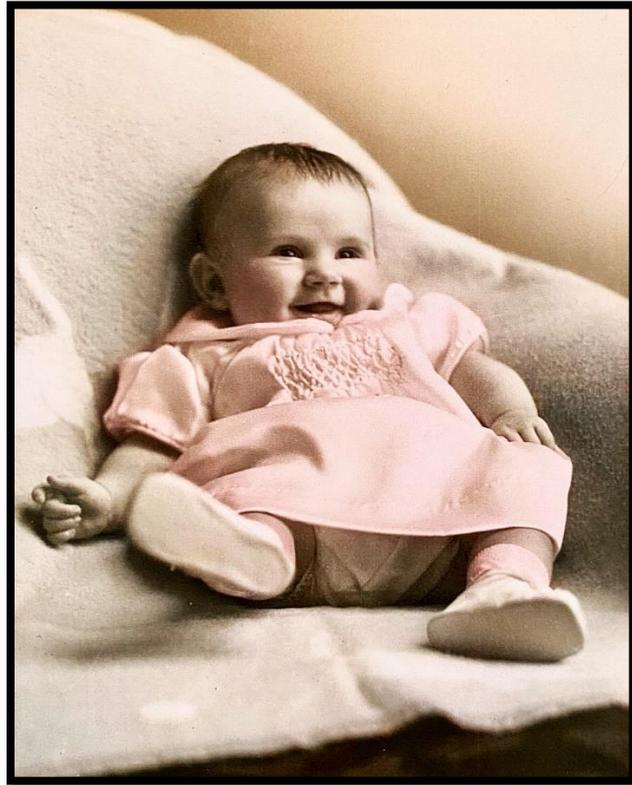
Native of Moosup, Connecticut

Member of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit

Retired Principal of Our Lady of Grace School, West Sacramento, CA



**Lorraine Catherine Moulin**, daughter of Henry Moulin and Anna Stringer, was born on December 10, 1936 in her family home at Moosup, Connecticut. She had a brother three years younger named Henry. Her mother and father created a loving, supportive environment for her and her brother Henry. Her father was a woolen mill weaver and taught his family the value of working hard and appreciating what one had. It is not surprising that Henry's daughter would carry on these same values when she arrived in California at the age of 21.



Photos courtesy of Sr Michael Henry, DHS

**Baby Lorraine Catherine Moulin**



**Left, Lorraine's First Communion**



**Right, Lorraine's Eighth Grade Graduation**

### **BEGINS HER EDUCATION**

The Moulin family lived a block away from the Daughters of the Holy Spirit Convent in Moosup so she attended the parish school run by these sisters and it was there that her religious life began. Lorraine began the first grade at All Hallows Grade School in 1942 at the age of 5. There was no kindergarten in those days. The Daughters of the Holy Spirit taught in this school so she experienced the DHS Sisters throughout her grammar school days until she graduated in 1950.

In the fall of 1950, she began her four years of high school at Putnam Catholic Academy in Putnam, CT. The teachers at the Academy were the Daughters of the Holy Spirit. As you can see, the religious sisters of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit were a significant part of Lorraine's life from her earliest days until she graduated from high school.



**Lorraine's Graduation Photo**

### **BEGINS WORKING**

After graduating from high school, Lorraine was hired by the 5 & 10 Cent Store in Moosup where she worked for only a few months in 1954. She was asked by a local dentist if she would work for him as his dental assistant. She worked for this doctor one year, 1954-1955.

### **LORRAINE ENTERS THE CONVENT**

It is no surprise that as Lorraine began to discern what she would do with her life, her mind and heart would turn to the religious community she knew so well, the Daughters of the Holy Spirit in Putnam, CT. She entered the DHS Novitiate in Putnam in January 1956 as a postulant for six months. She then spent a year as a novice and made her temporary vows on August 23, 1957. She then attended Diocesan Sisters College from 1957 to 1960 where she received her Connecticut Teaching Credential so she could begin her teaching career.



Photo courtesy of Sr Michael Henry, DHS

**DHS Novices in 1957; Sister Michael Henry is second from the left**

## SOME HISTORY ABOUT THE DAUGHTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



**Sister Michael Henry, DHS**

In 1760, the Congregation of the Daughters of the Holy Ghost was founded on the coast of Brittany, France. Don Jean Leuduger persuaded two young women, Renee Burel and Marie Balavenne, to join him in establishing a charity school for the education of youth and care of the sick and poor. The two foundresses vested themselves in white as a distinctive sign of their dedication to Mary Immaculate and as an emblem of purity which is to adorn the soul amid the corruptions of the world.

They wore a rosary and crucifix, symbols of prayer and sacrifice. Their ardent desire to bind themselves completely as the Spouse of Christ was realized on December 8, 1706 when they pronounced the simple vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

No religious congregation can subsist outside the beneficent shadow of the Cross—the storm clouds of the French Revolution threatened the Congregation during the years 1792-1793. Its various communities were dispersed. No matter how scattered they became, each religious lived her Holy Rule as best she could.

Again in 1900, the anti-clerical laws compelled the religious to secularization. With its abrupt closing of schools and convents, the Congregation had to find a new outlet for its zeal. They found themselves heading for both English and American soil.

Today, the Daughters of the Holy Spirit are to be found at work in the United States, Canada, France, England, Belgium, Ireland, Holland, Africa and South America. They teach youth on elementary, high school and college levels, engage in catechetical and social work, and care for the poor and the sick in their homes and at the hospital.

The Sisters modernized their religious habit in 1954. They now wear a plain two-piece white dress, cinctured by a black leather belt, from which hangs a black five decade rosary. Suspended from the neck on a thin black cord is a silver dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit. A medium-length white veil is worn indoors, while a black veil and black mantle comprise street wear.

The Spirit of the Congregation is that of simplicity, sincerity, solid and enlightened piety, charity and self-denial. The Sisters receive spiritual and religious training so that they can aid thousands of people physically, mentally and spiritually and lead them to Christ. The American postulate and Novitiate is situated at the Provincial House at 72 Church Street, Putnam, Connecticut.



Photo courtesy of Sr Michael Henry, DHS

### **Provincial Center of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit, Putnam, CT**

#### **HOW SISTER MICHAEL HENRY RECEIVED HER RELIGIOUS NAME**

As Lorraine was choosing her religious name, she was given three choices. Her first choice was Agnes Marie, the name of one of her early teachers who was loving and kind. She wanted to be named after this teacher. Her second choice was Anna Marie, the name of her mother. Her third choice was a man's name Michael, a name she did not want, but if it came to that, whatever the name would be, she wanted to add Henry to it because her father and brother were named Henry. So her religious name ended up being Michael Henry.

#### **TWO ANECDOTES ABOUT HER NAME**

An inmate at a local prison read the newspaper article about Sister Michael Henry taking her religious vows. His name was Michael Henry too so he wrote to her asking her to pray for him so he would be saved. She wrote back to assure him that she would be praying for him. She never met this man because he wanted to change his life before meeting her. One of her letters to him was returned marked that he had died. Sister Michael Henry became his motivation to change.

A second story: Some years later, a young man who used to live across the street from the Moulin family, one day out of the blue made contact with Sister Michael Henry. He and his wife were expecting a child and he told Sister Michael that if the child was a boy, he would name his son Michael Henry in honor of her. Before the birth of the child, the young father was stricken by a heart attack and died. After the birth of the child, the wife named her son Michael Henry as her husband promised. Sister Michael thought the son would be named after his father.

After the passage of many years, this son Michael Henry made contact with Sister Michael. He lives in Sacramento and has a business in Sacramento. He keeps in regular contact with Sister Michael and they have become close friends. So what is in a name? A lot!

### **SISTER MICHAEL BEGINS HER TEACHING CAREER**

Sister Michael Henry began her teaching career at Saint Joseph School in Waterbury, CT teaching eager first graders from 1960 to 1962. She made her final profession as a Daughter of the Holy Spirit on August 23, 1962.



Photo courtesy of Sr Michael Henry, DHS

### **Sister Michael Henry begins her Teaching Career**

### **SISTER MICHAEL ASSIGNED TO CALIFORNIA**

The day after her final profession, Sister Michael Henry flew to California on a propeller driven plane (there were no commercial jet planes yet) and she arrived in California. Her first assignment was to be a teacher of the second grade class at Our Lady of Grace School in West Sacramento where she taught from 1962 to 1966. At the same time as teaching in the school, she also taught CCD (faith formation) to Catholic children who attended public school. In the summers, she attended Dominican College in San Rafael to work on her master's degree in education.

### **TRANSFERRED TO DAVIS**

After four years teaching at Our Lady of Grace School, Sister Michael was transferred to Saint James School in Davis where she taught grade 3 for four years, 1966-1970. She also taught CCD classes to Catholic students who attended public school in Davis. It was during this time that she had her first surgery for cancer.



Photo by John E Boll

**Saint James School, Davis**

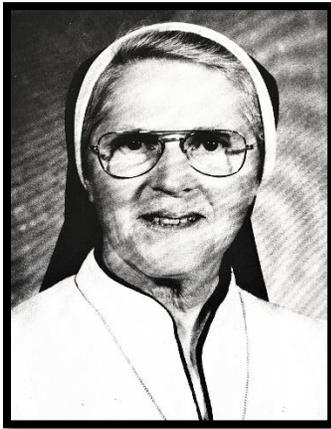
### **A MOVE TO FAIRFAX, CA**

In 1970, Sister Michael Henry was transferred to Saint Rita School in Fairfax, across the Golden Gate Bridge in Marin County. She taught the second grade in this school for two years.

### **RETURN TO WEST SACRAMENTO**

In 1972, Sister Michael Henry returned to Our Lady of Grace School in West Sacramento where she taught second grade from 1972 to 1975. Once again, she taught in the parish CCD program for Catholic public school children.

Sister Michael taught both the second and fifth grades at Our Lady of Grace School while working closely with Sister Joseph, the founding principal of the school.



When Sister Joseph was transferred to San Francisco in 1984, Sister Michael Henry became the principal of Our Lady of Grace School, a position she held for the next twenty-two years, from 1984 to 2006 when she retired.

**Sister Josephine Poulin, DHS**

### **TWENTY-TWO YEARS AS PRINCIPAL**

During her twenty-two years as principal of Our Lady of Grace School, she did most of the substitute teaching for other teachers in the school. This provided her the opportunity to get to know each child by name and she learned the various teaching styles of each of her teachers. Since she is a pianist, she prepared the music for the 9:30 AM parish Mass liturgies and involved children, parishioners, fire fighters and police officers in the liturgy.

Sister Michael Henry taught in the afternoons so that a teacher could be freed up to teach computer classes. She also directed the music for school events. After school, she helped with children's choir and youth choir once a week. In the evening, she taught some classes for the RCIA.

Sister Michael was selected as one of the 25 most influential individuals in Catholic Education in 1997 and was honored by the Diocese of Sacramento for outstanding service and leadership.

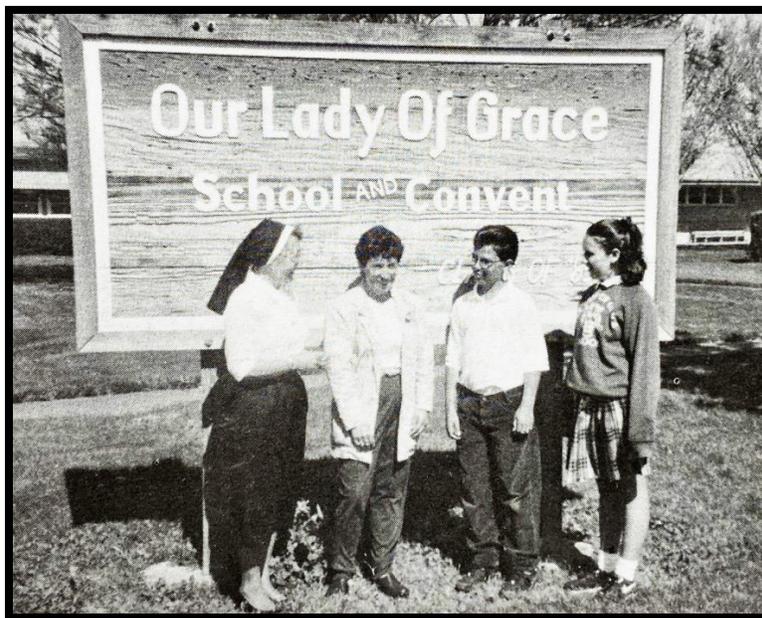


Photo courtesy of Sr Michael Henry

**Sister Michael with the sixth grade teacher and two sixth graders**

## **ABOUT OUR LADY OF GRACE SCHOOL**

Our Lady of Grace students consistently scored in the top 30% of all students tested nationally and the students entered secondary education well-prepared for the academic rigors which lie ahead. But what made Our Lady of Grace School unique was the importance of academics balanced with the importance of the individual child. Sister Michael was a leader with vision and her staff readily supported her vision. Her mission of nurturing the whole child directed all aspects of learning at the school and became the catalyst for innovative new programs.

## **MEMORIES FROM THE CLASSROOM**

Sister Michael has some humorous memories from her years of teaching. Here are a few of them: "After reading the story of Helen Keller to an eager 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class, Sister Michael explained that Helen died at the age of 73. One young fellow raised his hand and asked: 'Was she your age?' Sister looked at the child and realized his question was sincere so she answered, 'Not quite'. Another child then piped up saying: 'She must be 72.' 'She's not that old,' corrected a third classmate, 'she's only 50 or 60.' Sister Michael was 21 years old at the time!"

"In class one day a student was shocked to hear Sister Michael talk about her brother. 'You have a brother?' he asked, to which Sister answered: 'Yes, and a mother and father also.' The student then asked: 'Are they nuns too?' "

"One young child was fascinated with Sister Michael's veil. Sister explained that her hair was under the veil and the student replied: 'Do you have ears under there too?'"

## **SISTER LEO IRENE KILLED IN AN ACCIDENT**

Tragedy struck the convent on May 10, 1975 when Sisters Michael Henry and Leo Irene Giguere were returning a borrowed bike to a family who loaned it to the convent. It was in the afternoon when the two sisters were returning the bike. A truck driver passed a car and the bright sun blinded the 32 year old truck driver for a few seconds. He did not see the two sisters riding bikes on the side of the road. Sister Michael was riding the first bike and Sister Leo Irene was riding the second bike behind her. The truck missed Sister Michael but hit Sister Leo Irene and she was killed instantly.

Sister Leo Irene was the eighth grade teacher and was only 34 years of age when she was killed in West Sacramento.



**Sister Leo Irene, DHS**

This tragic accident left an indelible mark on the memory of the sisters, students, teachers and staff of Our Lady of Grace School, the parish and the whole community of West Sacramento. May Sister Leo Irene be at rest and peace in God's loving presence.

## DEATH COMES TO SISTER MICHAEL'S FAMILY



Because Sister Michael Henry had spent the majority of her life in California, she was three thousand miles away from her parents and her brother in Connecticut. Henry Moulin, her father, died on September 19, 1995, and her mother Anna died on April 10, 1996. Her brother Henry died on September 7, 1996 so in one year's time, she experienced the death of her parents and her only brother. That was an exceptionally painful year of loss for her as she served as principal of Our Lady of Grace School on the West Coast of California so many miles away from her family.

**Sister Michael Henry with her Parents, Henry and Anna Moulin, in 1982 as she celebrated her Twenty-Fifth Anniversary as a Member of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit.**

## HONORS SISTER MICHAEL HENRY HAS RECEIVED

**COMPAG**

**SKILLS BANK CORPORATION**

**FACTS**

**Creative Publications**

**Apple Computer, Inc.**

**World Book**

**Super Cookies**

**Wholly Foods**

**Benziger**

**William H. Sadler**

**SKILLS BANK CORPORATION**

**TELL ME**

**MODERN CURRICULUM PRESS**

**The Learning Company**

**Silver Burdett Ginn Religion Division**

**RCL**

**Our Sunday Visitor**

**Loyola Press**

**SF A W**

**Scott Foresman Addison Wesley**

**PETER LI EDUCATION GROUP**

**25**

**1971-1996**

On the occasion of the 25th Anniversary  
of  
*Peter Li Education Group,  
Today's Catholic Teacher*  
is proud to honor

**Sister Michael Moulin**  
nominated as one of the  
25 most influential individuals in Catholic education  
over the past 25 years

*Peter J. Li*  
Peter J. Li,  
Chairman and Publisher

*Mary Noschang*  
Mary Noschang,  
Editor, *Today's Catholic Teacher*

*Robert J. Kealey*  
Dr. Robert J. Kealey  
Executive Director,  
Elementary Schools, NCEA

*Sue Collis*  
Sue Collins,  
Educational Coordinator,  
Compaq Computer Corp.

Nominated by,  
Pat and Ray Echeverria  
Our Lady of Grace School

**Sister Michael Henry, honored as one of the 25 most influential individuals in Catholic Education over the past 25 years**

CITY OF WEST SACRAMENTO  
**Proclamation**

recognizing and honoring  
**Sister Michael Henry, DHS,**  
upon her retirement as  
Principal Of Our Lady of Grace School in West Sacramento

WHEREAS, Lorraine Moulin was born and raised by a loving, hard working family in Mossup, Connecticut and was educated by the Daughters of the Holy Spirit at their school near her home; and

WHEREAS, she left home and became Sr. Michael Henry and relocated to California at the age of 21 and began her teaching career; and

WHEREAS, she came to Our Lady of Grace in West Sacramento in 1962 and after brief relocations to teach in Davis and Fairfax, she came back "home" to OLG where she taught 2nd and 5th grades under the founding Principal, Sister Joseph; and

WHEREAS, when Sr. Joseph moved in 1984, Sr. Michael was named Principal – a position she has held for the last 22 years; and

WHEREAS, while Sr. Michael emphasized academics, she also realized the importance of the individual child and took as her mission to nurture the whole child in all aspects of learning; and

WHEREAS, Our Lady of Grace, accredited under Sr. Michael by both the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the Western Catholic Educational Association, has consistently produced students who score in the top 30% of all students tested nationally and enter high school well prepared for the academic rigors that lie ahead; and

WHEREAS, known as a friend of the children and a person who cares, Sr. Michael has maintained a vision for the school and successfully and gently convinced supporters that "God loves a cheerful giver" and been able to build a facility for an Extension Program for after school care and a library; and

WHEREAS, having done her Master's thesis on the importance of physical fitness, Sr. Michael supported the Parent's Club creation of the athletic field which is host and home to many Parochial Athletic League sports; and

WHEREAS, Sr. Michael Henry has seen nearly 8,000 students pass through the halls of Our Lady of Grace, among them successful doctors, teachers, sisters, priests and brothers, nurses, lawyers, humanitarians and a former West Sacramento Mayor.

THEREFORE, be it proclaimed, that the City Council of the City of West Sacramento does hereby acknowledge and appreciate the dedication and positive impact that Sister Michael Henry Moulin has had on the parish of Our Lady of Grace and the community as a whole; and does further wish her much happiness and good health in her retirement as Principal of Our Lady of Grace School.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the following vote of the West Sacramento City Council this 7th day of June, 2006.

AYES: Beers, Kristoff, Pierson, Villegas, Cabaldon

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

  
KRYSS RANKIN  
West Sacramento City Clerk



  
CHRISTOPHER L. CABALDON  
Mayor of West Sacramento

**City of West Sacramento Honors Sister Michael Henry Moulin, DHS  
Upon her Retirement as Principal of Our Lady of Grace School in 2006**

### **SISTER MICHAEL HENRY RETIRES BUT REMAINS ACTIVE**

In 2006, Sister Michael Henry retired as principal of Our Lady of Grace School at the age of 70 but she continues to spend her time in a great variety of service ministries. For five years, she served as Coordinator for Religious Education (CFF) at Saint Joseph Parish in Clarksburg. She also took care of two women who were suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

During this same time period, Sister Michael had a second cancer surgery but recovered from it. She helps prepare food and delivers lunches to homeless people in West Sacramento on the third Thursday of each month. This is an outreach of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society at Our Lady of Grace Church in West Sacramento. A former student of her is in charge of the program.

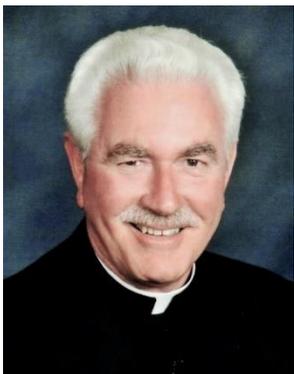


**Sister Michael Henry Moulin, DHS**

Sister Michael helps out in the kindergarten at Our Lady of Grace School once a week during the academic year. She does spiritual sharing with a DHS associate once a week and serves as spiritual advisor for Our Lady of Grace Women's Council and DHS West Sacramento associates. She is spiritual director for the Saint Joseph Parish Women's Prayer Group in Clarksburg and is pianist at the 8 AM Sunday Mass at Saint Joseph Church.

Finally, Sister Michael visits the sick and elderly, attends baptisms, First Communions, confirmations, weddings, funerals, birthdays and anniversaries in the parish. She celebrated her Silver Jubilee in 1982, her Golden Jubilee in 2007 and her Diamond Jubilee in 2017. She continues to live in West Sacramento and rents a small house from a family in a rural part of West Sacramento.

### **FINAL REMARKS**



I have known of Sister Michael Henry for many years but never met her until recently. She is an energetic 83 year old member of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit religious community from Putnam, CT. She has spent the majority of her life as a teacher and principal at Our Lady of Grace School in West Sacramento.

It is amazing to see the many ways she continues to reach out and serve the community. Through her life as a teacher and later a principal, she has touched the lives of hundreds of children over the years. Many of her

former students consider her a great friend because of the love and respect she showed them while they were students.

In an article Sister Michael Henry wrote some years ago, she quoted from the Daughters of the Holy Spirit Rule of Life on Mission as her life's vision for her ministry. That rule states: *"Through His words and His deeds Jesus revealed Himself as the One who liberates and saves. Following Him, we contribute with others – children, youth, adults – in creating conditions which enable all persons to liberate themselves and live more open and loving relationships."*

Commentating on that passage, Sister Michael writes: "To me, this passage can be construed as meaning, that if we free people to be the best they can be, then they will be able to give freely of themselves. If we can instill in our children an appreciation of their own worth, the recognition of the preciousness of life and the realization of the privilege of being God's children, then they will take heed of the beauty within and around them."

Over the years, Sister Michael did her very best to instill in the children an appreciation of their own worth, the recognition of the preciousness of life and the realization of the privilege of being God's children. In 1995, the visiting Provincial of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit visited the school and asked a first grade student: "What do you like best about your school?" His remark warmed Sister Michael's heart and confirmed her vision for the school when he said, "I like this school because we're like a family!" This young boy caught Sister Michael's vision and spirit.

We are grateful to Sister Michael Henry Moulin, DHS, for her life of service to the children of Our Lady of Grace School in West Sacramento and her ongoing ministry to the parishes of Our Lady of Grace in West Sacramento and Saint Joseph in Clarksburg. We wish her many more years of good health and joyful ministry to the People of God in the greater Sacramento area.

*Ad Multos Annos!*

## PHOTOS ON THE JOURNEY



The Moulin Family Home in Moosup, CT



Lorraine's Last Christmas at home before Entering the Convent



Sister Michael Henry, Principal of Our Lady of Grace School, West Sacramento



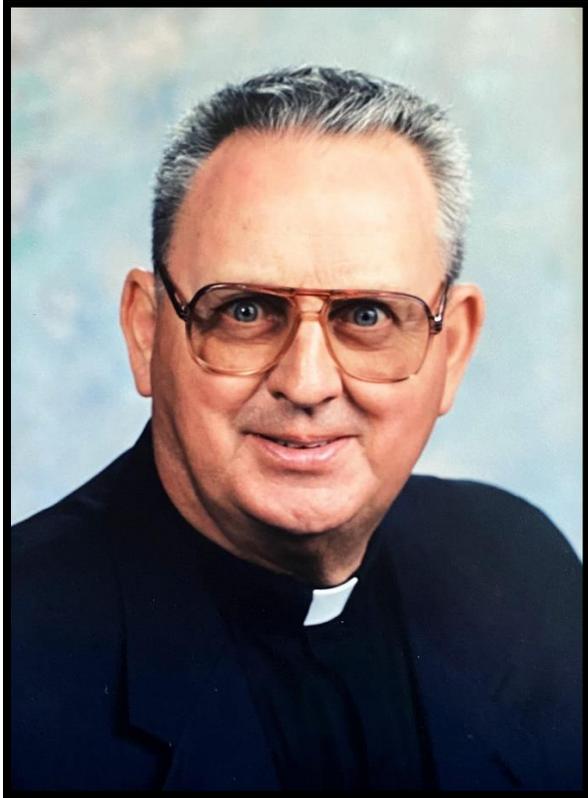
**OUR LADY OF GRACE SCHOOL  
First Holy Communion May 1, 1988**

**Sister Michael Henry  
Principal**

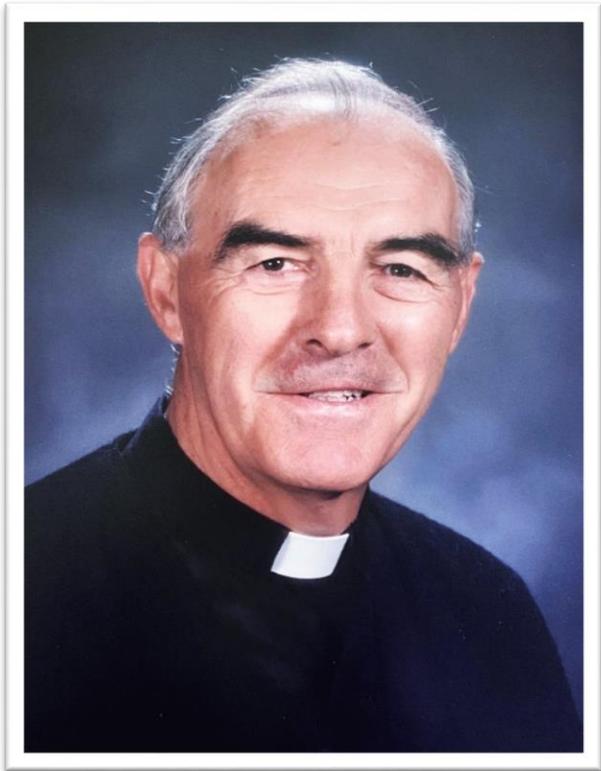
**Mrs. Barbara Price - Teacher**

**Father Matthias O'Callaghan  
Pastor**

PASTORS OF OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH WHEN SISTER MICHAEL HENRY WAS PRINCIPAL



Father Matthias J O' Callahan



Father Edward O'Hara



**Sister Michael Henry Moulin, DHS, on her Fiftieth Anniversary as a Member of the  
Daughter of the Holy Spirit  
2007**



*Sister Michael Henry Moulin, DHS*