



## North Thompson Catholic Parishes

**Roman Catholic Diocese of Kamloops**

### Our Lady of Snow Parish in Blue River

This is a write up made for Clearwater Times 15 year before.

#### **50 YEARS...GOLDEN JUBILEE FOR BLUE RIVER**

July 17, 1960, Bishop Harrington drove to Blue River accompanied by Frs. John MacIntyre and Emil Sasges for the blessing of the newly built church of Our Lady of the Snow. Perhaps even at that time the Bishop foresaw Father Emil as the first resident priest of Blue River less than 5 years later.

The CNR crews as well as men from a large sawmill afforded volunteers and materials to build the church and, along with their families, were eager for Mass as often as possible. In the early days the church was full every Sunday.

In 1972, volunteers built the permanent residence and parish centre. When the priest in the late 70's took up

residence in Valemount, volunteers in Blue River, serving as “lay apostles,” enabled the Blessed Sacrament to remain accessible to all with the doors of the church open each day. Fred and Fran Wolf have coordinated volunteer work since 1988.

In 2002, parishioners Fran Wolf and Lolly Fehr raised the money for new windows while Barb Farina fashioned window frames and improved the woodwork for the chancel.

What difference does it make to have such a tiny, one room church in such a tiny town amidst all those vast mountains covered with snow? Fran can tell of many who have come in off the highway to stop for a visit in the church... like the time a busload of men from Haiti came by. They were so happy to find the church open and went in and prayed the Rosary.

One visitor from Austria speaks for many in the note that he gave Fran: "I am skiing this week. I asked where the nearest Catholic Church was and was amazed and very happy to find this wonderful little church of Our Lady of the Snow. What a beautiful surprise to also find it open and Jesus present in it. Thank-you for giving me access to the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament here in this wilderness! I will pray for you and your little community."

## ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

All past parishioners, residents of Blue River and visitors are welcome. Please bring old photos and good stories to tell!

On Sunday, July 18 there will be a 50th anniversary celebration with Father Sasges, now serving Our Lady of the Snow for the third time. Same agenda: 2pm: pot luck lunch, 3pm: children's activities, 4pm: prayers, 5pm: Mass

Priests serving this area ...McBride, Valemount, Blue River, Avola, Vavenby, Clearwater over the years:

1941: Rev. M.A. Phelan (resident in Merritt)

1949: Rev. J.A. Quigley (resident in Little Fort)

1965: Rev. Emil Sasges (first resident pastor in Blue River)

1976: Rev. Desmond,

Rev. A. Vella (resident in Valemount)

1983: Rev. Emil Sasges

1988: Rev. J.C. Mulligan

1989: Rev. Thomas O'Neill

1992: Rev. Robert Haggerty

1996: Rev. Louis Hoffart

2004: Rev. Martin Moser

Rev. Richard Hanzowski

2006: Rev. Emil Sasges